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Finalists Announced for Local Kitchen Entrepreneur Challenge

Food Biz Concepts Span the Globe, Mixing History and Flavor

Milwaukee, Wis. – June 6, 2016 – This year's top food business concepts for the *Hottest Kitchen Entrepreneur Challenge* bring a sense of history, family heritage and culture to the table. Three start-up finalists and three early stage finalists will compete to find the next great start-up and early stage food entrepreneurs in Wisconsin. The Challenge is sponsored by [Milwaukee Area Technical College](#), [Reliable Water Services](#), a statewide provider of commercial water heaters, boilers and water softeners and [FaB Wisconsin](#), the state's food and beverage industry cluster network.

Start-up finalists include:

- Amber Frymark – Hales Corners, Wis. – **Zwitchel Craft Cocktail Syrup** – A gourmet cocktail syrup incorporating switchel, a drink made with water, vinegar and ginger which originated in Caribbean and became popular in American colonies in the 18th century. Natural, vegan, gluten free, this non-alcoholic syrup takes cocktails to a whole new level or combines well with ginger-based craft soda. Goal is to distribute via local bars and restaurants.
- Barkha Limbu Daily – Thiensville, Wis. – **Aachar Dipping Sauce, Pickle or Relish** – Aachar, the Hindi word for pickle is translated into a new line of dips, sauces and relishes incorporating fruits and vegetables. These gluten-free aachars (dipping sauces) have multiple uses from sauce base for other dishes, marinades or slow cooking. Goal is to sell via grocery and special stores.
- Lora Murray – Menomonee Falls, Wis. – **Sinful Whoopie** – A sweet or savory recipe of German/Polish heritage that incorporates local beer, cheeses and spices. Goal is to start a local dessert 'bus' featuring a variety of whoopie flavors including Red Velvet made with a cherry stout beer, Triple to Die for Chocolate Whoopie, Carrot Cake Whoopie with Cream Cheese, and a savory Corn and Cheese Whoopie made with fresh, grilled corn.

Early Stage finalists include:

- Stephen Glazer, West Allis, Wis. – **Stuffed Pierogis** – A recently launched food truck specializing in the Polish staple pierogi. Using a family recipe, Stephen and his wife Gosia make a wide variety of seasonal flavors including potato and cheese, mushroom and sauerkraut, braised short rib, chorizo and corn, and biscoff cookie spread for dessert. Goal is to ultimately purchase or lease larger manufacturing space as well as to sell their product in stores.



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- Laurie Pedersen – **Moondance Michelada Mix** –A concentrate mix crafted with a blend of seasonings, spices and lime juice to create the perfect Michelada. The mix also serves well in other cocktails, and as a marinade or cooking sauce. The Michelada originated in Mexico and is extremely popular there and in border states. Laurie hopes to make them just as popular here in the Midwest. Current goal is to establish relationships with quality distributors and sales brokers to expand product distribution.
- Linnea Harrington – **Linnea’s Pops & Lickers, LLP** – Handcrafted and spirited frozen treats. Every P&L is handcrafted using only the freshest ingredients and with a good time in mind. Pops=Virgin, Lickers=Alcohol. Seasonal flavors include Strawberry Basil Lemonade & Jalapeño Peach Margarita for summer and Spiced Cranberry Orange for fall. Launched in summer 2014, the goal is to resolve packaging issues and take manufacturing to the next level.

The public is invited to watch finalists compete for the grand prize at a final judging event at Noon on July 20 at Milwaukee Area Technical College’s 6th Street Café, 1015 N. 6th Street. The grand prize winner in each category will receive:

- \$2,000 in seed money from **Reliable Water Services**
- Tuition for a 3-credit course at **MATC** during the 2016-17 academic year
- Consultation with **FaB Wisconsin’s** Director of Innovation and a one-year membership in **FaB**.
- A booth at the 2017 **Midwest Foodservice Expo**
- Prize package worth \$400 from **Fein Brothers** Restaurant Equipment & Supplies

Judges for the contest include:

- Jenny Marino, president/CEO, **Angelic Bakehouse**
- Kurt Fogle, co-owner, **Bass Bay Brewhouse**
- Jan Kelly, owner and chef, **Meritage** restaurant
- Peter Gottsacker, president, **Wixon Seasonings & Flavor Systems**
- Pam Mehnert, general manager of **Outpost Natural Foods**
- Nick Maas, premise specialist for **Agave Loco LLC** (RumChata, Tippy Cow brands)
- Tonya Garrido, executive chef, **Harwood Place Independent & Assisted Senior Living**

“We are so impressed with this year’s line-up and can’t wait to see the level of energy that each food entrepreneur brings to our finalist competition,” Jan Kelly, contest judge. For more information, visit Reliable Water Services at www.reliablewater247.com/hottest-kitchen.