

Business Plan Challenge names semifinalists

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The 13th Annual Miami Herald Business Plan Challenge is shaping up to be another exciting opportunity to showcase South Florida's vibrant entrepreneurial spirit.

We received 222 entries, including food products, fashion accessories, pet ideas, plenty of eco-friendly products and services and lots and lots of apps.

Our judges had their work cut out for them.

Many of the entries were product pitches rather than business plans — they lacked financials, a marketing strategy, even the basics on the business model. No matter how interesting the business idea is, if the entry only included a pitch about the product, it could not win.

Today, we announce the semifinalists in all three tracks. On May 2, find out who the finalists and People's Pick contenders will be. Winners will be unveiled May 16.

In alphabetical order, here are the finalists:

Community Track

- BloqUV, submitted by Corina Biton, provides a sportswear line combining style, functionality and sun protection. The soft, chemical free fabrics block 98 percent of UV radiation.
- Call Loop, submitted by Chris Brisson, offers a Web-based self-serving mobile platform that makes it easy for businesses and organizations to send targeted voice and text message campaigns to customers who opt in.
- ConservPro, submitted by Ray Payano, helps local utilities, municipalities and organizations create and implement effective energy conservation programs.
- DonorCommunity, submitted by David Blyer, is a for-profit cloud computing software company that helps public charities expand their base of donors, increase their fundraising efficiency, generate awareness and reduce costs.
- Gym in a Shoe, submitted by Paulette Bethel, provides patented resistance bands that easily clip on and off the eyelet in any athletic shoe so that walkers can strengthen their upper bodies, too.
- Law Software Pro, submitted by John Alicea and Robert Vasquez, aims to provide the legal industry with a "green," comprehensive and affordable solution to running day-to-day operations via smartphones and computers.
- My Biotiful Bag, submitted by Ragnhild Greve-Isdahl, offers a collection of modern eco-friendly

bags, made of certified organic cotton and AZO-free dyes, in Miami and Paris.

- My Forever Print, submitted by artist Jackie Kaufman, specializes in professional jewelry casting that incorporates people's unique fingerprints, including babies' hand and footprints, offering one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces.
- MyPet2Go, submitted by Angelina Cortez and Blair Blacker, provides pet owners with products they need to care for and shelter their pets when traveling.
- PopsyCakes, submitted by Craig Edelman and Jessica Cervantes, is a gourmet cupcake on a pretzel stick that comes in several flavors. Created by Cervantes, who won a national business plan competition in high school, the product was developed and launched nationally in 2009.
- Stemlogix, submitted by Kristin Comella, Jason Griffeth and Dr. Sharon McQuillan, is a regenerative medicine company committed to providing veterinarians with the ability to produce safe and effective stem cell therapies in their own clinics.
- Words to Live By, submitted by Alex Suarez-Mondshein, offers custom made books filled with words of wisdom from the recipient's friends and family for special occasions.

FIU Track

- Baby Head Up, submitted by Rosemarie Mortazavi and Hamid Mortazavi, is a patented comfort-only baby head support system that holds the baby's head up comfortably when the baby is sleeping in a car seat.
- Energy Sheriffs, submitted by Salvatore Cavalieri, is a service providing affordable and guaranteed express electric savings, within three months of service, or your money back, by providing inspections and installing energy-saving systems.
- Miami Bebe, submitted by Sofia Inguanzo-Perez, offers Latin-inspired organic baby food, inspired by fruit and vegetable purees and potages that many parents grew up with, that would be delivered to customers, along with other baby essentials.
- MP Investments, submitted by Diego Castaneda, Jonathan Wolf, Arturo Ruiz, Nelson Aracha and Alfredo Lomando, is a turnaround fund dedicated to the acquisition, development and sale of distressed enterprises.
- Neomotiv, submitted by Carlos J. Arguello. This company's flagship product is uberBAR, a nutrient-rich ice cream-like product, providing the body with 25 essential vitamins and minerals as well as satisfying an ice cream craving.
- PassTheNotes.com, submitted by Frankie Coletto, helps institutions harness the power of education by leveraging technology and providing a platform to connect students with educational content for learning.
- Raw Apps, submitted by Francisco Otalvaro, provides market intelligence, conducts surveys, offers location-based ads and generates opt-in opportunities to channel partners based on a double opt-in mobile subscriber base of 5 million to 7 million.
- Urban Forager, submitted by Daniel Lessem, aims to be a regional "micro-distributor" of locally produced food. It seeks to be a consolidated source for restaurants to get products from nonconventional micro-growers across Florida.

High School Track

- Bump, Set, Spike Boutique, submitted by Symone Young of South Dade Senior High, provides volleyball athletes with a place to buy inexpensive, stylish uniforms.
- Cheap Eats Mobile, submitted by Anthony Cave of Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High, is a smartphone app that allows consumers to find restaurants and reviews and access their top three dishes and price ranges via GPS.
- GioPlantsPoetrees, submitted by Giovanni Garced of North Miami Beach Senior High, is a service that prepares a custom 20- to 40-page book of a poet's work along with a five-page website, helping the poet gain notoriety for his or her creations.
- Kit Korp, submitted by Michelle Black, Julia Geiger and James Sawyer of Ransom Everglades, will sell kits to families for many kinds of needs and situations. The team is entering the market with a Hurricane Preparedness Kit.
- MyGreenLime, submitted by Marcus Calpakis of the School for Advanced Studies, Nathalie Figueroa of Coral Reef Senior High and Henry Rivera of American Senior High, is an online resource site geared particularly to college-age people interested in starting businesses or investing.
- Project Life, submitted by Nerida Godinez and Evanson Telisme of Miami Edison Senior High, will design and sell coffee mugs with encouraging messages on them, in an effort to reduce youth violence and suicide.
- Sunny Breakfasts, submitted by Ryan Breslow and triplets Jacobo Lacs, Jonathan Lacs and Leon Lacs of Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High, aims to create a delivery service that provides healthy breakfasts for busy professionals, first in the downtown Miami area and then expanding outward.
- Sweet Dream Flashy Cakes, submitted by Jarron-Charles P. McKinney of Miami Central Senior High, has remodeled and restyled the common cupcake with added twists, such as using tropical fruits and ice cream.
- Text Weston, submitted by David Pinsky of Cypress Bay Senior High, provides free coupons for restaurants, stores and services in the Weston area for subscribers who opt in by texting "Weston."
- Turtle Boards, submitted by Jeffrey Bailey of South Dade Senior High, will provide custom handmade skateboards for its target market of students from 12 to 18 years old.