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Covington, KY – The Kentucky Innovation Network at Northern Kentucky ezone announced today that five companies have been named finalists in the Northern Kentucky Business Pitch Competition. The Kentucky Innovation Network and Kentucky Angel Investors are sponsoring the Competition, which is managed by the ezone.

The five finalists are:

- Garret Frey, founder, EasySync – provides a smartphone application that increases the organizational skills of students.
- Casey Williams, co-founder, Linkedü – a social content sharing platform for teachers.
- Michel Guntern, founder, Travel Notes – an app that communicates an individual’s travel plans to their financial institutions.
- Matthew Miles and David Adbon, founders, Verdant Applied Sciences – developed tools that enable companies to reduce environmental impact, by recovering and reusing chemicals and solvents, while improving the bottom line.
- Bob Cassity, founder, Yves Law – offers a web application that provides hybrid legal solutions.

The finalists will receive coaching from the Northern Kentucky ezone and make their pitches to CONNETIC Fund founder, Brad Zapp, and other members of the Fund on May 27 at UpTech. The public is invited to attend by registering here. \$1,500 in prize money will be awarded to first and second place.

“We are excited to help these entrepreneurs hone their presentation skills and business plans for the Pitch Competition on May 27,” said Casey Barach, director of the Kentucky Innovation Network at Northern Kentucky ezone, UpTech founder and Senior Vice President of Tri-ED. “It’s a tremendous opportunity for these startups to present to the Northern Kentucky-based CONNETIC Fund and win a cash prize.”

Applications for the Competition were accepted from entrepreneurs and companies from 11 counties, including Boone, Kenton, Campbell, Carrol, Gallatin, Owen, Grant, Pendleton, Harrison, Bracken and Robertson counties. The Competition is a collaboration of the many entrepreneur resource organizations – the Kentucky Innovation Network, Northern Kentucky Tri-ED, the ezone and UpTech – that support entrepreneur events and programs in Northern Kentucky.

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About Northern Kentucky Tri-ED:

Founded in 1987, the Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (Tri-ED) serves as the primary economic development marketing agency for Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties in Northern Kentucky. Since 1987, 600 companies have located or expanded in Northern Kentucky accounting for the creation of 51,600 new primary jobs for a total of 120,800 jobs created. These jobs have generated an economic impact of \$25B. New and expanding companies have accounted for \$6.9B in capital investment. Tri-ED is a key partner in Vision 2015, a 10-year strategic plan for growth in the region. For more information, visit www.NorthernKentuckyusa.com. Northern Kentucky Tri-ED can also be followed through social media channels via Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube.

About Northern Kentucky ezone

The Northern Kentucky ezone, a division of Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation and operator of the Kentucky Innovation Network’s Northern Kentucky Office, provides support for start-up

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entrepreneurs and established companies commercializing a new product, technology or process. Support includes early-stage capital in the form of grants, loans, forgivable loans and equity investments through the Kentucky Enterprise Funds and the Kentucky Department of Commercialization and Innovation. Since the program began in 2001, the ezone has assisted 350 companies, helping raise over \$160 million in grants, equity and forgivable loans for Northern Kentucky companies. The ezone has assisted clients in achieving 44 awards from state funding sources. To discover more, visit www.NorthernKentuckyezone.com

About Kentucky Innovation Network

The Kentucky Innovation Network provides business assistance to entrepreneurs from 13 locations across the state. Formed in 2002 by the Cabinet for Economic Development, the Kentucky Innovation Network serves all 120 counties throughout the Commonwealth from 13 offices, including Covington, focusing on the development of innovation-driven companies in Kentucky. Visit www.kyinnovation.com for more information.