UNK – Finalists for the first Central Nebraska Business Plan Competition have been announced by the Center for Rural Research/Development at the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

The finalists include: Keepsake Quilts by Jaime O’Byrne of Eagle and Lisa Soflin of McCook; Lucky Lady Tasting Room by Jay and Jennifer Mack of Aurora; Her View From Home by Leslie Means, Heather Riggleman and Jennifer Sill, all of Kearney; Stoll Tool by Nick Stoll, UNK student from Marysville, Kan.; and Niobrara Valley Vineyards by Jennie Nollette and Family of Amherst.

The finalists will each give a 10 – 15 minute presentation on Wednesday, March 28, at 7 p.m. in the UNK Nebraskan Student Union, Room 312. The event is free and open to the public.

A panel of business professions will evaluate the presentations based on set of specific criteria. The top three plans will receive monetary prizes. The first place recipient will receive $10,000; second place, $3,000; and third place, $500.

The finalists can be at any stage in their business, as long as they submit a complete business plan. All finalists are 18 years of age or older, legal residents of the United States, and all businesses, proposed or existing, must be located or willing to locate in rural Nebraska. For the competition, rural Nebraska may be defined as any county outside the Omaha or Lincoln Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The $10,000 first prize will be awarded after the competition when a background and credit check, additional due diligence and final negotiations with the owners have been approved by all parties. The university will not become a majority owner of any company that is entered into the competition.

The second place prize in the amount of $3,000 is sponsored by the Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC), and the $500 third place prize is sponsored by the Economic Development Council of Buffalo County.
For more information, visit www.unk.edu/crrd or contact Carrie Stithem at 308.865.8199 or stithemcl@unk.edu.

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