This is the first issue of the Forum Bulletin from the WKU Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI). The Bulletin is designed to provide a dialogue for individuals interested in creativity, entrepreneurship, innovation and small business development. The Bulletin will emphasize local, regional and worldwide economic development through self sufficiency, self determination and self-employment. The Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation is one of the Centers for Excellence housed in the Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University located in Bowling Green Kentucky. The Bulletin is available to all who are interested in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Readers are encouraged to provide us with feedback and to forward the Bulletin to others who may share our interests in reviving and encouraging the Entrepreneurship Spirit throughout these United States and the World at large.

This first issue will begin with an overview of the entrepreneurship movement at WKU and list some of the research and development activities developed by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the past few months. The following Activities are presented as activities generated by the CEI to begin the dialogue among Forum Colleagues.

**Our Purpose**

Our purpose is to engage entrepreneurs, inventors, community leaders, political leaders, venture capitalists, educators, business researchers and state/local government decision makers in a dialogue about the development of the importance of innovation and Entrepreneurship in this world at large.

**Recent Research Activities**

**Steering Committee**

Dr. Wil Clouse, Director for the Center of Entrepreneurship and Innovation led a Steering Committee seminar in March where various members of the business community gathered to brainstorm about innovative ideas on behalf of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The 15 members of this committee gave helpful insight on the progress of the Center and encouragement of how to progress further in partnering with the Bowling Green community. Slaughter Miller, Director of Regional Development, shared that he “had no idea how dynamic the Center of Entrepreneurship” was and continued the discussion by sharing ideas to further partnership with the Bowling Green community and promote public awareness.

**Glenda Ford Entrepreneurship Forum Series**

In efforts to infuse the Entrepreneurship spirit across disciplines at WKU and to help rejuvenate economic development in the state of Kentucky and surrounding areas - the Center for Entrepreneurship started a Forum series to attract noted Entrepreneurs from local, regional, and national levels. The first four people to be part of the first series were Carolyn Moreland from Colonial Furniture, Betty Gentry and Sheila Pruitt from Big Meadow Oil, Mo Miller from Stoneworks and Butch Hutchinson from Music City, USA. Since the start of these forums over 300 students, faculty, and other invited guests have attended.

**Established the Entrepreneurship Academy of Excellence**

The largest ever research and development grant was awarded to the Center to establish and develop an Entrepreneurial Academy of Excellence in the Lincoln Trail Administrative Region (LTADD) in efforts to serve the eight surrounding counties—Breckinridge, Grayson, Hardin, LaRue, Marion, Meade, Nelson, and Washington. This Academy developed a comprehensive Entrepreneurship training and development program for adults in the 8 county region. More than 100 adults were a part of the program and several new business startups were developed. The program also addressed the important move under development by the US department of Defense to create a new IT division at Fort-Knox, where thousands of new troops and civilians will be transferred from other locations i.e. Alexander VA, thus creating a new environment. The major theme of the Academy was to increase economic development from within the region using local ideas and local talent. The Academy Developed a Descriptive Research Study for each county.

**Think Tank Institute**

The Think Tank Institute was developed as part of the EAE as a process for identifying local entrepreneurs and small business owners to participate in a Think Tank Forum to help the eight counties to identify the needs and resources of the given region and to develop a strategy to build an entrepreneurial community. Redeveloping Rural Counties with the Entrepreneurial Spirit was a part of the EAE a Think Tank Institute which was held in Elizabethtown to establish entrepreneurship and creativity within the eight-county Lincoln Trail Development District. This was the first effort to develop a regional model for economic development through entrepreneurship.
groups created preliminary local venture opportunities for the region. Approximately 100 attendees specifically defined regional strengths and opportunities. A broad base of local and national entrepreneurs was in attendance, including special guest Thomas A. Cellucci, Chief Commercialization Officer of the United States Dept. of Homeland Security.

**Coming to America - Liaoning Scholars Program**

**International Cross-Cultural Problem Based Learning** - The Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation implemented the Liaoning Scholars Exchange Program by hosting five professors from Liaoning University in China through a contract with the Liaoning University. This experience involved over two hundred activities on three different University campuses including - WKU, MTSU, and MSU. The scholars executed extended problem-based learning exercises and created significant lines of communication between the four institutions. The nine week program, with several 100 activities, featured cross disciplinary studies, increasing learning for both WKU students and faculty, such as Krist Schell (Director of the CEI) who led a language training seminar series for the participants. The Center has continued a working relationship with selected Chinese members.

**International Entrepreneurship /FIPS** - the CEI was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) as part of the North America Mobility Program. The program title "Alliance to Enhance Entrepreneurial Impact to Stimulate Economic Growth among Underserved Groups in North America" includes consortia members from universities in the United States, Mexico and Canada.

**Business Plan Competition WKU campus wide** - the CEI developed the WKU Business Plan Competition for the entire WKU Campus and over the past three years more than 300 students have participated. Six local awards have been given and the WKU winners have participated in the state wide Entrepreneurship Competition.

**Kentucky State Idea University - State Entrepreneurship Competition** - The Center sponsored 10 groups of students, of which 6 received awards, in the 2010 State Level business plan competition. Students from the CEI have won the Distinguished Governors Innovation Award for the past two of three years.

**PGA Play Golf America** - The Center developed a Think Tank Institute to identify revenue streams for the PGA Play Golf program—A program funded by Kenny Perry a local Pro Golfer.

**Judge for Green Entrepreneurial Leadership Institute (GEL-IN)** - Wil Clouse served as Judge, under the direction of the Hardin County School System, the Lincoln Trail Innovation Center (Dept. of Commercialization and Innovation for Kentucky) and Kentucky Student Ventures Corp., over 150 participants from the 6 county regions were present. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 made possible a summer youth program which entitled Summer Green for Ever.

**Cross Disciplinary Entrepreneurship Coleman Scholars Grant Program** - Wil Clouse developed a Cross Disciplinary Entrepreneurship Fellows program with the Coleman foundation. The program is designed to encourage the infusion of Entrepreneurship principles into classes outside of the College of Business. Seven WKU Faculty members outside of GFCB are participating in the program and four more WKU faculty members will be a part of the 2011 program. The WKU Center is one of 21 Universities to be invited to work with the Coleman Foundation.

**Southern Growth Institute think Tank** - Wil Clouse and faculty developed a Think Tank Institute for the Southern Growth Institute with John Bonaguro, Dean, College of Health & Human Services and Leah Ashwil of the ALIVE Center. The Think Tank Institute was held at the Bowling Green Chamber of Commerce.

### SIFE Team

**Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) Team**

The SIFE Team, directed by Krist Schell, has a remarkable record in carrying out the mission and vision of the Students in Free Enterprise Program. They have won several Regional Competitions and they were ranked 20 in the nation in the 2010 competition. Some of the SIFE projects are as follows:

**Kenya: International Advocacy and Economic Development** - WKU SIFE developed and supported the Kasigau Weaver's Cooperative through the sales and marketing of baskets in the third year of this project. Having raised a record $6,000 for direct return to the villages, the Team is seeking ways to help the Cooperative establish greater independence and connection with international venues for basket sales. SIFE Team members travel to Kenya each year to further the development of this enterprise.

**DECA/FBLA**

WKU SIFE coordinated events and assignments for hundreds of DECA and FBLA participants in separate events. During the two day competitions the Team provided constructive feedback to DECA and FBLA members and chose winners in multiple categories.

**Kelly Autism Center: KAP’s Creations**

WKU SIFE has capitalized on its entrepreneurial spirit to help autistic children become self-reliant by working with the Kelly Autism Center, a nationally recognized program. The WKU SIFE met with middle and high school students twice a week, this school year, to educate participants on aspects of entrepreneurship, while working with local businesses to find a potential retail outlet for their products.

**2nd Chance**

2nd Chance is an eight week program with the mission to educate inmates on the skills necessary to succeed in the workforce. The need for this program is critical because 90% of Green River's inmates will eventually be released from prison, and without guidance many of the men released will return to prison.

**WKU SIFE Print Center**

The WKU SIFE Print Center was established five years ago through a $300,000 collaborative effort with the WKU Auxiliary Services and IKON Office Solutions. This venture has quickly gained momentum while providing the WKU SIFE team with substantial recognition across campus, and the SIFE Print Center now grosses about $1,000 a week. Twelve WKU SIFE students have operated the Center as interns and employees.

**Finance 101**

This project was designed to help high school students understand debt and credit card issues. The Team held a session for over 100 high school students from a local high school and presented information on personal financial issues such as: balancing a checkbook, money management, savings options and goals, credit cards, advantages and disadvantages of credit, interest, and financing.

**Air Ca$h**

Air Ca$h is a project about leveraging social responsibility with economic gain. The WKU SIFE team approached this effort with the intent of introducing the Bowling Green community to the small changes they could make that, when combined, create a huge environmental advantage. This project was held at local gas stations and consisted of an initial survey of knowledge, a pamphlet describing how drivers can gain financially and contribute environmentally by keeping their tires at the correct pressure, and a two question quiz.

**11th Street Alternative School**

This facility is often the last chance these students have to avoid the penal system. The WKU SIFE team decided to focus meetings around building these students’ business personal successes skills such as filling out applications and resume creation, and discussions of ethics.
Idea State U

**Business Plan Competition - April 22-23, 2011**

April 22-23, 2011 a select team of WKU students will be in Kentucky's new statewide business concept and business plan competition titled *Idea State U* which is designed to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship by rewarding participating student teams from the commonwealth's eight four-year state universities. Winning teams will be those judged as having the best new business concepts and business plans for proposed new ventures. (Existing businesses or proposed ventures having previously received funding from investors are excluded from the competition.)

The Center have sponsored students in previous years to compete in the business plan competition. One of the students, Austin Schroll, won The Governor's Innovation Award for the most technologically significant entry. This was the second consecutive year WKU engineering students won the award under CEI direction. The Center looks forward to this year's competition and sponsoring future innovators.

**Entrepreneurial Spirit—Dr. Dawn Bolton**

The Impact of Entrepreneurial Orientation on Technology Use was the focus of a survey developed by Dr. Dawn Bolton and Dr. Michelle Lane. The survey was developed to better understand the entrepreneurial orientation of students and how it correlates with their use of social networking technology.

Over 1,400 individuals from various different concentrations of study, participated in the entrepreneurship survey sponsored by the Entrepreneurship Center within the Gordon Ford College of Business at WKU.

Survey results will be used to enhance entrepreneurial education, to help understand the methods college-age students might use to develop their entrepreneurial ventures, and to provide the foundation for understanding the use of social networking services by entrepreneurs in general.

**Highlight on CEI Faculty**

**Professor Marvel and Torger go to Africa**

WKU faculty partnered with Professor Charles Kimwele, with the University of Nairobi's Animal Physiology and Biology and his 5 interdisciplinary students. The two groups worked collaboratively to investigate multifaceted problems like human and community-wildlife conflict within Kasigau's villages.

Western Kentucky Professors Matt Marvel and Lauren Torger studied the business and entrepreneurial activities of the villages and how they are progressing as individuals and as communities. As part of this initiative, interviews were conducted with over 160 business owners to assess their challenges and help understand how they can grow their business ventures more effectively.

**Think Tank**

Dr. Wil Clouse, Director for the Center of Entrepreneurship and Innovation led a think tank seminar with various members of the business community that gathered to brainstorm innovative ideas on behalf of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

The 15 members of this committee gave helpful insight on the progress of the Center and encouragement of how to progress further in partnering with the Bowling Green community. Slaughter Miller, Director of Regional Development, shared that he "had no idea how dynamic the Center of Entrepreneurship" was and continued the discussion by sharing ideas to further partnership with the Bowling Green community and promote public awareness.

At the end of the meeting Dr. Clouse was particularly encouraged by the ideas shared and the plans to moved forward in development.
An Ongoing Discussion...

We have presented the above information to stimulate thinking and discussion about entrepreneurship at the regional and international levels. We invite you to visit our website www.wku.edu/cei where we will have ongoing activities and Problem Based Cases in Innovation, Creativity, Humor and Entrepreneurship. We envision that the electronic Discussion Forum will stimulate new, exciting and creative ventures in entrepreneurship.

We would be happy to announce activities and events related to entrepreneurship and economic development via this electronic Forum.

Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation  
Gordon Ford College of Business  
Western Kentucky University  
Bowling Green, KY 42101  
Copyright ©2011-R.Wilburn Clouse

For more information and to submit research, cases and items of interest about Entrepreneurship, please contact one of the people listed below:

R. Wilburn Clouse, Ph.D. (Wil)  
Executive Director  
Matti Newman Ford  
Professor of Entrepreneurship  
Phone: (615)595-9461 or  
(270)799-9422  
wil.clouse@wku.edu

Krist Schell, MBA  
Director  
Sam Walton Fellow  
Phone: (270) 745-6864  
krist.schell@wku.edu

Meredith McGrew, B.A.  
Communication Coordinator  
meredyth.mcgrew@wku.edu