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### **Women's Center for Entrepreneurship Awards Aspiring Women Entrepreneurs**

**October 17, 2016** - Newark, NJ –The Women's Center for Entrepreneurship (WCEC) has concluded its annual Supplementary Entrepreneurial Establishment Dollars (SEED) program with a Shark Tank-style business plan pitch panel, which took place on September 21, 2016, at the Enterprise Development Center at NJIT. Through the generous donation from SUPCO, Inc., the WCEC awarded \$3,000 in cash prizes to three New Jersey-based, women-owned businesses. Our grand prize winner will receive her award the evening of October 19, 2016 at the WCEC Event -The Secret to Doing Business with Large Corporations- at The Park Avenue Club.

"It has been truly moving watching women become increasingly excited as they realize their dreams of owning a business over the past year. With the help of our grant from the State of New Jersey and the U.S. Small Business Administration, we have been awarded the opportunity to support women in starting and growing their own businesses. All applicants in this competition were extremely committed to the process. They attended classes, received business counseling and networked with other local, women business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs," said Nichole Barlow, Grant Manager, Women's Center for Entrepreneurship.

The winners of this donated prize pool include:

- **Bettina Peets** of Bloomfield, NJ for her business, Adventures for the Soul, which offers outdoor retreats for women, won the top prize of \$1,500.
- **Christina Martin** of Williamstown, NJ for her business, Cooking to Nourish, a company focusing on healthy plant-based lifestyle through education and outreach, won the second place prize of \$1,000.
- **Karen Sullivan** of South Orange, NJ for her business, Radius Technology and Art Campus, a technology company teaching coding, gaming and design, and helping girls patent and bring their inventions to market, won the third place prize of \$500.

"Thank you so much for all of your assistance and allowing me to participate in the Business Plan Pitch Competition. It was an amazing process. After the dry run I honestly thought about giving up but your encouragement helped me to push through my doubts. Because of you, and the resources that the WCEC has provided, I have grown tremendously as a professional, entrepreneur and as a person. Thank you for everything." -Bettina J. Peets, Adventures for the Soul, 1<sup>st</sup> place winner of the business plan competition 2016.

SEED, which is funded through a grant by the New Jersey Office of Faith Based Initiatives, is an annual competition during which aspiring women entrepreneurs receive 32 hours of training. Included in this training is business counseling and classes on business planning, QuickBooks, credit, marketing, sales

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and public speaking. At the conclusion, these women submit their application with a business plan and financial forecast for review. The top three business plans are selected for an opportunity to pitch, Shark Tank- style, for placement to our panel of judges. This year, pitches were evaluated by a panel of three judges – Steve Gomez, Executive Director, Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation; Angela Margolit, President at Bluebird Auto Rental; and Robin Tabakin, Owner of Technoforce LLC.

Bettina Peets will be receiving her award on Oct. 19 at the WCEC's quarterly speaker's forum at the Park Avenue Club in Florham Park entitled "The Secrets to Doing Business with Large Corporations." This panel is one of the WCEC's educational offerings to assist women entrepreneurs to getting past the gate-keepers at large corporations, in alignment with our mission to helping women launch, grow, and expand their businesses to reach \$1M in revenue. The award will be presented to her by last year's 1<sup>st</sup> place winner, Crystal G. Warner of Lor' Dour Designs, LLC, a Newark-based line of fashion active wear for women. For more information about this event, please visit our website: [www.wcecnj.org](http://www.wcecnj.org) (<http://wcecnj.org/seminar-details.aspx?ClassID=1365>).



Pictured left to right: Jennifer Krottinger (SBA), Bettina Peets (1<sup>st</sup> place winner), Steve Maiorano (WCEC Program Director), Rana Shanawani (WCEC Executive Director), Nichole Barlow (Grants Manager), Christina Martin (2<sup>nd</sup> place winner), Alyce Hackett (WCEC Board VP), Karen Sullivan (3<sup>rd</sup> place winner), Angela Margolit (Judge), Robin Tabakin (Judge), Steven Gomez (Judge).

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**About the Women's Center for Entrepreneurship Corp.** Founded in, 2009, the Women's Center for Entrepreneurship is a non-profit organization that works to promote entrepreneurship to women in the NY/NJ Metro area. Our mission is to provide the tools for women to successfully own, operate and grow their businesses. By being the resource for businesses of all sizes, we empower women to invest financially, intellectually and emotionally in their community. For more information or to donate, visit [www.wcecnj.org](http://www.wcecnj.org) or call (973) 507-9700.

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