First annual (E)-business plan competition planned for S. Florida

The College of Business Administration (CBA) at FIU offers South Florida graduate students cash prizes for their unique (E)-business plans. A new iteration of its long standing business plan competition, the CBA Net-Biz Challenge 2001 will bring together students, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and other South Florida business leaders for a taste of hands-on (E)-business development.

Through teamwork and valuable counseling from experienced entrepreneurs and (E)-business visionaries, participating students will be challenged to transform their business plans into viable ventures.

The CBA Net-Biz Challenge 2001, which will kick-off on October 16, can have up to five team members. At least two of the members must be full-time or part-time graduate students currently enrolled (2000-2001 academic year) in an accredited college or university in the four county South Florida region—Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach. Each team must have a faculty advisor and also elect to enlist the help of a coach from the business community. The business plan must be for an original seed, start-up, or early-stage venture in the information technology, telecommunications, or Internet-based (B to B, B to C) business arenas.

The plan must address the complete business concept, including implementation.

Grand prize winner and runner-up teams will be announced in early March at the CBA Net-Biz Challenge Awards Ceremony, to be held in conjunction with the CBA's Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame, sponsored by SunTrust Miami, N.A., and with the "Up and Comers Awards," co-sponsored by The Business Journal. The Grand Prize team will take home $15,000, the first and second runner-up teams—$5,000 each—and the fourth and fifth runner-up teams—$2,500 each.

The CBA is looking for members of the South Florida business community to serve as coaches for Net-Biz Challenge teams. Volunteer coaches are asked to consult with team members for a minimum of two hours. Additional sponsors for cash and other prizes are also welcomed.

For more information, to sign up as a sponsor or coach, or to request a Challenge Information and Application Kit, visit our web site at www.fiu.edu/netbiz.

You may also call or e-mail Monique Catoggio at (305) 348-4227, catoggio@fiu.edu.