

Governor's Cup is key step for many students

BY TOM WALKER [0 Comments](#)

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On Thursday, the graduate and undergraduate winners of the 2010 [Donald W. Reynolds](#) Governor's Cup Collegiate Business Plan Competition will be announced at the sixth annual Governor's Cup awards dinner.

The dinner, always a gala event, caps months of work by hundreds of entrepreneurial [Oklahoma](#) college students. The teams submitted their written business plans in early March.

The plans were evaluated through an independent review process, and the competition was narrowed to 12 undergraduate division semifinalists and seven graduate division finalists.

These students gave their oral presentations on Friday and Saturday to judging panels of Oklahoma business people.

It was an exciting two days, and the pressure on these student teams was intense. After all, they are competing for nearly \$200,000 in cash awards in the Governor's Cup and next month's Tri-State competition in [Las Vegas](#). The top two Oklahoma teams in each division will go on to compete with winners from [Arkansas](#) and [Nevada](#).

After the oral competition, I had a conversation with [Timothy Harlin](#), a graduating senior at [Oklahoma City University](#) who has competed in the Governor's Cup three years in a row.

In 2008, after taking third place in the undergraduate division, Harlin and his teammates from OCU entered the [Lee Kuan Yew](#) Global Business Plan Competition in [Singapore](#).

In a field of 212 teams from 15 countries and 70 universities, with judges from around the globe, the OCU team captured second place in the world, bringing home another \$7,500 plus the experience of meeting business leaders and other young entrepreneurs from around the world.

If it hadn't been for the Governor's Cup, Harlin told me, the team would not have even considered entering an international event.

And this is the point of the Governor's Cup.

The benefits of this program don't end with the annual awards dinner.

The Governor's Cup is a catalyst. This competition attracts many of our best and brightest potential entrepreneurs and propels them on to do great things — whether it is placing in an international competition, earning a graduate degree, or carrying out their entrepreneurial dreams.

[Tom Walker](#) is president and CEO of [i2E, Inc.](#), a not-for-profit corporation that mentors many of the state's technology-based startup companies. i2E receives state appropriations from the [Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology](#). Contact him at i2E_Comments@i2E.org.

More Info

DID YOU KNOW?

More than two dozen Governor's competitors have received scholarships and internships. At least seven new companies have been started by Governor's Cup alumni, and at least 11 Oklahoma companies that have benefited from the research, writing and business plans created by participating Governor's Cup teams are now in the proof-of-concept stage.

Read more: <http://newsok.com/governors-cup-is-key-step-for-many-students/article/3453379#ixzz0l0jP3qPB>