

Local Student Entrepreneurs Place First in State Competition

Wednesday, June 18, 2014



Wallenpaupack High School students Bradley Shepps, Kayla Askey, and Devin Distilli, were recently awarded first place in the State Entrepreneurship Challenge presented through EconomicsPennsylvania and sponsored by The Dime Bank for their business plan, *Paupack Waves*.

The team had attended a regional Entrepreneurship Challenge in January where they and students from several local schools learned how to take an idea and develop it into a viable business plan, with marketing, financing, and product development. They presented their completed plans to a panel of 'investors' made up of local businesspeople, bankers, and entrepreneurs. After placing 1st in the regional challenge, their plan was submitted to be judged state wide with other regional finalists, and placed 1st in the state.

While this team of 3 students presented the business plan, the idea and product behind it was a collaborative effort. The Wallenpaupack Invent Team, made up of 14 Wallenpaupack high school students, came up with the idea, and built the prototype, for a dock light which is powered by wave action, hence, *Paupack Waves*. Lemelson MIT (Massachusetts Institute for Technology) awarded them a grant of \$9600, and PPL gave them \$2000 to continue developing the light, and taking it to the next level of production. The students will present their invention at EurekaFest, MIT Celebration of Invention, in June. Only 15 high schools are invited to attend, with this team from Wallenpaupack being the 1st ever in Pennsylvania to receive that honor.

The Entrepreneurship Challenge is presented by EconomicsPennsylvania, and sponsored locally by The Dime Bank. EconomicsPennsylvania is a nonprofit organization committed to bringing financial literacy programs into schools K-12. Please contact Bonnie Blair, Assistant Vice President, bblair@economicspa.org, or visit their website, www.economicspa.org, for educational and/or sponsorship opportunities.

Photo: L to r – Gene Shultz, teacher; Bonnie Blair, EconomicsPennsylvania; Bradley Shepps (junior); Kayla Askey (senior); Devin Distilli (junior); Arlyce Degnan and Jill George, The Dime Bank.