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2009 ROCHESTER REGIONAL BUSINESS PLAN CONTEST OPENS; 1st ANNUAL “CELEBRATION OF ENTREPRENURSHIP”

Rochester, NY – High Tech Rochester announces that the 2009 Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest opens today and is now accepting applicants. The contest is a collaborative effort among community organizations including Digital Rochester, Greater Rochester Enterprise, Nazareth College School of Management, Rochester Institute of Technology, and the University of Rochester Simon Graduate School of Business.

This year’s event offers contestants a chance at winning over \$50,000 in cash and business service prizes, including a 1st place cash prize of \$25,000. All finalists will receive a customized prize package, as well as significant exposure to the business and investment communities.

“The Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest is a marquee event that showcases the innovation and entrepreneurial spirit that permeates our region”, said James Senall, president, High Tech Rochester. “The Rochester community was built on the successes of several pioneering entrepreneurs, and this contest can serve as a launching pad for our next generation of business leaders.”

The contest is open to for-profit companies headquartered in the Greater Rochester region (Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates Counties). Companies should have a scalable business concept with high growth potential. Companies must be early-stage defined as: 1) Less than \$250,000 of outside cash investment, and 2) Less than \$500,000 cumulative revenue, excluding research grants.

New for this year, the contest winners will be announced at the 1st annual “Celebration of Entrepreneurship” Luncheon on May 15th. At this gala event, several other entrepreneurial successes from the past year will also be recognized.

The contest features a series of workshops beginning on March 18th to help prospective entrepreneurs create the best possible plan. Contest registration ends on April 3rd, and executive summary submissions will be due on April 6th. Winners will be selected by a panel of judges prior to the luncheon on May 15th. Applications and Contest Guidelines are available online at www.htr.org.

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About High Tech Rochester (HTR)

High Tech Rochester is a not-for-profit organization focused on regional economic development in the technology and high growth business sector. HTR assists the development of new and emerging businesses through its business incubators, the Lennox Tech Enterprise Center and the Rochester BioVenture Center. Through its Manufacturing Extension Partnership, one of nearly 350 MEP locations across the country, the organization improves the competitive position of small manufacturing firms.

High Tech Rochester receives significant financial support from the New York State Foundation for Science, Technology and Innovation (NYSTAR[®]), New York’s high-technology economic development agency, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). HTR serves

as NYSTAR's designated Regional Technology Development Center for the Finger Lakes region. Learn more at www.htr.org.

About Digital Rochester

Digital Rochester (DR) is a community of approximately 5,000 technology professionals and entrepreneurs from across the Upstate New York region working together to strengthen and grow the tech sector. With membership drawn from IT, telecom, engineering, optics, high tech manufacturing and the life sciences, DR's events and community services include an array of networking, educational, entrepreneurial and economic development activities designed to serve a broad spectrum of participants. Digital Rochester was named New York State's 2003 Small Business Not-For-Profit Organization of the Year. For more information, go to www.digitalrochester.com.

About Greater Rochester Enterprise

Greater Rochester Enterprise (GRE) is a public-private partnership established to professionally market the Rochester metropolitan region as a competitive, high-profile place for business location and growth. Its efforts support business attraction and expansion, as well as entrepreneurship and innovation. GRE collaborates with businesses, universities, not-for-profit organizations and government leaders to ensure a unified approach to regional economic development. For more information, please go to www.RochesterBiz.com.

About Nazareth College School of Management

The mission of the School of Management is to prepare students to become responsible leaders with the ability to contribute sustainable value for both business and society. This is accomplished through learner centered programs that are global, ethical and entrepreneurial in orientation.

Nazareth has offered management education programs for over 65 years. The Nazareth SOM offers undergraduate degree programs in accounting, business administration, business and marketing education, economics, international business and information technology. In addition, the SOM offers graduate degree programs in accounting, business education, human resource management, and management. Learn more at www.naz.edu.

About Rochester Institute of Technology

Rochester Institute of Technology, internationally recognized as a leader in computer, engineering, imaging technology, business, fine and applied arts, and education of the deaf, is a proud sponsor of the Rochester Regional Business Plan competition and is committed to promoting entrepreneurship within the greater Rochester region. Visit www.rit.edu to learn more.

About University of Rochester Simon Graduate School of Business

The Simon School prides itself as the place Where Thinkers Become Leaders™ and is currently ranked among the leading graduate business schools in the world in rankings published by the popular press, including *BusinessWeek*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times* and *Forbes*. For example, the *Financial Times* recently rated the School 2nd in the world for finance and 5th in the world for managerial economics. More information about the Simon School is available on the World Wide Web at www.simon.rochester.edu.