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UC Davis Child Family Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Announces Syngas Challenge Prize

DAVIS, CALIF. — The UC Davis Child Family Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship announces the new Syngas Challenge prize, sponsored by Davis-based Sierra Energy, as part of the 2015–16 Big Bang! Business Plan Competition.

The Syngas Challenge will award a total of \$10,000 for first and a second place prizes to the competition teams with the most innovative applications focused on syngas (or synthesis gas) uses and end-products.

Synthesis gas is a fuel gas mixture consisting primarily of hydrogen and carbon monoxide. It has been effectively used as a replacement for natural gas in the generation of electricity, and has commercial application for re-processing into hydrogen fuel, biodiesel, ammonia and other industrial gases, fuels and molecules.

Innovations in technology have enabled the creation of synthesis gas from renewable sources, such as agricultural waste and municipal solid waste. This affords the opportunity to offset the mining and use of fossil fuels and virgin materials.

The Syngas Challenge encourages the competition teams to think outside the traditional and demonstrated applications and to identify new ways of using renewable resources to power society.

“The timing is serendipitous,” said Cleveland Justis, institute executive director. “The Big Bang! is celebrating its 15th year, and given the focus on climate issues at the international, national and state levels, we anticipate that clean energy will begin a comeback. More than 100 aspiring entrepreneurs attended our Big Bang! kickoff in October. We’re looking forward to another amazing competition focused on the best new innovations coming out of UC Davis.”

“We are excited to sponsor the Syngas Challenge, which will encourage UC Davis’ talent and innovation to spur the development of profitable, net-carbon negative fuels, chemicals and fertilizers in California,” says Sierra Energy founder Mike Hart.

The Syngas Challenge is one of a number of sponsored prizes in this year’s competition. In all, the Big Bang! will award more than \$60,000 in prize money to winning teams in May. Teams must have at least one UC Davis member (student, staff or alumni) or an approved affiliate member. For more information, visit <http://gsm.ucdavis.edu/big-bang-business-competition>.

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