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For Immediate Release

Pickering College and York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre produce second Business Plan Challenge winner

Contest encourages entrepreneurs in the early stages of business start-up and growth

NEWMARKET – Pickering College in the Town of Newmarket and the York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre have produced a multiple winner in the Business Plan Challenge for a second straight year. The competition encourages young people to use their creativity and innovation to develop strategic business plans.

Town of Aurora resident Barry Mason, who was in Grade 11 at the time of the competition, won first prize and \$1,000 in the Central Region level and first runner-up and \$1,000 at the Provincial level, plus an award of \$100, for a total of \$2,100.

“On behalf of York Regional Council, I congratulate Pickering College and the York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre for your respective roles in mentoring young entrepreneurs,” said York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch. “And I congratulate our winner, Barry Mason. Your business plan showcases the skills young people need to learn to be competitive and successful in today’s marketplace.”



In 2007, East Gwillimbury resident David Wilkings, who was a Grade 12 student at Pickering College at the time, developed a business plan for a motorcycle race track and an e-retail accessories business to win first place at all three levels: York Region, Central Region and the Province, winning a total of \$3,500.

“It is wonderful that young people have the opportunity to pursue their passion through a small business,” said Town of Markham Regional Councillor Tony Wong, Chair of the Region’s Planning and Economic Development Committee. “I commend Pickering College and Barry’s parents for encouraging and supporting Barry in pursuing his project.”

Barry’s business plan was for a service company that would provide exterior cottage cleaning and maintenance for busy cottage owners in the Huntsville area. His plan bested 11 other finalists at the Central Region level. There were 38 finalists for the Provincial awards, representing four Ontario regions: Western, Northern, Central and Eastern. Altogether, 1,020 business plans were submitted to the 2008 challenge.

Both Pickering College winners in 2007 and 2008 were championed in the "Introduction to Entrepreneurial Studies" class headed by their teacher, Marc de la Bastide.

The entry deadline for the 2008 Business Plan Challenge was June 2nd and the awards were announced at a banquet in Markham earlier this month.

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The York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre provides assistance to new businesses and developing enterprises located in the northern six municipalities of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville. It complements the services provided by Small Business Enterprise Centres in Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan operated by the local municipalities in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services.

For more information about these and other activities of the Small Business Enterprise Centre, please visit www.yorksmallbusiness.ca

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For more information on The Regional Municipality of York, please visit www.york.ca

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