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Welcome New Firms

CSBS Welcomes Brand New Firms and Some “Old” Firms with “New” Faces

This fall we had the opportunity to add four brand new firms to our ranks. Many of you have heard from them already, and will most likely hear a great deal more from them in the future. We would like to congratulate them on the tremendous progress they have made in such a short period of time. These firms are: Funky Footwear from Pemberton Township HS in Pemberton, NJ; I’ve Got Envelopes from Burlington HS in Burlington, WY; JRL Business Solutions from DesMoines Area CC in Akeny, IA; and Top Notch Audio from High Point Regional HS in Sussex, NJ. In addition, we had the great fortune to have two firms from Lima, Peru join us as part of a pilot project. They are Adventure Kingdom and Marqui Accessories from Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru.

In addition to these new additions, some of our “old” friends have changed their “faces.” We are happy to welcome Deez Moviez from Northern Burlington County Regional HS in Columbus, NJ; Lickity Splits Ice Cream from Morris Knolls HS in Rockaway, NJ; and Wyoming Wyld West Gifts from Casper College in Casper, WY. CSBS members look forward to lots of trading activity with all of you!

Rustle Up the Spirit of the West

Wyoming Wyld West Gifts is a new business founded by Gale, Joi, Molly, Heidi, and Anthony, under the supervision of Georgia and Gary. Wyoming Wyld West Gifts introduces the heritage of the west to the world through high-quality, genuine Wyoming-made products in an individualized gift basket of the purchaser’s choice. Our gift baskets are originally crafted using items of the west. We use high quality authentic unique western made products. Our goal is to bring the sense of the west straight to your door. Our business sells Western American gifts and products.

Our success has been the bond that the seven of us have created within our business. We were fortunate to explore the ideas and research the depth of our western culture, and we learned about each other in the process. We chose Wyoming as the foundation of our business because not only do we live in Wyoming, we are proud of its history and the aura that the west represents.

At the present time we feature two gift baskets; The Food Basket and The Comfort Basket. “The Food Basket” consists of Chugwater Chili
Gary Donnelly of Casper College in Wyoming has been named the 2006 Wyoming Association of Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year. Gary was among one of the first teachers at the community college level in the U.S. to implement the course. He also has been instrumental in the growth of the IBPF concept in the state of Wyoming. CONGRATULATIONS, Gary!

**Wyoming Tech Prep Consortium Recognized!**

Lead by Gary Donnelly of Casper College, this Tech Prep program was recently recognized nationally as a best-practice program. This national and regional award winning program focused on international business and marketing practices. Partner schools incorporate curricula for international business and marketing into existing courses. Students participate in simulated international business practice firms.

Partners in this consortium include the Casper Workforce Center, WY Small Business Development Center (Cheyenne), Casper Small Business Administration, Casper Area Economic Development Alliance, WY Business Council, Casper College, Laramie County Community College, Sheridan College, Eastern Wyoming College and eight high schools located throughout the state. The project supports virtual work-based learning, join in-service training for instructors, career specialists and counselors, increased access to the use of technology and development of sustainability of leadership activities through educational and business support and funding.

**Kudos to one of our Instructors!**

Gary Donnelly of Casper College in Wyoming has been named the 2006 Wyoming Association of Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year. Gary was among one of the first teachers at the community college level in the U.S.

The Marketing Department designed the new logo and developed our new product offering. They also created promotional flyers and most importantly, created a new web site. Now they are trying to increase customer contact through email and the website.

The Accounting and Purchasing Departments worked together with Marketing to implement the new product strategy. They investigated the cost structure and made important inventory decisions to meet customer demand.

The Human Resources Department completed the necessary changes to all company documentation and coordinated the completion of the new Business Plan.

Our new approach to customers is for the customer to be able to “express yourself BIG in a small way.” We hope that our hard work and dedication will show as Xpressions, Inc. continues to grow over the semesters to come.

**Xpressions, Inc.**

In August 2006, our company was restructured and went through some exciting changes. Formerly Vibrant Colors, the company was given the new name, Xpressions Inc., We have been working diligently as a team all semester to market and advertise our new products. In the past, products consisted mainly of Crayola products, but in an attempt to attract a different array of customers, the products that are offered are now mainly small electronics such as I-pods and hand held video game systems.

We at B-Gone Travel Inc. are committed to our mission of providing excellent customer service, internally and externally, while on the cutting edge of the travel industry. We continue to provide a hassle-free traveling experience at an affordable price but without sacrificing the quality that our customers deserve. B-Gone Travel Inc. looks out for our customers’ complete traveling needs. Our services consist of preassembled...
B-Gone Travel Inc. consists of 5 departments:

**The Human Resources Department** is responsible for the daily issues within the company and for providing our employees with a comfortable and safe work environment. They have revised the employee handbook with updated benefits and have created an employee file in Excel.

**The Employee Motivation and Development Department** is responsible for serving the internal customer, who are our employees. They award all employees who go above and beyond their normal work obligations. Recently, EMD hosted a competition for employees that made the most purchases from other virtual firms. The winners were: Monica Ambrus (4), Prisca Long (3), and Barbara Morales (3).

**The Marketing Department** has designed a variety of brochures and flyers to promote the company. They have also developed a Power Point presentation for “Europackage and Print,” a company in Belgium, which was presented via video conference. This demonstration should help B-Gone Travel to develop a business relationship.

**The Purchasing/Sales Department** handles the processing of all incoming requests by researching and planning packages that work within the budget of the client. To this date, they have booked over 100 trips with the most requests being cruises and trips to the Caribbean.

**The Finance Department** handles payroll, operating expenses, invoices, payment processing, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and budgeting.

It has been a wonderful semester and we have enjoyed learning the business of travel. We hope that when you decide to take that exotic vacation or business trip, you contact us and we will do the rest. Think It! Book It! Live It!

**Human Resources** has added several employment policies to the Employee Handbook and conducted sexual harassment training. Each month Human Resources presents the “Employee of the Month” with a certificate.

**Accounting**, which is composed of several members of the Human Resources department have been wearing multiple hats and performing the payroll function. Purchasing is also working on the financial statements. In addition to the normal accounting functions; research into questionable vendor invoices has also been a measurable task. In mid-November over $400 from erroneous invoices has been recouped.

The Say it with Socks Fall of 2006 company has made many changes in order to help make our company more successful. With a limited number of students and resources we have made changes to our product line, website and promotions. Each of these factors has turned our company around which has made it a lucrative business.

The entire company put our heads together and tried to modernize our product line. We came up with some new series of NFL and NCAA socks. The purchasing department then went out and researched all of our new product ideas and brought them to our product line. This helped us with upgrading some of our inventory but we still had issues with our website.

Our advertising group then changed our website completely around. We gave ourselves a new face for the company website. We changed the colors, added some more pictures of what we have to offer as well. The website is now more efficient for searching what our company sells, and it is easier to place an order with Say it With Socks. With changes made to not only our product line and our website, we also needed to accelerate our business and bring in more clientele.
The marketing department was busy all semester long putting out promotions for our company. They sent out a series of flyers for all our different holiday sales such as for Halloween and Thanksgiving. They were designing new promotions all the time such as giving away a free gift with any purchase over $25. They were very creative which brought in new customers from not only the United States but all over the world.

All of this couldn’t have happened without the combined efforts of the whole company. The finance and human resource department handled all of our orders without any problems. Our purchasing department stayed on top of keeping inventory in stock. And the entire group from Say it with Socks wants to thank all of our customers for being a part of our success.

**Java & Joe**

The year end is here and Java & Joe would like to take this opportunity to summarize the outcome of our successful year.

First and foremost, thank you to all those people who participated in International Business Practice Firm and did business with Java & Joe. Each Department did an awesome job working as a team with each other to ensure a very successful semester at Java & Joe.

Currently, future plans for Java & Joe are being discussed. Research on a coffee roaster is underway. We are hoping to be able to buy a quality roaster to create a top-quality coffee to offer future customers.

Java & Joe is a virtual business that is run by Waukesha County Technical College students. Java & Joe offers a wide variety of gourmet coffee flavors as well as coffee accessories. Our company is sponsored by Berres Brothers Coffee Roasters, WCTC and Berres Brothers allow students to see how a business is run in the real world.

The students in the class are all employees of the company, which is divided into five departments. The departments include Human Resources, Accounting, Purchasing, Marketing, and IT. Each department has to maintain all of the responsibilities that a “real” company has.

As this successful year ends, our employees look back at how hard they worked to make this company great and profitable. We had some setbacks in employee-to-employee communication, and worked hard to perfect that issue. Accounting had problems accessing PeachTree, but now they are confident in working the program. All in all we are excited about our sales and had a great time working together.

We look forward to seeing the greater development of our company.

**EUROPEN Update**

**A New Name for a Familiar Face**

EUROPEN the worldwide association for practice firms is recognized all over the globe for its work with practice firms. It was established as an official organization on October 27, 1997 to coordinate and support this unique model for education and training. The founding countries at that time were: Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Spain and Switzerland.

EUROPEN was an outcome of a European Project that was started in November 1993. The name EUROPEN initially stood for European Practice Enterprises Network. Thanks to the dedication and foresight of the founders of the organization, the concept rapidly grew outside of Europe. Currently there are 42 countries on 5 of the 7 continents represented in EUROPEN. There are strong indicators that in the very near future countries from other continents will apply for membership.

Approximately three years ago, the members began discussing the feasibility of a name change. After all, the membership had grown significantly outside of Europe. On the one side, the name EUROPEN was already recognized for what it was, i.e., the worldwide association of practice firms, and on the other side, the name no longer represented the membership. After a bit of debate, the membership unanimously agreed to a name change—PEN International. The name along with its new logo was officially unveiled at the International Trade Fair in Quebec City, Canada on October 4, 2006.

PEN International will continue to support the various Central Offices that in turn support the practice firms in their network. It is hoped that the new name will bring greater recognition, support and collaboration among the member countries.

**International Business Strategies Course**

**Off to a Good Start at Morris Hills High School**

Morris Hills High School is again running an International Business Strategies course, which uses a simulated business environment managed by Mercer County Community College. It operates in a network, known as the International Business Practice Firm (IBPF) network.

One of the steps in running a simulated business is to obtain a corporate sponsor, so the students can borrow information and have access to resources to develop a similar business in this international simulated environment. For the second year in a row, the sponsor is Panera Bread, through the Fenwick Group, which is an entity formed to develop
and manage the franchise rights of forty Panera Bread bakery-cafes in the North and Central New Jersey area. According to the instructor, Mrs. Perry, “last year Panera was so supportive. Throughout the year they provided business consulting, field trips to facilities, products to “sell” at the trade fair, and class presentations. We simply could not have had as realistic of an environment without them. Their constant contact and interest in our students helped to get very close to the true business issues and challenges.”

Again this year, students will buy and sell in a simulated international business environment. They are required to come up with a company name, logo, image, product line, product information, pricing, and all financial records, including operating expenses, balance sheet, income statement, payroll, and the like. Students will also interview for their positions within their simulated company, choosing from Marketing, Sales, Finance, and Human Resources. All “real-world” responsibilities within these departments will be the responsibilities of the individuals fortunate enough to win the jobs.

“As the simulation progresses through the year, students will work in cross-functional teams to set and meet goals and objectives of the organization,” says course instructor Mrs. Colleen Perry. “They will learn about the international business environment, career considerations and the specific functions and responsibilities within each department.” The students will begin by filing a Certificate of Incorporation. Then they will operate and manage the business all the way to "closing the books" at the end of the company's "fiscal year."

The real challenge this year will be developing a full blown business plan for the simulated business, now named Crustino’s Bread and Breakfast. In the spring students will enter their business plan in a competition hosted by Merrill Lynch. This even takes place in New York City, the day before the group will participate in a “real world” trade fair, at which they will “sell” their products and “buy” from other simulated businesses. In addition, at the trade fair, the students can win prizes for Best Booth, Best Salesmanship, Best Catalog, and Best Web Page.

To launch this year, Mr. Bob Bagnell, CFO of The Fenwick Group presented information about business plan considerations and what challenges and opportunities the franchisees face in running this business. Students will use this information, including financial and marketing information, to plan, run, and evaluate their business throughout the year.

The students of the International Business Strategies course are excited to be working with Panera-Fenwick Group. For more information about this course, please contact Mrs. Perry at Morris Hills High School’s General Office 973-664-2309. Students enrolled in this course include Troy Weygandt, Tom Perry, Andrew Kirk, Luke Mirabella, Chris Roman, Ilya Shuf, Megan Frankle, Andrew Dickler, Matthew Bernstein, Paula Mendez, Diana Leon, and Monica Lee.

Expanded Use of Video Conferencing

CSBS is attempting to connect firms domestically and internationally with the use of video and web conferencing. Some of you have submitted your technology forms, and we are hoping that more of you will do so in January. If you need the technology form, please contact us. Although we have not make “connections” for all of you yet, we plan to do so for any firm that is interested in the Spring.

In the fall, B-Gone travel held a video conference with a school in Belgium as part of a regional Internet2 Conference that Mercer hosted. The purpose of this was to highlight how this technology could enhance the practice firm concept. In addition, Favor-It participated in two different video conferences. In one, the students spoke to participants in a regional forum about their firm, and in the other the students shared their unique experiences with IBPF orientation participants at Mercer.

Some of the things to look forward to in the spring: connecting with other CSBS firms to negotiate trades, connecting with international firms to arrange partnerships and trades, connecting with the CSBS office in forums to discuss best practices, procedures, and workshops, and finally the possibility of “attending” an international trade fair in Belgium in February 2007 via a video conference. Stay tuned for information on this particular item. Email us at csbs@mccc.edu if you think you might be interested.

Dates to Remember:

IBPF Teacher Training—February 22 & 23, 2007

NYC Trade Fair, March 29-30, 2007

**Reduced Rate for IBPF Teacher Training**

CSBS will again offer a two-day training program on February 22 and 23, 2007. Teachers new to the program are strongly encouraged to attend. The cost is reduced for network members. It is only $200. Information and registration forms are on our website: www.mccc.edu/ibpf. Sign up early as space is limited.

Happy Holidays!