BETHANY SHINN, a senior at UNK who majors in journalism and mass communication and minors in public relations and marketing, is entering the Central Nebraska Business Idea Contest. The contest is open to anyone in central Nebraska with a business idea. The best idea wins $1,000.

UNK, others sponsoring contest for best idea

By KEVIN HERBERT
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KEARNEY — If you have a business idea, you could win $1,000.

An event sponsored by Invest Nebraska, the Economic Development Council of Buffalo County and the Center for Rural Research and Development in the UNK College of Business and Technology will pit budding entrepreneurs and their business ideas against each other for the grand prize.

Participants have to record a one-minute video about their ideas and post them on YouTube and then paste the URL at www.pitchburner.com/unk.

The participants with the top ten ideas chosen will then be invited to present their products or services to a panel of 10 entrepreneurs and community leaders 7 p.m. Nov. 16.

The deadline is midnight Nov. 6.

Shawn Kaskie, the director for the center for research and development in the college of business and technology at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, said anyone from central Nebraska can compete for the prize.

"Any age, any idea," Kaskie said. "It's a great opportunity for those people who are holding on to their great business idea. We've all heard them before. It gives them a little incentive to pull them out in the open so they can get a little feedback."

He said the most important thing about the contest is that it is "a networking event. He said the idea behind the contest is that it will be a way to encourage new businesses in rural Nebraska. He also said the event will provide feedback opportunities to budding entrepreneurs.

"Our goal is to improve the entrepreneurial capacity and climate in central Nebraska," Kaskie said.

One participant in the contest, Bethany Shinn, is a senior at UNK. Shinn's major is journalism and mass communication and her minor is in public relations and marketing.

She is required to participate in the contest for a class on entrepreneurship, Management 400, she is taking.

She is entering her business idea for wedding and "save-the-date" announcements, as well as wedding photography and business card design.

She said she a lot of her friends are getting engaged to be married, and she's already been busy helping them with the skills she's learned at UNK.

She encourages anyone with a business idea to enter the contest. "Everybody could use a $1,000," Shinn said. "It's worth trying."

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