



Lyles Center for
Innovation and
Entrepreneurship

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Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship to Feature Top 5 Student Businesses at the NFTE Central Valley Regional Business Plan Competition

Fresno, Calif. – The Top 5 Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) high school students from the Central Valley will compete in the final round of the NFTE Regional Business Plan Competition “Dream it! Start it! Own it!” to be named the regional grand prize winner.

Scheduled from 5:30 to 9 p.m. on May 21, the banquet will be held at the Sunnyside Country Club. NFTE is a program offered by the Lyles Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Fresno State.

The keynote speaker for the competition will be Viliami Tuivai, also known as “Coach V” Success Consultant-Life Coach-Team Dynamics Expert-Speaker. Coach V coached football at UC Davis and Boise State. He has 125 Wins-18 Lessons (not losses) in 11 years, eight Seasons of Division one Football, and 8 Bowl Game Appearances, 4 Bowl Championships on his record.

Coach V now is a professional speaker; he sits on the Rose Bowl Advisory Committee and is also on the Blueprint Education Advisory Board. He is one of the most practical and exciting Success Consultant, Team Dynamics Expert, and Motivational Keynote Speakers in the Country.

NFTE has 18 high schools from the Central Valley that participate in the program. “Dream it! Start it! Own it!” will begin with a business expo where the top three students from each school site will showcase their businesses.

Out of more than 1,000 student participants, the top 5 will compete that evening to be the regional first place winner and the opportunity to pitch their business idea in New York City in October at the NFTE National Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge. The winner will compete for seed money to launch their business.

Semifinal round awards and recognition will also take place. Nearly 300 students, faculty, community members and staff are expected to attend the banquet.

“This competition is really empowering for the high school students that are participating,” said Program Coordinator Casey Lamonski. “It allows them to look into the future, envision themselves running and owning their own business and choosing entrepreneurship as a career path.”

Steve Banevedes will be recognized as the NFTE 2012-2013 Teacher of the Year. Banevedes teaches at Carter G. Woodson Public Charter School in Fresno and also received an Enterprising Educators of the Year award from the NFTE program in New York City this past April.

The event will also recognize the NFTE Student of the Year, Tyler Hansen, founder of Central Valley Paintball in Reedley. Tyler is a graduate of the NFTE program and current entrepreneurship student at Reedley College.

For additional information, contact Casey Lamonski, clamonski@csufresno.edu or (559) 917-7971.

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The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship’s mission is to provide programs that inspire young people from low-income areas to stay in school, recognize business opportunities and plan for successful futures. Since its founding in 1987 by Steve Mariotti, NFTE has worked with nearly 450,000 young people from low-income communities in programs across the US and around the world.