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CONTACT:

Lisa M. Wogan

Economic Alliance of Kankakee County

815.472.4159 (office)

815.355.4159 (mobile)

k3alliancepr@gmail.com

## EnterpriseU Finalists Announced

*Eight business plan competition contestants advance to June 21 finals.*

**KANKAKEE, IL – June 9, 2011** – Finalists for Kankakee County’s inaugural "EnterpriseU" Business Plan Competition were announced today at the monthly meeting of the Economic Alliance of Kankakee County. The eight finalists, selected from 18 contestants who completed and submitted business plans by the May 31 deadline, will advance to the oral presentation round of the competition on Tuesday, June 21.

EnterpriseU 2011 finalists are: Brian Scheppler, Bourbonnais – “BC Systems,” commercial and industrial instrumentation and calibration services; Sudipta Roy, Bourbonnais – “Currey Garden,” an Indian restaurant with a sustainable twist; Kevin and Deborah Pippin, Momence – “DeKe’s Inc.,” an indoor shooting range and club with safety training and educational classes; Jeffrey Rice, Aaron Rice and Richard Tran, Bradley – “GeekSpeak Inc.,” a computer boutique specializing in repair, education and sales; Robert and Vertricia Robinson, St. Anne – “Growing Together,” a St. Anne agribusiness that grows and promotes natural products for local consumption; Keenan and Jayme Adams, Momence – “K&J Farms,” a Momence diversified, sustainable farm; David M. Ramirez, CCE, Bradley – “Kankakee Electronic Discovery, LLC,” digital forensics, incident response, data recovery and information assurance services; Sara Goodberlet and J. Kelley, Aroma Park – “The Parlor: Bean-Grape-Gather,” a cafe and entertainment venue.

Contestants were scored on a five-point scale in 13 primary areas of concentration to determine the competition finalists.

“Our semi-final review panel deliberated at length and in a systematic way to select the most thorough, well conceived and viable business plans,” noted Mike Van Mill, Economic Alliance of Kankakee County President and CEO. “All of our finalists have proven to be highly qualified prospective small business owners. Narrowing the field to three ultimate winners on June 21 certainly will be a challenge, but one that we are very enthusiastic about.”

The five-member EnterpriseU business plan semi-final review panel consisted of: John Gruhn, First National Bank of Grant Park; Brett Reum, Ryan Reum Insurance; Jessica Horn, Small Business Development Center of University of Illinois at Chicago; Andy Pristach, SCORE; and Glenn Nixon, Economic Alliance of Kankakee County board member.

Oral presentations by the eight finalists will be made on June 21 from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the 4th Floor Auditorium of the Kankakee Public Library, 201 E. Merchant St., Kankakee. The public is invited to attend this event. Subsequently, three winners will be named and awarded a generous prize package consisting of startup capital, six months free office space within Kankakee County, and numerous other professional goods and services provided by area businesses and organizations.

EnterpriseU is a Kankakee County economic gardening program consisting of free educational sessions, networking opportunities, special events, business plan mentoring and a business plan competition. The inaugural 2011 initiative, which attracted 44 initial registrants, is spearheaded by the Economic Alliance of Kankakee County, Kankakee Community College, Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley, the Daily Journal and LinkPoint Media in conjunction with many local business and agency partners. For further details, visit [www.enterprise-u.com](http://www.enterprise-u.com) or phone 815-935-1177.

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