



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY *at* NEW ORLEANS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH/UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

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6400 Press Drive • New Orleans, Louisiana 70126

Direct (504) 286-5343 • Fax (504) 284-5525

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Contact: Eddie Francis
(504) 286-5343 or (504) 236-1009
efrancis@suno.edu

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SUNO wins Morehouse College 2010 Business Plan Competition

New Orleans, LA – Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) won the Morehouse College 2010 Business Plan Competition on February 26th in Atlanta, Georgia on the campus of Morehouse. Two senior Business Entrepreneurship majors, Tonia Simmons-Doakes and Erica Bilbo, comprised the winning team under the guidance of Dr. Louis C. Mancuso, professor of Marketing. The team won the top prize of \$10,000 for their concept, Housing Innovations, LLC. Howard University won the second place prize of \$6,000 and the University of Virginia placed third to take home \$4,000.

The team developed a project dealing with the need of Section 8 housing in the Orleans Parish area. Housing Innovations proposes the idea of purchasing two fourplexes in the New Orleans East area to refurbish the dilapidated housing. Other teams from Clark Atlanta University and Morehouse participated as well. On the day of the finals over 200 people were present and nine judges from around the country evaluated the participants.

“These students worked with me throughout the Christmas Holidays and Mardi Gras,” said Mancuso. “This is a monumental victory for these students and our institution.”

The judges from the competition were: John Curtis, JC Marketing, Inc.; Donna Ennis, Georgia Minority Business Enterprise Center; Deborah Griffin, State Farm Insurance; John Handy, Ph.D., Morehouse College; Michael Jones, IKON Solutions; Eric Lyons, National Black MBA Association, Inc. (NBMBAA); Monica Peete, NBMBAA; Michael Rhodes, Atlanta Urban League; JaKathryn Ross, Georgia-Pacific LLC; Said Sewell, Ph.D., Fort Valley State; and Roger Williams, Ph.D., Morehouse College.

The final evaluators were: Audrey D. Hines, President, Dillard Hines and Associates; CaSondra "Cas" Sigler, Writer and Producer, Nina Holiday Entertainment; Doug Speight, Manager Strategic Partnerships and Outreach, ONRL; Dr. Farrah Gray, Founder, Farrah Gray Foundation; Kent Matlock, Chairman and CEO, Matlock Advertising and Public Relations; LaDoris "Dot" Harris, Global Marketing Executive, GE Energy; Sharon Dougherty, Program Manager, Lockheed Martin; William Swift, Managing Partner, Airport Retail Management; and Yolanda White, Assistant VP of African American Marketing, Coca-Cola North America.

END

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