



2011 Business Plan Contest Details Announced

Media Contact: James Otterstein
Phone: 608.757.5598

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(Rock County, WI) - Details regarding the 2011 *Accelerate* Your Business Plan Contest were released today. The Contest, which is designed to encourage the development of effective and strategic business plans, serves as a platform to match available financial and technical resources with local needs. This year's prize package is valued up to \$35,000. Support for the 2011 Contest will derive from Rock County 5.0, Murphy Desmond Lawyers S.C. and other contributors.

While last year's inaugural Contest was a success, various modifications have been implemented for the 2011 offering. First, the Contest has expanded its eligibility categories. Existing businesses with up to \$5MM in annual sales and up to 35 employees can enter the contest. Meanwhile, new or emerging start-ups with fewer than 5 employees and annual sales less than \$250,000 are encouraged to enter, as well.

Second, the Contest's workshops and mentor sessions have been retooled. For example, an extra mentor session has been added to ensure that contestants receive more personalized attention. Third, various online enhancements will increase administrative efficiencies for contestants, mentors and judging panel members alike. Lastly, the upgraded prize package affords the judging panel with the discretion to possibly consider multiple awards.

The *Accelerate* Your Business Plan Contest kicks-off on May 1st, with a solicitation encouraging contestants to submit their business ideas online. These ideas or summaries are due June 1st, along with the Contest Registration Forms. Then these contestants will be required to participate in a series of structured workshops and one-on-one mentoring sessions. The Contest concludes with the culmination of the contestants' final business plans, finalist selections and then an awards presentation later this fall.

Individuals or businesses interested in lending their talent, expertise or in-kind business services are encouraged to apply online. For additional Contest information, visit the "Business Resources" section online at www.rockcountyalliance.com.

Rock County 5.0 is a five-year public / private economic development initiative designed to reposition and revitalize Rock County's economy. The initiative's efforts are focused on the following five economic development strategies: Business Retention & Expansion, Business & Investment Attraction, Small Business & Entrepreneurship, Real Estate Positioning and Workforce Profiling.

For additional Rock County 5.0 information, visit www.rockcounty5.com.

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