



For Release
September 26, 2017

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NEW TITLE SPONSOR NAMED FOR ARKANSAS'S NATIONALLY PRESTIGIOUS COLLEGIATE BUSINESS PLAN COMPETITION

Annual Cash Prize Pool of \$154,000 Continues for 2018 Student Competitors

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – [Delta Plastics of Little Rock](#), the nation's leading manufacturer and supplier of irrigation polytube for the agriculture industry and one of the country's largest recyclers of heavily soiled and contaminated plastic, is the new title sponsor for the [Arkansas Governor's Cup Collegiate Business Plan Competition](#), presented by [Arkansas Capital Corporation](#). Delta Plastics succeeds the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation, which is ceasing operations later this year.

Since 2004, Delta Plastics has invested in the Governor's Cup. For the 2011 competition, the company took on sponsorship of the competition's Innovation Division, which awards \$5,000 in cash each year to both the graduate and undergraduate division winners in that category. As the title sponsor for 2018, Delta Plastics will increase its investment in the Governor's Cup by funding a \$154,000 cash prize pool for the first, second, and third place overall winners in both the graduate and undergraduate divisions.

"We love the Governor's Cup," said Dhu Thompson, Delta Plastics' owner and chairman, citing the company's decision to be the Governor's Cup's 2018 title sponsor. Thompson said, "It's a perfect fit for our company. Delta Plastics' core values are excellence, integrity, discipline, collaboration, innovation, and sustainability. These values are also hallmarks of the Governor's Cup that we've observed over the years,

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both through the work of the student teams, the faculty advisors, and the collegiate institutions, as well as commitment of the staff of Arkansas Capital in its management of the competition."

Delta Plastics CEO Sean Whiteley added, "Besides our company's financial support, we've had several people from our team who have served as volunteer judges for the competition. This gave us the great opportunity to interact directly with Arkansas's incredible collegiate entrepreneurial talent. The Governor's Cup is unique in our state's economic development in that it showcases our future entrepreneurs and lets them discover that we have the resources here in Arkansas to start and grow successful businesses."

Arkansas Capital Corporation manages the Governor's Cup through its 501(c)(3) Arkansas Economic Acceleration Foundation (AEAF). Rush Deacon, Arkansas Capital CEO and a former member and chair of the corporation's board of directors, recalled discussions regarding the intent of the board members and staff in taking on the competition.

"We had four purposes," Deacon said. "They were to promote and support college students in their entrepreneurial endeavors and new venture creation, to encourage commercialization of promising ideas emerging from colleges and universities, to build bridges between these collegiate institutions and the entrepreneurial community, and to become one of the premier business plan competitions in the United States. Because of the partnership of committed sponsors such as the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation and now Delta Plastics, we've succeeded. Our colleges and universities have done a marvelous job taking advantage of the Governor's Cup to steer their students into some truly remarkable work. We know of at least 10 Arkansas colleges and universities that now offer a certificate, a major, a minor, or an entire degree program dedicated to entrepreneurship."

Thompson agreed. "I know collegiate faculty members, administrators, and others beyond the campuses will agree with me when I say the Governor's Cup has been pivotal in building and feeding today's flourishing entrepreneurial ecosystem in Arkansas. There are several flourishing companies in Arkansas that have their roots in the competition. Even competitors who didn't go forward with their business ideas tell me they have far greater appreciation for the entrepreneurial process and have applied both the hard and soft skills they learned from the competition in their professional careers," he said.

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Since 2001, more than 2,500 students have competed in the Governor's Cup from 24 Arkansas colleges and universities presenting 839 business ideas. Teams are judged extensively in both written and oral rounds of competition by volunteers from Arkansas's private and public sector business, industry, and government entities. The 2018 competition begins in February and will conclude with an awards luncheon April 18 in Little Rock, which has an average attendance of 800 and will feature live 90-second pitches by a representation of each of the 12 graduate and undergraduate finalist teams.

For more information on the Governor's Cup rules, required business plan contents, dates, and sponsorships, please visit the Governor's Cup website, arcapital.com/governors-cup.

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