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Partnership Launches 2010 Business Plan Competition

The Greater Burlington Partnership has officially launched the 2010 Des Moines County Business Plan Competition. The competition, now in its third year, will award a prize pool of \$7,500 in seed capital grants to the winners. Complete details and competition rules are available at <http://www.GrowBurlington.com>.

“This competition is important because it encourages people to develop a plan to start a business in our community,” said Michele Schnicker, chair of the entrepreneurship committee and Chief of Operations for F&M Bank & Trust. “It has never been more crucial to find new ways to create jobs in our area. This competition can be the incentive that motivates a person to turn an idea into a business.”

The competition is open to all Des Moines County residents and residents of adjacent counties who intend to start their new venture within Des Moines County. Again this year, Downtown Partners will be offering an additional \$1,200 rent subsidy to the winning plan should the business open in Downtown Burlington. As a new feature, the winning business plan will also receive a free web site designed by Hayloft Media.

Contestants enter the competition by completing a course offered by Southeastern Community College entitled *Writing Your Winning Business Plan*. Scholarships for the course are offered by the Des Moines County Extension office. Winners will be selected in late May.

The winners of the 2009 competition were Doug Wilson of Great River Materials, Kyle Carruthers of Lad N Dad Storage, and Martin James of The Blind Bean. All three businesses are up and running.

The competition is funded by investment pledges received during the Greater Burlington Partnership's *Partnering for the Future* campaign.