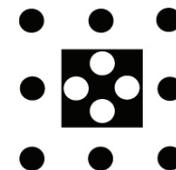


The New Enterprise Forum

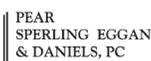
The Entrepreneur's Link to Resources



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www.newenterpriseforum.org

NEF Stakeholder Members



In the News... Presenter Updates

RealKidz, Inc. Merrill L. Guerra, CEO & Founder



Merrill Guerra

Since RealKidz presented at NEF a year ago, the Company has brought two more collections to market and is working on a third for Fall 2010. On the operations side, they have signed 12 consultants and are implementing a revised recruiting strategy to significantly boost the number of active consultants necessary for current growth. RealKidz successfully closed its first round of angel funding for \$142K, with a match to that round from Ann Arbor SPARK's Michigan Pre-Seed Capitalization Fund.

On the marketing and publicity side, RealKidz continues to experience great press, with a year-long series in 2008 of 10 articles in the *Detroit Free Press*, a *Business Week* article in June of last year, two spots on Channels 2 and 7, and an upcoming article

See Updates, Page 2

GLEQ News

GLEQ is continuing to host Community Conversations on entrepreneurship as part of the Michigan's Defining Moment Public Engagement Campaign, the goal of which is to build a pragmatic, solutions-oriented agenda for the state's future. Three events, in Troy (6/30), Kalamazoo (7/1), and Ann Arbor (7/2) have begun the dialogue to find

See GLEQ, Page 2

Sixth Annual Unusual Entrepreneurs Share Their Stories

In July, NEF celebrates business ideas, models, methods, or products that definitely aren't "mainstream," but reflect the imaginative, willing-to-take-a-risk energy that epitomizes entrepreneurship. This year, we've found another group that fits that description wonderfully!

Entrepreneur Panel

Curt Fournier, founder of Linden, MI-based **GreenDog LLC**, has developed the "PowerLoo," an outdoor, hands-free, flushable toilet for dog waste that solves environmental and health problems, as well as the "yuck" factor of poop-and-scoop disposal. The system is tied-in to residential water and sewer lines and works just like an indoor toilet. There is even an optional heating unit to prevent freezing in colder climates. Targeted markets beyond homeowners include breeders, doggy day-care centers, and pet-friendly apartment communities.

Axis Music Academy of Canton, MI is taking the concept of private music lessons to a whole new level. Launched in 1986 as Axis Music, the firm was initially a four-studio guitar lessons center. John Antone, the Founder, has grown the business, now called Axis Music Academy, to 12 studios plus office space. They offer lessons in 10 additional instruments, including voice, and presently provide more than 1,000 lessons per week using "proprietary" teaching methods customized to the goals of each student.

Showcase Presenters

Also on the program are 10-minute presentations from two young companies that also fit the "unusual" theme well. **Bandals International** (Tom Sesti, Presenter) designs and sells fashion sandals and flip flops that have adjustable, interchangeable uppers.

See July Program, Page 2



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Ray Waters, Detroit Community Loan Fund

313/886-2163, ray_waters@sbk.com

July Program, Cont. from Page 1

The Commerce Township-based company recently landed \$250,000 from Hennessey Capital and plans to use the money for new product development, marketing, and increased manufacturing of its signature product.

The second company is **GradeCheck.net** (Sheila McBride, Presenter) which is commercializing a subscription-based webtool that helps (mostly) high school student athletes keep up their grades, compiles and maintains an on-going eligibility analysis, and prepares a formal report including test scores, grades, etc. that can be sent to college coaches around the US to land NCAA scholarships. Located and expanding in TechTown at WSU, the Company is hoping to double last year's customer base of 4,000, clients who garnered more than \$2M in college scholarships.

As always at our monthly meetings, we will have great networking, hors d'oeuvres, and the Open Forum, during which we pass the mic for audience introductions. Please plan to join us for this always-fun program on **Thursday, July 23. Please note the "unusual" date -- a week late due to the Ann Arbor Art Fairs.** Hope to see you then!

Updates, Cont. from Page 1

in *Crain's Detroit Business*. Guerra also has been awarded the 2009 Pioneering Spirit Award by the Detroit Chapter of the National Association of Business Owners and a spot in StartUpNation's "Top 200 Leading Moms in Business" for 2009. RealKidz has also been named as a finalist for the Michigan Business Review's Innovation Michigan Awards. Contact Guerra at 734/483-5333 or merrill@realkidzinc.com. For more company info, visit www.realkidzclothing.com

GLEQ Business Plan Competition Winner

Lambert Technologies, of Canton, Michigan (Showcase Presenter April 2008, CEO Todd Gross) received the Runner Up award of \$5,000 in the Emerging Company category. Lambert Technologies has developed and is bringing to market a patented stress-testing tool by which engineers may verify and validate engineering designs of structural components. The technology involves a proprietary paint, illumination with a particular colored light, and imaging of a surface while subjecting it to a load, thus revealing surface stresses in objects. This technology will see widespread application in a variety of manufacturing facilities. For more information, visit www.lambertech.com.



Become a Member

- Stakeholder \$500
- Corporate \$275
- Individual \$100
- Student \$25

For details of category benefits and payment of membership fees, visit www.newenterpriseforum.org

Join Our Program Committee

All are welcome!

8 a.m., Ann Arbor Area Chamber of Commerce, 115 W. Huron at Main, 3rd Floor, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734/665-4433 • FAX: 734/665-4191

Address questions about Program Committee or becoming a Showcase Presenter to Committee Chair, Diane Durance, at diane@gleq.org.

*Our next Program Committee meeting is Thursday, July 30.

GLEQ, Cont. from Page 1

common ground agenda to guide state and local leaders. Mark your calendars and join the next events to have your voice heard!

**Community Conversations:
Entrepreneurship
Wednesday, July 22, 5-7 p.m.,
GVSU, Grand Rapids, MI**

GLEQ is also adding one in Midland.
Get details and register at
<http://www.gleq.org/>

**FastTrac to the Future
Wayne State University
Community Arts Auditorium
Saturday, July 25; 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.**
FastTrac to the Future is a program created by the New Economy Initiative and the Kauffman Foundation to "provide a jump-start down the road to entrepreneurship through mentoring, training and resources."

For two-step registration, visit <http://events.wayne.edu/techtown/view/17116/date/72758/?y=2009&m=7&d=25&onda=y=2009-07-25>

Mark Your Calendars!!!
**GLEQ's Business Plan Competition
Registration begins August 24.**
See www.gleq.org for details.

Last Month Meeting Highlights

Showcase Presentation

Blaze Medical Devices Michael Tarasev

The Company is designing equipment and consumables to measure degradation in the quality of blood being stored for transfusions. The products will improve blood supply and patient care, while reducing medical costs. The prototype is ready. Initial test sites (500-bed size) include U-M and Henry Ford Hospitals. The company is seeking its initial round of funding (\$200K) for beta testing. Exit by large-company acquisition is seen for 2012/13. For more information, contact Tarasev at 734/761-8426.

Open Forum

Entrepreneurs

Worknet Systems; Dean Jeffery (734/622-8484)

The Company acts as a part-time IT department, providing “a predictable result for a predictable fee,” for companies with 20-100 employees. Visit www.worknetsystems.com.

Bee Box Technologies, LLC; Stephen Swanson (734/972-3983)

Company is developing remote monitoring in low or no infrastructure environments. Seeking advice, assistance with IP filing.

Esclapeus Biopharmaceuticals; Khew-voon Chin (419/383-3502)

Company is developing a first-in-class anti-obesity drug. Seeking capital, advice, management team.

Wiljanen Systems; Keith Wiljanen (734/476-6975)

Company offers custom software development, web design, graphic territory mapping.

Talent Available

Tejinder Singh Deo (586/943-9175); email tsdeo@umich.edu

Student at Ross Business School (MBA) seeks opportunity with start-up firm (finance/strategy).

THANK YOU!

To NEF stakeholder member
Pear Sperling Eggan & Daniels, P.C.
for sponsoring the June meeting.

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(734/323-4901)

Podcaster: MITechNews
<http://mitechnews.mediaria.com/archives/category/nef>

Featured Speakers

“You’re The Founder, But Should You Be The CEO?”

Panel:

Ian Bund, Plymouth Venture Partners
George C. Levy, GDI Infotech, Inc.
Chris Rizik, Ardesta
Deb VandenBroek, Packard Health

Moderator:

Claudia Rast, Pear Sperling Eggan & Daniels, P.C.

The short answer to the topic question? Probably not. But the panel agreed that the decision to keep or change the founder as CEO will be pivotal to the future success of the venture. The ensuing discussion centered on how to find high quality talent to fit a company’s needs and culture; how to “change management” if management is not aware change is needed; and what leadership characteristics matter most.

Finding talent: New talent is best located through one’s network of trusted individuals; the candidate should have excellent references. Even with excellent performance credentials, due diligence is key; resumes show relevant experience, but do not reveal lifestyle or values considerations. In addition, consider the ethos of the company; get individuals who fit -- or who are different if the organization needs to change.



Chris Rizik

Need for leadership change: The need for new talent most often arises when growth will require the first outside funding. The major question at this stage is usually whether the founder has knowledge of and connections to the targeted growth customers and markets. Discussion with the whole management team should identify specific goals, milestones to be reached, and the talents needed to succeed. Explore whether the needed talent is already there; if not, the search begins. Also best to have “the talk” before taking the money.



Ian Bund

Leadership characteristics: Different characteristics will be needed at different stages of growth. Knowledge of both the industry and the organization is key. Personal traits of honesty, straightforwardness, perseverance despite setbacks are also central. Look at both resume and personal life to learn how candidates manage themselves; are they balanced, tenacious, steady? Seek a history of leadership, not flash.



Deborah
VandenBroek

Bottom line: The needed talent is out there; be willing to devote sufficient time and effort to finding it.

The New Enterprise Forum reviews business plans to determine the readiness of entrepreneurial ventures for presentation to the group. No independent investigation of claims or representation is made. Applicable securities laws place certain limitations on the manner in which an offer to sell securities may be made and on solicitations and advertisements to sell securities. Failure to comply could result in the loss of the private offering exemption. The New Enterprise Forum can assume no responsibility for the form or content thereof.

Next Meeting: Thurs., July 23, 2009*

"Unusual Entrepreneurs Share Their Wild Success Stories"

*Please Note Special Date Due to Art Fairs

Showcase Presentations

Bandals International **Tom Sesti**

The Company designs and sells sandals and flip flops with adjustable, interchangeable uppers.

GradeCheck **Sheila McBride**

The Company helps student athletes track, analyze, and submit to US coaches their eligibility reports to land NCAA scholarships.

Featured Speakers

Curt Fournier, President/CEO **GreenDog LLC**

John Antone, Founder **Axis Music Academy**

Hear from these "unusual entrepreneurs" where they got their ideas and how they have managed to commercialize them so successfully thus far!

Open Forum

Brief turn at the mic to introduce your business, marketing strategy, and present resource needs.

Meeting Sponsor

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Holiday Inn - North Campus • US-23 at Plymouth Road • Ann Arbor, MI
Registration & networking begin at 5:00 p.m.
\$20 for non-members • Students \$5

■ ■ ■ **New Enterprise Forum**
■ ■ ■ **115 W. Huron at Main, 3rd Floor**
■ ■ ■ **Ann Arbor, MI 48104**
■ ■ ■ **July 2009**

Inside:

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- ✓ Presenter Updates
Real Kidz
Lambert Technologies
- ✓ GLEQ News
- ✓ Last Meeting Highlights
- ✓ Get Involved in NEF!

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