



Northern Ontario Young Business Planner Wins the Ultimate Challenge

By Carmela Laffin
The Northwest Business Centre
Business Advisor

Six high school students were brought together in Sudbury, on November 13, from across Northern Ontario to celebrate the 2004 award ceremony for the Ontario Secondary School Business Plan Competition. The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade welcomed each student and offered their support and best wishes as each student had worked hard and had competed with the best of the best throughout the province.

During the 2003-2004 school year 31 Business Enterprise Centres across the Province participated in local Business Plan Competitions, including six locations in Northern Ontario. On Saturday the top award winners from each location attended the award ceremony in Sudbury, at the same time that their counterparts in Central, Eastern and Southwestern Ontario attended ceremonies in their areas.

All the youth attending the evening's festivities were already winners in their own areas, each having placed first in their respective local competitions. The Regional Winner chosen for Northern Ontario was Heidi Friesen of Emo, with her prize-winning business plan, "Drizzle Creek". Heidi then moved on to the Provincial competition and placed second out of four. Heidi earned educational bursaries totalling \$1,750. "

Events and competitions like these are vital to the communities and to our youth. Encouraging our youth to strike out on their own and start their own business helps the North ensure a future where our economy is strong and our youth stay in our communities. Small businesses are the life force of any community.

Planning for the 2005 Northwest Business Plan Contest is well underway. "The contest prepares today's youth for tomorrow's opportunities", said Carmela Laffin. Interested youth can contact Carmela Laffin, 807.467.4643 or toll free 866.336.7779, at the Northwest Business Centre. The Northwest Business Centre is committed to committed to fostering a spirit of innovation among youth and is part of **Youth Opportunities Ontario**

The Northwest Business Centre and local Community Future Development Corps organize the Northwest Business Plan Contest, which is sponsored and supported by Fed Nor, The Province of Ontario, the business community, and local organizations representing the Kenora Rainy River District.