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Winners of UNH Holloway Business Prize Announced

By Denise Hart
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DURHAM, N.H. - Jessica de Pontbriand of Nashua, a business major at the University of New Hampshire's Whittemore School of Business and Economics, has won first prize in the undergraduate lifestyle category for her business plan, "jajaBelle's," in the 15th annual Paul J. Holloway Jr. Business Plan competition.

The contest recognizes outstanding undergraduate and graduate student entries in two categories, lifestyle and high growth. Winners are awarded $4,000, and runners-up receive $900 for reaching the final round in a contest that judges business plans for feasibility of implementation and overall quality. The winning lifestyle plan, "jajaBelle's," creates a café and in-store bakery in de Pontbriand's hometown that would sell homemade ice cream, Greek pastries, homemade desserts and an assortment of beverages.

Justin S. Gamester of Portsmouth and Louis M. Levine of Waterford, Conn., took top honors in the high-growth business category for their plan for "Seacoast Premium Finance, LLC." The finance company would offer property and casualty insurance financing services, allowing businesses to pay insurance premiums over time and use their capital for growth.

Graduate student winners for the lifestyle category were the team of Mike Carmichael of Newington, Denise Laferte of Newburyport, Mass., and Ed Rowe of Amesbury, Mass., with a business plan for "The McRae Group." Their plan would create a consortium of consulting human performance management professionals to help businesses reduce the consequences of human error. In the high-growth category, graduate student Jim Losee of Mason took the winning prize for his plan for "Active Acoustics," a company that would provide noise abatement and mitigation products using Active Acoustic Surface (AAS) technology.

Undergraduate lifestyle runners-up include Jason David Wood of Rochester for "The Apple Seed, Inc." and Lindsey MacAleese of Walpole, Mass., for "In-Home Care, Inc." The high growth runners-
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up awards went to undergraduate duo of Justin Bruce of North Andover, Mass., and Ryan Welch of Melrose, Mass., for "The ArseniX™ Advanced Filtration System" and Sean Gaffney of Laconia for "The Oliverian School."

Runners-up prizes in the graduate lifestyle category went to Mary Cleveland of Hampton for her "Top Notch" plan and Jeff Rapsis of Bedford for "El Toucas." The high-growth runners up were Douglas McClellan of Windham for "ECR Pollution Control" and William Scheer of Essex Junction, Vt., for "Movies To Go."

The Paul J. Holloway Jr. Business Plan Prize was established at the Whittemore School by the Exeter businessman's family to honor his achievements and contributions to the education and business communities.

Judges for this year's Holloway competition were marketing research consultant Beth Baldwin of Lexington, Mass., and a 1984 Whittemore School MBA graduate; Harry Boghigian, president of Pharma Consultants, another Whittemore School alumnus; Pamela Diamantis, president of State Street Global Advisors of State Street Bank and Trust Co. of New Hampshire; Andrew Lietz, managing director, Rye Capital Management, LLC, and a USNH trustee and member of the Whittemore School Advisory Board; UNH alumnus Joe Reilly, president and CEO, Centrix Bank & Trust, Bedford; and Craig Welch, advisor at Grubb & Ellis of Coldstream Real Estate Advisors, Inc.

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