

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

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For Immediate Release

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Tulare County Office of Education Announces:

Results From Third Annual Gas Company Student Entrepreneur Challenge

Held Thursday, February 26, 2009 • El Diamante High School, Visalia

On Thursday, February 26, 15 teams of young entrepreneurs from Fresno, Tulare and Kings County high schools presented projects developed in response to The Gas Company Student Entrepreneur Challenge. The Challenge, an event sponsored by The Gas Company, is designed to encourage students to develop products, services or other economic growth ideas that can be applied in the San Joaquin Valley.

Teams participating in the event submitted a written business plan and made a live presentation before a panel of business leaders, who served as judges. The teams included: Porterville's Monache High School and Citrus High School, Visalia's Golden West High School and El Diamante High School, Sanger High School, Kingsburg High School, Fresno County's Washington Union High School and Lemoore High School. Projects ranged from alternative energy sources to innovative service ventures.

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Winners

- 1st Washington Union High School (Fresno County), “La Bella Vie Verte” (\$1,500 prize).
- 2nd Monache High School (Tulare County), “Bread Basket” (\$750 prize)
- 3rd Golden West High School (Tulare County), “Central Valley Biodiesel” (\$500 prize)
- 4th Washington Union High School (Fresno County), Harnessing the Sun” (\$250 prize)

Washington Union’s La Bella Vie Verte Bed and Breakfast is an environmentally-friendly resort that proposes to accommodate customers who are concerned about preserving the earth. Located in Oakhurst, California, the resort is committed to serving only organic foods, utilizing furniture made from recycled materials, composting, and incorporating solar power and the most energy efficient appliances. The resort plans to capitalize on the 3.5 million annual visitors to Yosemite National Park.

The Student Entrepreneur Challenge was created from the vision and support of The Gas Company with coordination by the Tulare County Office of Education and local business partners. Other supporters include the City of Porterville, College of the Sequoias, Visalia Economic Development Corporation and the Visalia Unified School District. The Challenge's partnership between business and education, working together to promote entrepreneurialism, also supports Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposal for the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley.

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“We are delighted to see the growing interest in this student entrepreneurialism,” says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. “And we appreciate that The Gas Company continues to be such an active partner.”

For more information, please contact Robert Herman at (559) 733-6606.

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