

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Recipients of entrepreneurship grants graduate and businesses still strong

GOSHEN, Ind. – As their first taste of life after college, two recent Goshen College graduates have had the opportunity to become their own bosses with help from grants given by the Business Department's Entrepreneurship Learning Center (ELC).

Nate Gautsche and Garrett Gingerich, both 2007 Goshen College graduates, were awarded grants in the 2006 for individual entrepreneurial endeavors they developed and presented to the grant committee, and now completed they have been able to invest completely in their business plans. Gautsche currently runs Properties, a real estate business, and Gingerich launched a graphic and Web design business called 3epho Design (www.3epho.com), beginning full time from his home office in early June.

The award, now in its third year, is made possible by a grant Goshen College received from the Lilly Foundation as part of addressing the Indiana brain drain, an attempt to prevent students who receive their education in Indiana from moving away. According to Melissa Kinsey, director of the ELC and assistant professor of business, "the grant is made available to all students in all disciplines."

This year, however, both recipients were from the business department. Gautsche, a business major, was the recipient of this grant. His company, NCG Properties, buys, remodels, manages and resells buildings that have historical value. Gautsche hopes to create attractive and safe places for singles in Elkhart County to live.

Gingerich was also a business major, with a minor in multimedia communication. His business, 3epho Design specializes in Web design services for small companies. It also offers Web hosting, visual identity development, Web strategy consulting. Gingerich has the tools to begin a Web site, makeover a Web site, add flash features, design logos, business cards, and letterheads and help small businesses or other interested clients set up and build marketing strategies, among other things.

Every recipient is offered what Kinsey referred to as time, space and money. The grant can be up to \$5,000 and award-winners are also offered production space donated by local businesses and credit hours to be used in their businesses while finishing college.

As Gingerich and Gautsche did, any student interested in beginning a business is required to write a viable business plan and present it to a committee made up of area Chamber of Commerce members, local business people, interested or knowledgeable students, faculty and staff. Part of the purpose of the grant, as Kinsey describes it, is to allow students to take advantage of this learning setting where there are so many people and experience available to help. "It's much easier now than when they're out there in the world," she said.

It was this sort of encouragement from Kinsey that led Gingerich to apply for the grant. After working in Web design for a summer, he began free-lance graphic and Web designing, and decided that he wanted to run his own design business in the future. Gingerich said, "[Applying] was a good way to formalize what I was already doing."

Gautsche's interest in his field goes back a bit farther. He purchased his first property as a first-year at Goshen and decided to start NCG Properties because "I enjoy renovating old, run-down houses. I like to be able to see the difference in the downtown community that has been neglected in the past," said Gautsche, a native to Goshen.

As his first project, Gautsche purchased a house constructed in 1870 that he turned into an apartment building. The grant allowed him to fix a leaking roof and build a laundry room. "Without it, I would have had a hard time getting some key projects done to improve the living situations of my tenants," he said.

The grant allowed Gingerich to purchase a computer, essential software, a printer, fax machine and other equipment. Had he not received it, Gingerich says he likely would not have been able to start his business full time almost certainly not so soon after graduating. "I had initially planned to work for a marketing or advertising firm," he said, but with Kinsey's influence, he decided that if he had the opportunity to begin his business now, he would take it.

"Nate and Garrett are two students who have had a great impact on the Business Department," Kinsey said. "They have been leaders in Business Club and have taken part in the college's Research Symposium. Both of their businesses have service components as well as for profit, according to Kinsey.

"I think they're going to be very valuable contributors to any community that they live in," Kinsey said.

– By Kelli Yoder

Editors: For more information about this release, to arrange an interview or request a photo, contact Goshen News Bureau Director Jodi H. Beyeler at (574) 535-7572 or jodihb@goshen.edu.

###

Goshen College, established in 1894, is a residential Christian liberal arts college rooted in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. The college's Christ-centered core values – passionate learning, global citizenship, compassionate peacemaking and servant-leadership – prepare students as leaders for the church and world. Recognized for its unique Study-Service Term program, Goshen has earned citations of excellence in *Best Buys in Education*, "Colleges of Distinction," "Making a Difference College Guide" and *U.S. News & Report's* "America's Best Colleges" edition, which named Goshen a "least debt college." Visit www.goshen.edu



E-mail this story

Goshen College
1700 S Main St
Goshen, Indiana 46526
USA

phone: +1 (574) 535-7569
fax: 535-7660
web: arachnid@goshen.edu
other: pr@goshen.edu