

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:**

Peter Winicov, Senior Associate Director of Communications  
The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania  
215-746-6471 or winicov@wharton.upenn.edu

## Wharton Entrepreneurial Programs' 2009 Wharton Business Plan Competition Chooses 25 Semi-Finalists

*25 Teams of Entrepreneurs Named Semi-Finalists with Concepts Including:  
Zebra fish pollution detector; Online platform for donations to teachers;  
Solar "farm" equipment; Next-gen injectable toxin beauty aid*

PHILADELPHIA, PA, Feb. 20, 2009—The Wharton Business Plan Competition, a program of Wharton Entrepreneurial Programs, announced it has chosen its 25 semi-finalists. These semi-finalists will compete for more than \$73,000 in prizes and the chance to present their business plan at the annual Venture Finals on April 29, 2009.

Participation this year increased nine percent over 2008, for a total of 366 students in early phases of the Competition, most of them focused on Internet, Biotech and IT concepts. This year, however, nearly thirty-eight percent of the submissions were aimed at finding a solution to some social problem. For the semi-finals, judges chose ventures--medical devices, regionally focused services, disease management therapies--serving specific market niches. For the first time in the Competitions' history, a non profit concept was selected.

Among the Wharton Business Plan Competition semi-finalists six teams are led by undergraduates, three are members of the Wharton Venture Initiation Program educational incubator and four are based at Wharton West, the Wharton School's San Francisco based campus. Some of them include:

- Neuroderma: Injectable toxin formation for better cosmetic results with fewer side effects
- CuddleBots: Robotic toy and online community for kids and young adults
- Sustainable Solar: Devices for landowners to turn unused property into solar "farms"
- DocASAP-Online medical appointment scheduling services notifies patients of last-minute openings
- Zecotech-Patented zebra fish risk assessment tool shows water pollution as live fish change color
- Apples for Angels-Online system facilitating donations to teachers who on average spend \$500/year out of pocket for needed supplies.

The Wharton BPC program is made possible through corporate sponsorship support, including from Gold Level sponsor Schering-Plough. Like all sponsors they will gain visibility throughout the year-long Competition and at the Venture Finals. The Venture Finals, the Competition's culminating event, consists of the eight finalist teams, selected from among the 25 semi-finalists, facing off with 20-minute presentations to distinguished judges.

Those judges, drawn from the business and venture capital community, evaluate the persuasiveness and viability of each business plan. Finalists will vie for \$73,000 in cash prizes and in-kind awards including a \$20,000 Grand Prize. The Venture Finals takes place April 29 at the Wharton School's Dhirubhai Ambani Auditorium and annually attracts over 200 entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, investment bankers, alumni, faculty and students.

For the past decade, the Wharton Business Plan Competition, which is open to any University of Pennsylvania student and managed by Wharton Entrepreneurial Programs, has seen numerous student teams go on to become successful businesses including **PetPlan USA, PayMyBills.com, BuySafe, NetConversions, Stata Labs, DealMaven, Verge Solutions and MicromRI**. Information about past participants is available on the Wharton BPC Web site: <http://bpc.wharton.upenn.edu>.

### **About the Wharton School and Wharton Entrepreneurial Programs**

In 1973, The Wharton School became the first school to develop a fully integrated curriculum of entrepreneurial studies. Today Wharton, through Wharton Entrepreneurial Programs <[www.wep.wharton.upenn.edu](http://www.wep.wharton.upenn.edu)>, supports and seeds innovation and entrepreneurship globally through teaching, research and outreach to a range of organizations through its many programs, initiatives and research centers. At the same time, Wharton students and alumni are helping to build entrepreneurial enterprises around the world and impacting virtually every industry.

The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania -- founded in 1881 as the first collegiate business school -- is recognized globally for intellectual leadership and ongoing innovation across every major discipline of business education. The most comprehensive source of business knowledge in the world, Wharton bridges research and practice through its broad engagement with the global business community. The school has more than 4,600 undergraduate, MBA, executive MBA, and doctoral students; more than 8,000 annual participants in executive education programs; and an alumni network of more than 84,000 graduates.

For more information on the Wharton Business Plan Competition, go to: <http://bpc.wharton.upenn.edu>.

###