



Downtown Eau Claire, Inc.  
203 S. Farwell St.  
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[www.NothingArtificial.org](http://www.NothingArtificial.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Jump-Start Downtown Business Competition 2009**

EAU CLAIRE, WI – Downtown Eau Claire, Inc. (DECI) announced today the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Jump-Start Downtown Business Competition. Again this year the winner will be awarded \$5,000 in start-up capital to open a new business in downtown Eau Claire or to relocate an existing business to the heart of the city. New this year is additional \$500 in airtime or advertising production given to the winner by Charter Media. The competition also awards a \$1,000 scholarship to the Entrepreneurial Training Program by the UWEC – Continuing Education Small Business Development Center for a business plan with the most innovative idea. Entries are due by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

“This is our 5<sup>th</sup> year we have been running this competition and every year we see more interest in the downtown area and better business plans. It is very exciting.” said Mike Schatz, the Executive Director of Downtown Eau Claire, Inc.,

According to the Small Business Administration (SBA), small firms have generated 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs annually over the last decade and on average, small innovative firms produce 13 times more patents per employee than large patenting firms. In addition, those patents are twice as likely as large firms to be among the most widely used patents.

As part of the business competition DECI offers several seminars for aspiring entrepreneurs:

- Business Plan Basics: March 26, 2009 (6-8p.m. at Western Dairyland - \$5 fee includes light dinner)
- Financials and Projections: April 16, 2009 (6-8p.m. at Western Dairyland - \$5 fee includes light dinner)
- One-on-one Business Consulting: April 22, 2008 (5.30-8 p.m. at Eau Claire City Hall - free)

“Many other business plan competitions only offer a cash prize but do nothing to assist entrepreneurs in successfully running their business. That is why DECI partners with Western Dairyland’s Women’s Business Center and the Small Business Development Center to bring helpful seminars into the community.” said Dagmar Beckel, DECI’s Business Assistance Specialist. Beckel also emphasized that the seminars are open to all public.

To register for seminars or business counseling, please contact Dagmar Beckel at (715) 839-4914 to confirm your reservation. Additional details about the business competition and application can be obtained online at [www.NothingArtificial.org](http://www.NothingArtificial.org).

#### **About DECI**

Downtown Eau Claire, Inc. (DECI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the development of business, housing, and cultural resources and activities within downtown Eau Claire. DECI is driven by a Board of Directors consisting of twenty-one members who represent businesses, neighborhoods, government, and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) that operate in Downtown Eau Claire. Public meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30am.

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