

Teenagers attend Concordia University entrepreneur summer camp in Irvine

Christian Examiner staff report

IRVINE — Forty high school students, some from as far away as China, attended Concordia University's inaugural Teen Entrepreneur Academy.

The camp, which ran from July 15 to 20, catered to aspiring young business owners with curriculum that encouraged inventiveness and creativity, while teaching entrepreneurship principles for future business start-ups. Assisting the students were 25 local entrepreneurs and business owners, who as guest speakers, shared their real-world experiences. The lectures complemented the curriculum and textbook "Young Entrepreneur's Guide to Starting a Business," which covers such topics as identifying problems, seeing needs, creating opportunities, developing the business idea, sales, marketing, competition and financing.

In establishing the camp, Concordia President Dr. Kurt Krueger cited a 2011 Gallup survey which revealed that 85 percent of America's teenagers indicated that they wish they had more business education in high school, with 75 percent indicated they wanting to learn how to start their own business.

"This is the need we responded to," Krueger said. "People say, 'It's never too late.' We say, 'It's never too early' to introduce teenagers to entrepreneurship principles."

Academy attendees spent six days living and working on the Concordia campus and going on field trips to area companies. The academy concluded with a business plan competition that offered a \$1,000 prize to the best business plan, said Stephen Christensen, who founded



Students enrolled in the inaugural Teen Entrepreneur Academy listen to one of their instructors during the weeklong camp, which was held at Concordia University in Irvine.

the Teen Entrepreneur Academy.

Adam Brownell, a student at San Clemente High School, took home the prize for his start-up business, a social media company called Juke-Box, designed as an online, entertainment-oriented social media business that creates a platform for upcoming musical artists and independent studios to showcase their new work,

"Our goal is to introduce entrepreneurial skills at an early age and nurture an entrepreneurial drive and values that would set students on the right path for success in achieving their career and life goals," said Christensen, who also

serves as Concordia's executive vice president for external relations and is an entrepreneurship business instructor.

The program leader said he developed the program to counter a declining job market for teens ages 16 to 19 by increasing start-up companies and small businesses, which account for most of today's job creation. In addition to the practical skills taught by the academy, its focus is to foster creativity, knowledge, independence, integrity and entrepreneurial ventures among teens. It also encourages students to complete high school and attend college.

Sponsors for the program include UPS, Entrepreneur Magazine, Definiti Healthcare Management, Orange County Business Council, Irvine Chamber of Commerce, OC METRO, U.S. Small Business Administration, Wright, Ford, Young & Company, Faith and Work Life and the Concordia University Center for Faith & Business. Additional partners include Century High School, Santa Ana High, Nicholas Academic Centers, NOVA Academy/Olive Crest Foster Homes, Delhi Center and Human Options.

For more information, visit www.cui.edu/yea.



A quiet place, far from the hectic pace... where blue skies, clean air, peace and fun abound



Christian Camp and Conference Center

Located in a serene valley nestled in the San Jacinto Foothills, 7.5 miles southeast of Hemet. 285 acres with two large ranch-style lodges accommodating up to 120 people. Offering comprehensive retreat packages year round for all kinds of retreats. Delicious meals catered.

Hayrides through the canyon • Canoeing • Archery range • Hiking trails • 2-acre grass athletic field • Obstacle course • Amphitheater w/ fire circle • Swimming pools • Volleyball

(951) 658-2943 • www.paradisevalleyranch.org