

Students graduate from Entrepreneurship Academy *Awards given after business plan competition*

SPENCER – Seven young entrepreneurs spent the week of July 11 turning their hobbies into businesses. The Iowa Lakes Corridor has a goal to create the next generation of entrepreneurs, and these middle school students are well on their way to becoming business owners.

The Academy focuses on teaching middle school students the power of starting their own business. The students learn how to write a business plan, how to identify business ideas, and how to turn a hobby into a business. Students had the opportunity to learn from real entrepreneurs throughout the week and had to raise capital in a mock-business setting. Throughout the week, students did research and completed their own business plan. On the last day of the Academy, students gave a power point presentation to judges Brian Dalziel of the Iowa Lakes Corridor, Pat Reno of RANCO Fertiliservice and Kelly McCarty of the Small Business Development Center.



2011 Entrepreneurship Academy graduates are, front row from left, Hazkhatt Zeledon, Taylor Nissen, Kaylee Nissen, back row, Jill Fahnlander, Kristen Salzwedel, Brett Salzwedel and Michael Peterson.

Winners of the business plan competition were Jill Fahnlander, first place with her business The Bakers Dozen, Michael Peterson, second place with his business Eat My Dust, and Kaylee Nissen, third place with her business Tots Babysitting. Other students participating include Brett Salzwedel with It's A Bird's Life, Kristen Salzwedel with Signs for Life, Taylor Nissen with Pupz Dog Walking Service, and Hazkhatt Zeledon with Lakes Soccer.

The week-long academy was facilitated by Kevin Robinson, president of Common Cents Coaching, and was assisted by Donalle Rodas of Spencer. The students came from Spirit Lake, Estherville and Royal.

Kathy Evert, president and CEO of the Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation, said, "We thank the parents and teachers who encouraged these students to participate in the week's activities. We are impressed and very

excited to see the work of the students and proud to offer this learning opportunity to young people in the Corridor region."

Other youth entrepreneurial endeavors by the Iowa Lakes Corridor are the Okoboji Entrepreneurial Institute, a week-long event offered to college students, the Be Your Own Boss seminar and high school business plan competition, the entrepreneurship training for high school teachers and Junior Achievement programming to K-12 classrooms throughout the region.

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The Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation is the regional economic development agency for Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson and Emmet counties. Its mission is to foster, encourage, aid, promote or otherwise assist in the economic growth and development of the region. For more information about the Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation, call 712-264-3474 or visit www.lakescorridor.com.