

NEWS RELEASE:

11 December 2009

Big Business Backs Leeds Young People in Pitch 4 Change!

On Friday 11th December, 5 teams of young people pitched their ideas for improving their community to a panel of local business representatives and received a total of £2165 in funding for their projects.

Youth charity organisation Envision works with over 200 young people aged 16-19 every week in 16 of Leeds' schools and colleges, supporting them in developing and implementing community projects. Five of the Envision School Teams were selected to pitch their project ideas to a panel of local business representatives in order to receive funding for projects which benefit their local communities. Envision are working in partnership with the enterprising community organisation Tiger11, who hosted the Pitch 4 Change at Hillside in Beeston.

The teams of young people were grilled by a panel of business 'dragons' which included: **Yorkshire Bank** partners Ken Williams and Mike Harvey; Jeremy Piercy, Founder of **Shared Earth**; Nicky McEnery, Recruitment manager for **TD Waterhouse**; and Julie Cullen, Regional Cares Manager for **Business in the Community**.

Schools' success:

- The Envision Team from **Priesthorpe School** secured **£500** in funding to produce a documentary which gets to the bottom of the social divides in their local area, by highlighting inconsistencies within media reporting, misconceptions, stereotypes and ignorance. They hope that by focusing on what we have in common they can help bring people together.
- The "**Wastebusters**" from **Abbey Grange School** nailed **£250** in support for their 'project which will tackle the problems of waste and littering both school and the community, by introducing better facilities and running a publicity campaign.
- **Pudsey Grangefield School** earned full funding of **£500** for their anti-bullying initiative, and will use the funds to train up senior students who will act as mentors for younger children who are being bullied. The judges were impressed by the team who had already made a film and a presentation about the effects of bullying which they are currently showing to younger years.
- **The Make a Difference (MAD) Crew** from **Primrose High** were awarded **£415** in funding for the celebration of culture and religion which they are organising for their school. They hope it will promote greater community cohesion within the school and beyond into the local community.
- **Lawnswood School's** Envision team were thrilled to be awarded **£500** in order to run an exciting programme of arts and sports activities for children in under privileged areas, providing the children with the chance to spend time with older young people who are positive role models, whilst having lots of fun!

Envision Leeds, Suite 7, Tiger 11, Hillside, Beeston Road, Leeds LS11 8ND

www.envision.org.uk

Envision (full name Environmental Vision) is registered as a Charity and a Limited Company in England and Wales
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Students were supported in their bid by Councillor Mohammed Rafique, who presented them with their cheques and pledged his support for future events held by the young people.

What they said:

“Pitch 4 Change has been a fantastic opportunity for young people to develop their skills and employability at a time when youth unemployment is such a prominent concern. It's really exciting that our panel of business leaders want to continue to be involved with these young people, and support them as they develop their projects. The involvement of the business mentors can only strengthen the students' projects and help them make even more of a positive impact on their community.” **Katherine Myles, Regional Coordinator Manager, Envision Leeds**

“The most rewarding thing I got from [Pitch 4 Change] was that we can see our idea being put into action, and we've shown that we can do it!” **Rochelle, 6th Form Student at Lawnswood School**

“Envision has had such a positive impact on all of our students, they all really enjoy it and I think it's definitely got them thinking about some important issues, as well as being able to have a lot of fun at the same time. They really look forward to the Envision Team coming into school. Envision's Pitch 4 Change is an amazing project for our students to be involved with, and they've all been really excited about it. A lot of thought's gone into. I think it's such a good think because it brings in so many different people from the community and it's really allowed my students to get the message out there about important issues that they're all thinking about.” **Sasha Leader, Post 16 Development Leader, Primrose High.**

I thought [Pitch 4 Change] was fantastic. I was very impressed by the level of expertise that the young people actually demonstrated and the amount of thought and preparation that they'd taken was fantastic. It's been amazing” **Nicky McEnergy, Recruitment Manager at TD Waterhouse, and Pitch 4 Change “Dragon”.**

-ENDS-

Editors Notes:

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For more information about Envision go www.envision.org.uk

Notes to editors:

- Envision provides young people with the opportunity to make a difference. The charity was established in 2000 by four young people who wanted to challenge the stereotype that young people are apathetic and disengaged.
- Today Envision supports 16-19 year olds from 100 schools and colleges in Greater London, Birmingham and Leeds, helping over 3000 young people every year to design their own local community projects tackling issues ranging from street crime to climate change.
- Tiger11 is a community development trust in Beeston and Holbeck. Founded by local residents, its first project was to create a community enterprise centre in a former primary school, which is a Victorian Grade II listed building. All of the profits from the income streams generated through letting state of the art office space, conference

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facilities and meeting rooms is reinvested into the community. For further information about Pitch 4 Change and for details about the other Pitch 4 Change events happening around the country next week please go to www.envision.org.uk/businesses/pitch4change

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