

[close window](#)

\$30,000 contest prize keeps entrepreneurs on path to '09

By [Max Showalter](#)
mshowalter@journalandcourier.com

February 17, 2006

Entrepreneurial firms that want to create software for children with learning challenges, provide solutions to energy problems and offer online access for companies to advertise in college publications presented their business plans Thursday at Purdue University.

But companies poised to do a better job of detecting cancer cells and develop soy-based beauty products for women took the top prizes in the 19th annual Burton D. Morgan Entrepreneurial Competition.

This year's contest had two categories: Five teams that included graduate students and five teams that included undergraduates. Presentations were made to a panel of 10 judges, which included venture capitalists and professors.

"This competition is really, really outstanding," said Jerry Woodall, director of the Burton D. Morgan Center for Entrepreneurship. "I've seen a lot of these ... and this is top competition."

In the category for entries involving graduate students, the \$30,000 first prize was won by IVFlow LLC, a firm working on technology that can more precisely detect cancer cells and manage them better.

"This is a very wonderful technology that can save people's lives," said Wei He, a company representative.

Presenter Mike Golebiowski said the next step for the fledgling company is to parlay Thursday's win into additional funding that could lead to the technology being ready for the market in early 2009.

"We're on the right path. It's not full funding, but we're on the right path," he said. "We're looking for funding to get to the second stage (of research) and see what results we get."

Other results in the graduate students' division:

- Second place, \$15,000 -- Science of Sounds Technology, which wants to develop a computerized baby sleep monitor that transmits signals to a wristwatch-type device.
- Third place, \$10,000 -- XFederate Technologies, which proposes to create identity and access management technology for electronic devices.
- Fourth place, \$5,000 -- CAMPUSGIANT.COM, a firm that is developing an Internet program to buy, manage and sell collegiate-based advertising.

- Fifth place, \$2,000 -- Cerelia Energy, a firm that wants to use fuel cell technology to help companies manage their energy needs and problems.

Beauty through soybeans

In the competition involving undergraduate students, the \$15,000 first prize was won by Manipure Cosmetics, a company that may have a product ready for the marketplace by the end of this year, initially selling soy-based nail polish remover.

Using a company motto of "Helping every woman discover her natural beauty," undergraduates Courtney Howard and Ruth Pinto envision eventually expanding their all-natural product line to include hand cream, body wash, shampoo and conditioner, lip balm, bubble bath, bar soap and nail polish.

"It's soy-based, all-natural and nontoxic," Howard told the judges. "Our goal is to become an internationally known brand."

Other results in the undergraduate students' division:

- Second place, \$10,000 -- Artistorm, a business that allows independent artists to sell their work on an interactive online gallery.
- Third place, \$8,000 -- Merlin's Magic Castle, a concept stage company that has worked with the Lafayette Adult Resource Academy to create interactive products that help children learn English or foreign languages.
- Fourth place, \$3,000 -- Roberts-Jonker Health Solutions Technology, which wants to design software that would allow medical personnel to use a pocket personal computer to record their patient evaluations.
- Fifth place, \$2,000 -- Edubility Software Inc., which is working on the creation of software that could help children overcome learning challenges.

Don Blewett, associate director of the entrepreneurship center, located at Purdue's Discovery Park, said entrepreneurship is not mysterious, unique or brand-new.

"You can get most ideas to fly. It's just a question of how high," he said. "It's lemonade stands and the thought processes you go through in a startup.

"Having won real dollars in a business plan competition is a résumé item that will separate you from other graduating job seekers because established companies seek entrepreneurial employees. Longer term, the competition will prepare its entrants to enter the entrepreneurial arena at any point in their future careers."