

YEA! – Homestead collaborators creating young entrepreneurs

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MIAMI — Miami Dade College's (MDC) School of Continuing Education is participating in a national program geared toward helping local students in grades 6 through 12 learn the process of starting a running a real business.

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) Program, in collaboration with MDC, will give students the opportunity to work closely with local business leaders to cultivate and research business ideas, write a business plan, pitch their plan to a panel of investors, obtain funding, develop their brand, participate in a trade show at the end of the year, and actually launch their enterprise.

Launched by the Greater Homestead and Florida City Chamber of Commerce for the fall of 2013, MDC's Homestead Campus will offer the program as a course, and facilitate the registration, and provide classrooms, administrative, and marketing assistance.

By partnering with YEA!, both large and small companies/businesses volunteer their time and services acting as business mentors, field-trip hosts, guest lecturers, graphic designers, web developers, attorneys, etc. Community support strengthens the program, and the academy strengthens the community.

"Small businesses play such a vital part in the strength of the local economy," said Jeanne F. Jacobs, Homestead Campus president and a chamber supporter. "It is critical that we support entrepreneurship and encourage students to develop their sense of business at an early age."

Final details of the program and how students can apply are being refined and the chamber is actively seeking local business sponsors for the maximum of 24 students who will be selected for the program.

The 30 weeks of instruction, mentoring, and hands-on work will take place from October 2013 to May 2014 when one or more young entrepreneurs will be eligible to compete on the national level for valuable scholarships.

For more information about the Young Entrepreneurs Academy, contact Rosa Brito, executive director for the Chamber of Commerce, at 305-247-2332 or rbrito@chamberinaction.com