

For Immediate Release

CBPP Announces 2020 Student Business Plan Competition Winners
Inspiring and Encouraging Entrepreneurship & Economic Development for UAA Students

Three teams of UAA College of Business and Public Policy (CBPP), student finalists presented investor pitches to a panel of judges and 43 community participants as they competed for cash prizes in a live Zoom event on Friday, March 27, 2020. The Business Plan Competition and Awards were established to inspire and encourage entrepreneurship and economic development in Alaska.

“Prior to COVID-19, the Business Plan Competition and Award Ceremonies were scheduled on the UAA campus in the Lucy Cuddy dining room. The student teams had worked hard to prepare their final business plans and hone their investor pitches for the culminating event,” said Dr. Helena Wisniewski, Organizer of the Business Plan Competition, and Professor of Entrepreneurship, and Department Chair in CBPP. “I did not want to disappoint the students. So to keep the momentum going I migrated the final competition to a live virtual event,” she said.

Ten CBPP students in three teams competed for prizes in four prize categories:

- Most Beneficial for Alaska - \$2,000; Winner: Alaska Electric Scooters
- Most Beneficial to UAA Student Life - \$2,000; Winner: Alaska Electric Scooter
- Most Likely to Succeed in Business - \$2,000; Winner: Bear’s Belly Barbeque
- The People’s Choice Award - \$1,000; Winner: The Other Guy’s Athletic Association

Alaska Electric Scooters won two of the four categories – Most Beneficial for Alaska, and Most Beneficial to UAA Student Life. Founding team: Manny Rodriguez, Matthew Vincent, and Vanessa Stadler. This company will bring the first, organized fleet of dock-less, electric scooters to UAA and downtown Anchorage communities. It will provide students, local residents, and tourists quicker, cleaner, easy to access, affordable transportation with a zero emission for eco-friendly transportation in areas too large to walk and too small to drive. “We are honored to win multiple awards and to compete against hard working students and fellow entrepreneurs. Winning multiple awards and receiving positive feedback from reputable individuals in our communities gives students such as ourselves the vote of confidence we need as we proceed to take the road less traveled. The business plan competition was a learning experience that my team and I will remember for years to come,” said the team.

Bear’s Belly Barbeque won Most Likely to Succeed in Business. Founding team: Owner and chief chef Chad Richey and owner Jamie Richey. This team plans to expand their award-winning premier southern-style barbeque restaurant in South Central Alaska to the local and state-wide food service market through brick and mortar and “food truck” facilities. “As an entrepreneur, the College of Business and Public Policy’s business plan competition has provided an invaluable opportunity to hone the plan for my business’s future. The feedback offered by real world investors and business professionals has given new insights into what is required to navigate the business cycle from startup to growth,” said Chad Richey.

While judges deliberated during the event intermission, participants had the opportunity to vote for their favorite. **The Other Guys Athletic Association (TOGA) won The People’s Choice Award.** Founding creators: Matt Muffoletto, Morgan Hartley, Maksim Mayer, Micah Barber, and Community/alumni Sam Erickson. Their venture provides a friendly, supportive home for cross country skiers of all ability levels—from those looking to stay fit and have fun to those who desire serious training and race support. The team expressed: “TOGAA is incredibly grateful to the organizer of this competition Dr. Wisniewski for all the effort and time she dedicated to this competition, the judges who gave us excellent advice, and to the audience members who expressed their support for our mission. We look forward to using this prize to strengthen our

organization and keep more young athletes in cross country skiing. Lastly, we would like to congratulate the other participants AK Electric Scooters and Bear's Belly BBQ on their awards.

UAA leadership, faculty, judges, and the student entrepreneurs responded flexibly to support the event. Chancellor Cathy Sandeen provided opening remarks, Interim Provost John Stalvey announced the winners, and CBPP Interim Dean John Nofsinger gave the closing remarks. **The panel of judges** at the event included the following community leaders, VCs, and UAA members. James Kostka, COO and owner of Alaskan Data Solutions; Greg Wolf, Executive Director World Trade Center Alaska and Vice Chair Advisory Board CBPP; Joe Zimmermann, Owner and Director of Cook Inlet Marketing Group, Inc., Chair, Advisory Board, CBPP; Steve Socolof, Managing Partner, Tech Council Ventures participated from NJ; Dr. Helena Wisniewski, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Chair of the Management & Marketing Department, CBPP, and Competition Organizer; Dr. Sumeet Jhamb, Assistant Professor of Business Administration, CBPP.

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