

-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

Business Advisory Centre Durham Teens Win Big with ‘Best in Province’ Business Plan

Sarah Ritchie and Ashley St. John, sing, dance and act. And, to top off all that talent, they’ve both got a head for business.

The grade 12 students at O’Neill Secondary School created a business plan for a performing arts academy as a course project. On the advice of their business teacher, Ms. Michelle Terry, they entered it into the local Durham Secondary School Business Plan Competition. Their plan won 1st place and a prize of \$500. But that was just the beginning of their winning ways.

Their plan was then entered into the regional and provincial levels of the Competition. This past Saturday, when Sarah and Ashley attended the gala evening in celebration of the Competition’s winners from all over Central Ontario, they learned their plan not only won 1st place in the Central Ontario semi-finals, but 3rd place in all of Ontario. The Durham teens took home trophies commemorating their double win and prizes totalling over \$1000.

The Ontario Secondary School Business Plan Competition is sponsored by the Government of Ontario and coordinated for students in the Durham Region by the BACD Business Advisory Centre Durham. High school students may submit individual business plans or create plans in groups of twos or threes to enter into the Competition. Winning plans from the local competitions vie for prizes in northern, eastern, western and south-central Ontario regional competitions and, for prizes at the province-wide level. The Competition is designed to encourage secondary school students to develop entrepreneurial and business skills and orientations. This year a total of 1170 student business plans were submitted for judging in the Competition from across the province.

“When Ms. Terry suggested we enter the Competition here in Durham, we never thought our plan would win 3rd place among all the plans from across the province,” says Sarah.

Chimes in Ashley, “It’s a great way to get paid just for doing your homework!”

What’s next on the business horizon for Sarah and Ashley? “I’m encouraging them to turn their plan into reality by participating in Summer Company,” says Wenda Abel, Young Entrepreneur program Manager at BACD Business Advisory Centre Durham. “With an award up to \$3000 to start their business and one-on-one mentoring provided by the program, who knows where their plan can take them in the future?”

For more information about the Secondary School Business Plan Competition and Summer Company, contact: Wenda Abel, Young Entrepreneur Program Manager, BACD, 905-668-4949, X 226, email: youth@bacd.ca



Ashley St. John and Sarah Ritchie of O’Neill Collegiate, Oshawa, pose with their trophies for their triple win in the Ontario Secondary School Business Plan Competition.