



UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

GIGOT CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDIES
MENDOZA COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

234 Mendoza College of Business
Notre Dame, Indiana
46556-5646 USA

Telephone (574) 631-3042
Facsimile (574) 631-3979

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact:

Daniel J. Buckenmeyer
Associate Director
Gigot Center for Entrepreneurial Studies
Mendoza College of Business
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN 46556
Ph: 574.631.3543
Email: buckenmeyer.2@nd.edu
www.nd.edu

Notre Dame Social Venture Business Plan Competition Award Winners Announced

South Bend, IN, May 22, 2007 - The Gigot Center for Entrepreneurial Studies sixth annual Notre Dame Social Venture Business Plan Competition \$10,000 award winner was team Por Fin, Nuestra Casa "Finally a home for me". PFNC team members are Pablo Nava, Kate Nava, Brian McCarthy, Maggie Welch and Kyle Annen. The mission of this team is to provide Mexican residents living in squalor in shelters constructed of wooden pallets or boxes that are tied together the opportunity to improve their living conditions. This team also received the Pace Global People's Choice award of \$3,000 as determined by audience vote.

Runner up for the Notre Dame Social Venture Business Plan went to team Planting Empowerment. Team members Chris Meyer, Andrew Wulf, Kevin Fay, Andrew Parrucci, Damion Croston, Johanna Abinnante, and Carlos Espinosa. Planting Empowerment (PE) is the managing body and operator of partnerships that will invest in hardwood timber production in Panama. PE offers the farmers an alternative economic incentive not to deforest.

Best Undergraduate-Led Social Venture Business plan award goes to Artisan Opportunities International, Inc. (AOI), team members Brian Brownschidle, Ben Gunty, Creston Brown, Lupe Pineda, and Sarah Rauenhorst. AOI is a nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the quality and dignity of life for impoverished Latin American artisans by providing vital income through marketing their products and telling their stories throughout the world.

The Gigot Center for Entrepreneurial Studies curriculum emphasizes the core of entrepreneurship and vision and strategic thinking. Intuition is encouraged and students are challenged to "think like entrepreneurs" so they will be able to recognize opportunities and face challenge head-on. In partnering with local companies and alumni from around the globe, Notre Dame's students gain vital experience and are challenged to use their imagination and intellect to make a difference.

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