



CAREER NEXT STEP AWARDED FIRST PRIZE IN UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION

Career Next Step receives unanimous vote of confidence from panel of three venture capitalists at the annual business plan competition

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Virginia, February 23, 2005. Career Next Step today announced that the company has received 1st prize in the annual University of Virginia Business Plan Competition. In winning first prize, Career Next Step receives a cash prize of \$10,000, as well as financial and logistical support for two years through the Darden Progressive Incubator.

“We are honored and excited by the feedback from the competition judges and the market,” second-year student and Vice President of Sales Mark Higgins said. “We believe that rewarding careers are a function of passion, and Career Next Step empowers individuals to find careers that tap their unique passions. We are working around the clock to make our products accessible and affordable to everybody who shares the simple belief that passion for one’s career is possible.”

Career Next Step evolved from the Self Assessment and Career Development process that Professor James G. Clawson and Director of Alumni Career Services, W. Herbert Crowder, III have delivered to Darden students and alumni for more than two decades. The basic process was originally developed at the Harvard Business School more than 25 years ago. Second-year student, Mark Higgins, and first-year student Conor Sibley joined Professor Clawson and Mr. Crowder to launch the company.

Career Next Step replicates the career development process taught by Professor Clawson by offering a series of web-based modules involving self-assessment tools, instructions for translating assessment results into career implications, and guidance on how to execute an effective job search. The company currently sells the service to the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business and another Top 25 business school. Using the money and support from the Progressive Incubator, Career Next Step plans to expand its presence at campuses and companies throughout the world.

“Everyone has aspirations, hopes and dreams about their next chapter in life,” Professor Clawson said. “Career Next Step will offer people a way of developing a self assessment profile that will give them higher levels of confidence about what will make them happiest personally and professionally. Further, CNS stores members' data for life so members can go back at any point in their career, pull up their data, revise and refine it and use it to help guide them in the next step they are contemplating. We aspire to be an individual’s on-line career counselor for life.”

About Career Next Step

Career Next Step is a web-based self assessment and career development service. Using a battery of proven self-assessment instruments, guided results interpretation, and career search best practices, Career Next Step enables individuals to identify career paths that match their unique personal profile. The service is derived from an award winning course developed at the Harvard Business School in the late 1970s and continuously administered at the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business over the last 25 years to incoming MBA students. The Career Next Step site was launched for beta testing during the fall of 2005, and is now available for use by business schools, undergraduate universities, corporations, and individual career changers. Additional information can be found at www.careernextstep.com.

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