

WALLACE MCCAIN INSTITUTE ENGAGES YOUTH AT THE EXTREME ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE

SAINT JOHN, February 14th, 2008

The G. Wallace F. McCain Institute (WMI) for Business Leadership at the University of New Brunswick is engaging emerging youth entrepreneurs at the upcoming Extreme Entrepreneurship conference in Moncton on February 18th. The 250 expected conference attendees will have three ways to interact with the Institute: a pitch completion, a focus group and panel participation.

"The most exciting thing we are doing for the attendees is the pitch completion", says Dr. Nancy Mathis, the Executive Director of the WMI. "We will have a video camera set up at the booth of the New Brunswick Securities Commission. Any attendee can do an impromptu "walk-up" 30 second pitch on their business opportunity." The videos will be reviewed by a panel of judges and the winner will be announced the following day during the closing lunch. "This will be great experience in generating an elevator pitch and the \$500 prize is a nice perk too", says Mathieu Bourgeois, one of the registered conference attendees.

The second unique activity allows these emerging entrepreneurs to voice their opinions on a new web portal that is under development. This will occur during a focus group on Monday evening where feedback will be gathered on the current design scheduled to launch in April. The portal is a result of collaboration between the WMI and several other organizations that service entrepreneurs in New Brunswick. "The portal is really a combination of LinkedIn, Facebook, eBay and YouTube focused on New Brunswick entrepreneurs", commented Kelly O'Brien of Enterprise Fredericton, the champion of the concept.

The goal of the portal is to consolidate the huge amount of information that overloads an entrepreneur, especially those starting out. The result will be 'one door' access to a broad range of local services such as prototyping, market surveyors, web designers, IP lawyers, mentors and angels. Entrepreneurial self-populated 'needs profiles' will be matched with available service so that the desired information will be delivered to their desktop when they need it. The portal will also provide a forum to entrepreneurs to provide feedback on service providers. This feedback portion of the portal will be based on an eBay or Expedia model. "This focus group will be an important gauge on the interest in this concept by the younger entrepreneurs" says Kathy Watt, President of LearnNB. "This group is often at a disadvantage because they do not have access to a broad network to ask for help".

The final WMI activity at the conference is the participation of Nancy Mathis, in a panel discussion on Financing. She will share her experiences as a CEO in accessing angel, bank, government and venture capital financing. She will also speak to new innovative ideas that are being discussed to supplement the existing financing options.

About the G. Wallace F. McCain Institute

The focus of the Wallace McCain Institute is to support the next generation of senior business leaders in the province to meet the complex challenges facing New Brunswick. The program will be a catalyst for shifting the business culture of the province and advancing the values of entrepreneurship and innovation. The development and deepening of relationships and networks is fundamental to how the Wallace McCain Institute will deliver on its mandate.

Programs will range in depth, from a very intensive cohort program where high potential leaders will interact in a series of experiences to one-off workshops and lectures on themes relevant to New Brunswick business issues. The program will use innovative pedagogy to convene people,