

# Manitoba Highlights Entrepreneurs Boot Camp For Business Opportunities

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**The three winners of the first Entrepreneur Boot Camp were presented with their awards by Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Minister Stan Struthers last night at the Manitoba Hydro Celebration Banquet at the annual Capturing Opportunities business forum at the Keystone Centre in Brandon.**

“New business ventures are important for the economic future of our province,” said Struthers. “It’s exciting to develop a new business idea but the real challenge is selling the idea to financiers and the buying public. Encouraging and supporting this skill set through competitions like this will help create and grow business and employment opportunities for Manitobans in their communities.”

The Entrepreneur Boot Camp was a new addition to the Capturing Opportunities program this year, providing some of Manitoba’s newest entrepreneurs with an opportunity to pitch their ideas during the two-day event. The 26 competitors in this inaugural contest spent Wednesday in a workshop with business professionals to refine their individual business ideas. Yesterday, they pitched their ideas to potential investors, customers and lenders. The proposals included genetic livestock breeding, development of an ATV campground, the development of energy bars and photography.

The first, second and third place finalists received awards which include cash and in-kind services valued at \$2,000, \$1,500 and \$1,000 respectively.

The first place winner was Robert Bryce of Brandon whose proposal was for Heartland Software Solutions, a custom-development company with a range of products including non-destructive testing instrumentation and software.

Wally Szymczyna of Winnipeg received second place for his presentation on ePro, an emergency planned-response, web-based solution that focuses on sharing information with police and fire personnel en route to an emergency.

The third place prize was awarded to Nate Bower of Brandon for his ITV Brandon which provides local media content online.

The judges for the competition were Don Pratt, Barry Cullen, Chris Griffin, Chad Hughes, Mike Malazdrewicz, Brent Muirhead and Craig Senchuk.

Sponsors for the Entrepreneur Boot Camp program were Keywest Photo Image by Design, ResQ Mobile Services, the I.H. Asper School of Business Stu Clark Centre for Entrepreneurship (University of Manitoba) and Meighen, Haddad and Company.

The Province of Manitoba also supported the event through Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives and Manitoba Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade.