



## Canada's Brightest Entrepreneurs Face Off in National Competition

*- 2009 Nicol Entrepreneurial Award Finalists Announced -*

For Immediate Release

OTTAWA, Ontario (March 16, 2009) –The next generation of young Canadian entrepreneurs is getting set to face off in a boardroom in the Nation's Capital to compete for the prestigious National Nicol Entrepreneurial Award.

Participating in this year's Nicol Award competition are teams from across the country, including Acadia University, Carleton University, St. Francis Xavier University, the University of Victoria, the University of Western Ontario and Wilfrid Laurier University. The teams have advanced from local competitions at their own schools, with entries from thirteen of Canada's top universities.

The Nicol Award, launched in 1997, is unique for its emphasis on the value of the entrepreneurial spirit and the key role it plays in the success of a business. No other business award offers as true-to-life an experience or is as inclusive as the Nicol Award, which welcomes entries from any undergraduate student with a solid business idea, from any program.

Even though he's faced some challenges this past year, Chris Carmichael, winner of the 2008 Nicol Award credits the experience for giving him the confidence to roll with the punches and realize success. "Competing for the Nicol Award gave me the confidence to trust my instincts and make solid business decisions even when faced with unexpected hurdles," said Carmichael. "This competition gave me a real taste of what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur. The total experience, from developing an idea to pitching it to venture capitalists, is invaluable – you can't get this experience in a classroom."

In the midst of the current global economic crisis founder Wes Nicol believes that the Nicol Award is more relevant than ever. "People with a strong entrepreneurial spirit and good business sense are going to play an extremely important role in driving the Canadian economy forward in the coming years," said Nicol, a successful Ottawa business leader. "I founded this competition 12 years ago to encourage that spirit and provide students with a true-to-life, supportive venue to develop and test their business ideas. The fact that so many universities across Canada are participating and encouraging their entrepreneurs is a good sign for the future."



## The Nicol Entrepreneurial Award

The 2009 Nicol Award will be presented during the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Nicol Award Gala on March 24, 2009 at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier Hotel. Mr. Nicol is pleased to welcome Mr. Frank McKenna, Deputy Chairman of TD Bank Financial Group and former Canadian Ambassador to the United States, as the keynote speaker at the event.

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For more information or to arrange interviews with the finalists, please contact:

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