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Details: The Business Center for Entrepreneurship & Social Enterprise Awards
The Winners of the 8th annual *Enterprising Woman Business Plan Competition*

The Business Center for Entrepreneurship & Social Enterprise in Philadelphia's Northwest section, presented the 8th annual *Enterprising Woman Business Plan Competition* to help local women achieve their entrepreneurial dreams. The annual competition serves as a vehicle for supporting female entrepreneurs and woman-owned businesses in the Philadelphia area. Now in its 8th year, the Competition provided a total of \$10,000 in cash to be awarded in three categories.

Invited to enter the competition are small to mid-sized businesses, earning less than \$250,000 in annual revenue. Applicants who possess at least 51 percent ownership in the existing or proposed business should consider entering. The three award categories include retail, restaurant, and service industries.

According to Pamela Rich-Wheeler, the Executive Director of The Business Center, "This annual competition is aimed at providing women with the tools they need to launch, improve, and grow their businesses." Wheeler adds, "The competition also encourages many women to complete and fine tune their business plans and ideas as a first step in realizing their goal to own a business."

Aside from the financial reward, the creation of a business plan and networking opportunities is the centerpiece of the competition, which is an important first step for all businesses. Finalist Keirra Winters says, "The business plan competition and The Business Center have really been fundamental to my growth as an entrepreneur. I feel even more enthusiastic, passionate, and confident in my business now more than ever."

The awards ceremony took place at Philadelphia University in the Ravenhill Dining Room on July 17th, 2009 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Anita T. Conner was the keynote speaker and Monique Braxton, Channel 10 anchorwoman, served as the emcee for the evening.

The event was made possible by the support of presenting sponsor, OARC. OARC supports the annual *Enterprising Woman Business Plan Competition* because "the competition falls in line with our objectives towards economic development," as said by Executive Director Jack Kitchen, "We seek to support businesses that serve a niche, while at the same time are making a commitment and investment in the community. This is vital and in line with The Business Center's mission to launch and improve businesses on underserved corridors."

Co-sponsors are Sovereign Bank, Exit Realty, Wachovia Bank, Philadelphia University, PNC Bank, and Gateway Funding.

The Business Center for Entrepreneurship & Social Enterprise is a non-profit incubator located in the Northwest Section of Philadelphia, which targets start-up and existing small businesses. The purpose of The Business Center is to aid in the development of professional management and entrepreneurial skills. Services include consulting, workshops, and technical resources through a combination of in-house expertise and community network resources.

For more information on the 2009-2010 competition or any of The Business Center's service and programs, look for details on our website, www.thebizctr.com, or contact us directly by dialing 215-247-2473.

The 2009 winners (from left):



Meeka Johnson & Tenee Nelson, I Luv Hoodies (1st place Retail category); Lori Tharps, ?RU Gear(2nd place Retail category); Stephanie Stevens, Integrity Cleaning & Janitorial Services (3rd place Service category); Leslie Spady, Kids Fundamental Bakehouse (3rd place Restaurant category); Zana Billue, Zana Cakes (1st place Restaurant category); Sandra Jones, Big Daddy's BBQ (2nd place Restaurant category); Glynis Tart, Verden Interior Design Studio, LLC (1st place Service category); Bernadine Abad, Intellectual Pursuit, Inc. (2nd place Service category).

Not pictured:

Tesia Barone, ?RU Gear partner (2nd place in Retail Category); Karen Colquitt Hall, CAMOR (3rd place winner in Retail Category)