



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **First Annual Chatham High School Business Plan Contest Winners Named**

PITTSBORO – A crowd of more than 50 people gathered Tuesday evening, May 22 at the Siler City Country Club for an awards ceremony to name the winners of the first annual Chatham High School Business Plan Contest sponsored by Brookwood Farms Barbecue. Three teams took home cash prizes for their work in developing business plans.

Cody Jeffrey and Nathan Woolard of Jordan-Matthews High School were awarded first place for their business plan to build a drive-in movie theater in Siler City named Wheels and Reels. The proposed venue would host theme nights targeting all ages and audiences. The students received a \$500 scholarship.

“We came up with the idea for Wheels and Reels because of the limited entertainment facilities in Siler City,” Jeffrey and Woolard said. “After participating in the competition, we learned a lot about the planning process and possible struggles that emerging businesses face.”

SAGE Academy students Alyssa Binkley and Dee Dee Davis were awarded second place and \$300 for their business plan to open Bakery Bliss, a bakery serving sweets made with locally-sourced products. Shade Lee Montano and Oscar Avilez of Jordan-Matthews came in third place, winning \$200, for their idea to start a custom design shoe manufacturer called Cool Shoes, Bro.

Three teams received honorable mention. They were Baby Care, with team members Jasmine Farrar and Millison Newby from SAGE Academy; Rent-a-Random, with team members Wyatt Grillo and Angel Gaytan from Chatham Central High School; and That's Entertainment: Dinner and a Show, with team members Amber Brown, Jasmine Roberson and Adrienne Beranger from Chatham Central High School.

“It was great to have a competition like this in our county,” said Luke Nicks, a marketing teacher at Jordan-Matthews who advised Jeffrey and Woolard. “I am always looking for ways to challenge my students and this was a great experience for all who entered.”

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naturally innovative

The competition was launched in February 2012. The first three rounds required teams to create a business plan, analyze the business structure and marketing, and prepare financial statements. The six semifinalist teams delivered business pitches to a panel of judges in April.

Central Carolina Community College's Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning (REAL) course instructor Diane Kannar, Chatham Economic Development Corporation board member Andrew Weniger, and Chatham CCCC Small Business Center Director Gary Kibler served as judges for the contest.

"I was very impressed with how creative the students' ideas were and the amount of work they did to be a part of this contest," Kannar said. "More importantly, they all did a great job with their presentations to the judges. They should be proud of their accomplishments!"

"I was inspired by the enthusiasm and creativity of the students and I look forward to seeing these budding entrepreneurs develop successful businesses in Chatham," Weniger added.

The program encouraging youth entrepreneurship was made possible with the generous support of Brookwood Farms Barbecue.

"Craig [Wood] and I were extremely happy to sponsor this contest," Brookwood Farms President Twig Wood said. "We view this as an important competition to help develop tomorrow's business leaders and hopefully bring their hard work and ideas back to Chatham County."

The contest was organized by the Chatham Economic Development Corporation.

"Youth entrepreneurship is critical for development in rural counties," Chatham EDC President Dianne Reid said. "We look forward to continuing this program and planting the entrepreneurial seed in more young people."

For more information, contact the Chatham Economic Development Corporation at 919-542-8274.