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Media Relations

November 17, 2015

N.H. Social Venture Innovation Challenge Finalists Compete for \$25,000 Nov. 20

DURHAM, N.H. – The [16 finalists](#) – eight each in student and community tracks -- in the 2015 New Hampshire Social Venture Innovation Challenge were selected by a panel of 55 judges and will compete in the final round Friday, Nov. 20, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the University of New Hampshire's Holloway Commons. A keynote address by Stonyfield Farm Co-founder and Chairman Gary Hirshberg, one of the country's most recognized social entrepreneurs, will begin at 11 a.m. followed by the conclusion of the challenge. More than \$25,000 in cash prizes, plus valuable in-kind prizes, will be handed out to winners.

All events on Nov. 20 are free and open to the public but space is limited and registration is required: https://www.events.unh.edu/RegistrationForm.pm?event_id=18441

The student finalist teams have undergraduate and masters students with a diverse set of majors including Business & Economics; Civil, Environmental and Mechanical Engineering; Computer Information Systems; Entrepreneurship; International Affairs; Justice Studies; Public Administration; Social Work; Sociology; and Spanish. The teams proposed ventures that span a diverse set of issues including food waste and food insecurity, sustainable agriculture, clean drinking water, community development, sexual violence, sustainable construction and recycling, and reduction of plastic use.

Finalist teams for the community track proposed ventures on sustainable fisheries and distribution, health access, renewable energy, broadband access, affordable insurance and savings. The community track this year includes a team of high school students from Phillips Exeter Academy.

Major supporters of the challenge include Timberland, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, PixelMEDIA and Alpha Loft. The final round will be judged by [12 leading social venture founders, leaders and investors](#), included notable New Hampshire leaders as well as judges from outside the state.

An annual signature program of UNH, the Social Venture Innovation Challenge (SVIC) engages aspiring and practicing student and community social entrepreneurs in designing novel, sustainable, business-orientated solutions to some of society's most pressing social and environmental challenges. The SVIC is an idea-stage competition with the goal of inspiring innovative, solution-orientated thinking and providing a forum to shine a light on these ideas.

The program is a collaborative, interdisciplinary event, organized at UNH by the Center for Social Innovation and Enterprise, and cohosted by the Carsey School of Public Policy, NH EPSCoR, the Peter

T. Paul College of Business & Economics, UNH Sustainability Institute, UNH Innovation, and Net Impact UNH.

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