



**BIZCONNECT**  
CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP



## January 2016 Newsletter

### Free Training and Mentoring in the 2016 HCC Newspring Business Plan Competition

#### Helps Entrepreneurs Start or Grow

Five free training sessions and mentorship from February through April help Business Plan Competition (BPC) contestants refine and polish plans to start or grow their businesses. Are you considering applying for the 2016 Competition? Read about those that have gone before you and get inspired to take action now! 2016 BPC Application Deadline is January 20th!

### Celebrating Small Business Successes - Former Contestants

**Night Light Pediatrics - Zwadi Bryant** - "I didn't win prize money but the BPC mentorship and training helped me plan for three new locations. Our Pearland location opened Fall 2014 and we hit breakeven in month four, less than half the time it took to breakeven at our earlier locations! We opened in Humble in February 2015 and in Webster in September 2015" (creating 17 more jobs this year). Zwadi also won a Pinnacle Award from the Greater Houston Black Chamber of Commerce in Fall 2015. [More](#)



**Texas Swim Academy, Bruce McMordie** - Bruce McMordie is the founder/co-founder of Texas Swim Academy, a family-owned swim school for infants, children and adults. They were particularly attracted to the HCC Newspring Business Plan Competition because it offered the opportunity to move four key people (husband, wife, son and another company employee) through three months of competition mentoring and training as a collaborative team. The McMordies created a plan to expand further by building another facility and by adding competitive swim team training and activities. They also allowed the competition to be a platform for moving their son William into a stronger lead role in the business. William did the verbal presentation in the competition finals this past April 2015, and their team won first place! Since then, the McMordies have identified and secured the land for their new location. They are now planning to break ground this September and open in Spring 2017. [More](#)



**Math Philanthropy - Bon Crowder** - "The business plan competition gave the company a huge shot in the arm. It's hard to be an expert in your field and start a business. The business acumen isn't there - at least it wasn't for us. You're not just clueless on the answers but also on the questions to ask. The BPC advisors, Bil Gentner and Terry Eleftheriou, helped us navigate through our questions as well as those yet to come. And the HCC class gave our founder an awesome business foundation. We're moving steadily to success." [More](#)



**Destination 4 Relocation - Landi Spearman** -- Landi's team did not win competition prize money, but she won big with the plan that the competition helped her team create. Since the competition, she has rolled out an expanded line of services through several key partners including Pottery Barn, Crate & Barrel, Gite Art Gallery, Cantoni Furnishings, Whole Foods and the Houstonian Spa and Athletic Club. Average client commissions have increased from \$5,000 to between \$8,000 to \$12,000; and she's also added two new contract staff. Before the competition, her target market was local relocations. Now she is doing business in Washington D.C., New York, New Jersey, Pittsburg, Chicago, Atlanta, Baltimore and Mexico. [More](#)



## Take Action to Apply Now - 2016 HCC Newspring Business Plan Competition

**Get Started and Apply Early - You Could be Accepted Prior to the January 20 Application Deadline!**

Three Basic Steps:

- 1) Class
- 2) Competition
- 3) Prize Money!

The BPC is a great opportunity for start-up and existing entrepreneurs to refine, update and polish a plan to launch or grow their businesses! Application Deadline is January 20!



In order to apply, you must either take the 1) Small Business Management Class; or the 2) Creating a Successful Business Plan Class; or 3) have graduated from the HCC Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* program. Still need to sign up for the class? See below.

[More on the Competition and Past Winners](#)

For questions email [c4e@hccs.edu](mailto:c4e@hccs.edu) or call 713-718-6650.

Last year, we awarded \$26,000 in prize money to the top five teams!

## More Great News

### LiftFund Signs On to Sponsor \$6,000 in Prize Money for the 2016 HCC Newspring Business Plan Competition

#### Micro Lending Training, Education and Counseling at HCC NW Throughout 2016

HCC welcomes [LiftFund](http://www.liftfund.com) as a 2016 Competition Sponsor and Strategic Partner to the Center for Entrepreneurship at HCC NW. This generous \$6,000 prize money donation will empower winners in the competition and LiftFund will also prove to be an invaluable resource to all BPC contestants interested in pursuing micro lending. For over twenty years LiftFund has provided millions of dollars in microloans and other small business loans to deserving entrepreneurs who are planning to start, stabilize or expand a business.



Throughout 2016, LiftFund will partner in a number of ways with our Center for Entrepreneurship locations at HCC Spring Branch and our new location opening at the HCC Alief Hayes Road Campus to serve aspiring and existing entrepreneurs. "We look forward to working with the outstanding Center for Entrepreneurship team at HCC NW and are extremely excited about entering into this strategic partnership with them. Our combined goal is to empower all 2016 Competition contestants with knowledge on how to move forward with their businesses and achieve their goals and objectives," Richard Gianni, Market President, Houston, Regional President, East Texas Region, LiftFund.

## Upcoming Reception and Seminar

### Mix & Mingle BPC Reception & Showcase - Aspiring & Existing Business Owners

**Wednesday January 13, 4:30pm - 6:00pm**

**Wallis State Bank, 2929 W Sam Houston Pkwy N (Beltway 8 at Kempwood)**

Join us at Wallis State Bank to mix and mingle at a reception for HCC Newspring Business Plan Competition (BPC). Who is invited:

- BPC Competition Alumni
- All Applicants for the 2016 BPC (and for those considering applying)
- Community Partners and Supporters



- Business Plan Competition Partners including Newspring, Wallis State Bank, Amegy Bank, LiftFund, Constant Contact, and more..

Come be inspired, meet BPC master trainers, competition mentors and BPC sponsors! Also meet and talk with past contestants and see how the competition helped them start or grow their businesses. [For More & To RSVP](#)

## Lunch-N-Learn Seminar - Business Plan Prep and Funding for Small Business Expansion and Startups

**Friday January 15, 12:30pm-3:30pm**  
**HCC Spring Branch, Commons**

Small business owners are invited to join HCC and SCORE as we host a line-up of experts on creating a plan to start or grow your business and on securing funding to make it happen. Learn, ask questions and make invaluable connections!

Featured Topics: Prepare a Plan to Start or Grow Your Business and to Seek Funding through the Small Business Administration, SBA Lenders and/or a Micro-Lender. Featured presenters from SCORE, SBA, Wallis State Bank and LiftFund.



[For More Details and to Register Now](#)

## Upcoming Classes Related to the HCC Newspring BPC

### Still Need to Sign Up for Class to Apply for the Competition?

#### Take **Creating a Successful Business Plan** or take **Small Business Management**

**Creating a Successful Business Plan** - Take this six-week, online continuing education class offering 24 hours of instruction.

**Small Business Management** - Another option is to go deep and get 48 contact hours of instruction over sixteen weeks, earning either three hours of college credit or 4.8 continuing education units.



## Creating a Successful Business Plan Class

### Online Six-Week, 24-Hour Continuing Education Class

Sign up for one of the six-week, 24-hour online continuing education classes below with instructor Kris Solie-Johnson, chancellor and president of the American Institute of Small Business, and best-selling author, educator and speaker.

Choose one of the sessions below:

- 6 Weeks - Starts January 13, Ends February 19; OR
- 6 Weeks - Starts February 10, Ends March 18
- [For More Information & To Enroll](#)

For questions regarding enrolling in these classes: call 713-718-5149/713-718-5149 or email [anna.go@hccs.edu](mailto:anna.go@hccs.edu).



For questions regarding the business plan competition: call 713-718-6650 or email [c4e@hccs.edu](mailto:c4e@hccs.edu)

## Small Business Management Class

### Sixteen-Week Class, For College Credit Hours or Continuing Education Units

The two sessions listed below are 16-week class sessions available either for college credit or for continuing education units. A link is also provided for additional college credit sessions offered across the HCC district. This class goes deep and delivers 48 contact hours of instruction:

- Saturday Class, 10:30am-12:00pm, January 19-May 15 OR
- On-Line, January 19 - May 15
- [For More on These Sessions and To Enroll](#)
- [For Additional College Credit Sessions](#)



For questions regarding the business plan competition: call 713-718-6650 or email [c4e@hccs.edu](mailto:c4e@hccs.edu)

### About the HCC Center for Entrepreneurship

The mission of Houston Community College's Center for Entrepreneurship is to provide education and training for entrepreneurs and small business owners. Our mission fosters economic growth through business and community development. [More details.](#)