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2-8-2017

BestBook wins 2017 Ouachita Business Plan Competition

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Recommended Citation

Hines, Hannah and Ouachita News Bureau, "BestBook wins 2017 Ouachita Business Plan Competition" (2017). *Press Releases*. 333.

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OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

For immediate release

BestBook wins 2017 Ouachita Business Plan Competition

By Hannah Hines

February 8, 2017

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – The team of Jake Edmondson, Cole Jester and Evan McKinnon won the 8th annual Ouachita Baptist University Business Plan Competition on Feb. 1 with BestBook, an intra-campus book trading system.

“We connect people on campuses trying to sell books with students on campus trying to buy those same books,” explained Jester, a senior Christian studies/Biblical studies and political science double major from Benton, Ark. “Coming in first was extremely significant to us as it validated a business idea we had worked on for months.”

Edmondson is a junior biomedical studies major from Benton, Ark., and McKinnon is a senior accounting major from El Dorado, Ark. The team was advised by Justin Keeler, OBU instructor of business administration.

Addressing the teams after the winners were announced, Bryan McKinney, dean of the Hickingbotham School of Business, said, “Every year I am impressed with the students, and I just love the engagement with the judges and the questions you ask and the insights you bring, and, as a professor, I learn every bit as much as the students do.”

In second place was University E-Bikes (UEB), created by the team of Chandler Blake, Chris Clark and John Franklin Matros. According to Clark, UEB seeks to “reduce the parking problem at large universities and decrease the campus’ ecological footprint” by creating community access to electronic bikes at student hot spots across campus. Students can rent bikes using the UEB mobile app and are charged based on the length of the ride.

Blake is a senior business administration major from Frisco, Texas; Clark is a senior accounting and business administration major from Arkadelphia, Ark.; and Matros is a senior accounting major from Arkadelphia, Ark. The team was advised by Dr. Jim Files, OBU associate professor of accounting.

Coming in third in the competition was Sergio’s Pizza, created by Brian Krikorian, a senior business administration major from Benton, Ark. Krikorian’s faculty advisor was Justin Keeler. Inspired by Krikorian’s father, Serge, Sergio’s Pizza is “dine-in, restaurant quality pizza that can be delivered straight to your doorstep,” Krikorian said. “It is a pizza that uses fresh, high-quality, local ingredients to make each item on the Sergio’s menu.”

The first place team in the OBU Business Plan Competition was awarded a prize of \$4,000, second place won \$3,000 and third place won \$2,000.

BestBook, UEB and Sergio’s Pizza will go on to compete against the top three teams from the Henderson State University Business Plan Competition on Friday, Feb. 10. In phase three, teams will compete in the statewide Donald W. Reynolds Governor’s Cup for prizes of up to \$25,000. All entrants, regardless of

placement in the initial competition, may compete in the Governor's Cup. For more information about the competition, contact Bryan McKinney, dean of the Hickingbotham School of Business, at mckinneyb@obu.edu or (870) 245-5513.