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‘Wisconsin YES!’ student business plan contest open for middle, high school entries through Dec. 5

MADISON – Wisconsin Youth Entrepreneurs in Science, a statewide youth business plan contest modeled after the successful Governor’s Business Plan Contest, is open for online entries from Wisconsin middle- and high-school students through Dec. 5, 2011.

Public, private and home-schooled students across Wisconsin are eligible to turn their science- and tech-related ideas into business plans and compete for cash and prizes for themselves and their schools. The contest begins with a 250-word summary and culminates in June with awards at the Wisconsin Entrepreneurs’ Conference.

The contest is an opportunity for students to get hands-on experience in developing ideas into business plans. Throughout the process, students get feedback from professionals throughout Wisconsin who will serve as judges.

As a tool for educators, Wisconsin YES! helps foster interest in science and tech education and encourages students to be independent, creative thinkers capable of problem solving.

“Leveraging technology, thinking creatively and working as a team are all important characteristics for today’s entrepreneurs,” said Tom Still, president of the Wisconsin Technology Council. “Entrepreneurial skills are vital to the long-term success of Wisconsin’s youth as well as the state’s innovation economy.”

The Tech Council produces the contest, with major sponsorship from WEA Trust. The Milwaukee School of Engineering and the Wisconsin Health and Educational Facilities Authority are also sponsors.

Contestants begin by submitting a 250-word idea abstract after registering through www.wisconsinyes.com, the Wisconsin YES! website. Plans selected by contest judges will move to Phase 2, during which contestants will write a more in-depth business plan. Templates for both phases are available online, along with other materials.

Students are able to work in teams or as individuals and will be judged based upon their grade level, with the oldest team member determining the team category. Students or teams may enter multiple ideas.

The Wisconsin Technology Council is the independent, non-profit and non-partisan science and technology adviser to the Governor and the Legislature. It serves as a catalyst for tech-based economic development in Wisconsin through programs such as the Wisconsin Angel Network, the Governor’s Business Plan Contest and the Wisconsin Innovation Network.

If you would like further information about the contest, print materials for your school or have questions, please visit www.wisconsinyes.com or contact Kari Fischer at the Wisconsin Technology Council, kfischer@wisconsintechcouncil.com or 608-442-7557 ext. 27.

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