

News Release

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www.solanosbdc.org

Young Entrepreneur Program Launching in Solano County

Fairfield California—Solano County youth experience firsthand critical skills for starting a business through a special **Young Entrepreneur Program**. YEP is funded by a \$35,000 Entrepreneurship Career Pathways Grant received by the Solano College Small Business Development Center (SBDC) from a California Community College Economic and Workforce Development Program. YEP inspires students to achieve personal, academic and business success. Solano youth ages 14-27 are eligible to participate.

A **Business Plan Showcase and Competition** is scheduled on **May 15**, Solano College Main Campus, Bldg. 1400, YEP participants compete for the best Business Plan. Winners receive cash and other prizes for first, second and third place. The BPS and Competition is modeled after the hit TV show “Shark Tank” where a panel of potential investors critique business presentations by aspiring entrepreneurs. To help youth develop their business plans, a series of business clinics will be held on the following days:

Saturday, March 20th 10 am – 3 pm at the Solano College Vallejo Center

Saturday, April 17th 10 am – 3 pm at the Small Business Development Center in Fairfield

Charles Eason, Director of the SBDC said, *“This project will expose youth to entrepreneurship as a career option. YEP teaches young entrepreneurs how to turn their ideas into a business.”* Wil Cason, YEP Program Coordinator, said, *“We are committed to providing students with a global view on entrepreneurship and how they can develop the necessary skills of becoming world leaders. Many students have a desire to achieve their dreams and goals of developing a business. However they need guidance, a clear plan and encouragement.”*

The program focuses on practical interpersonal and technical skills needed to own and operate a business. The goal of YEP is to provide information, knowledge and “real world” experience to help students master business-related skills. “We are teaching students how to develop their passion and talents into a business,” Cason said. Some students who participated in the program last year expressed ideas of starting a tee-shirt business, customized shoe company and international fashion design company.”

Sponsors for the Young Entrepreneurs Program include Travis Credit Union and the California Community College California Economic and Workforce Development Program. There is no cost for youth to participate. For more information regarding YEP, call the SBDC at 864-3382 or visit www.solanosbdc.org.

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