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UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO BOOTH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS WINS THIRD ANNUAL
EDUCATION INNOVATION CASE COMPETITION

National competition seeks innovative ideas to grow and scale charter schools

CHICAGO, IL – The Mind Trust and Kellogg School of Management awarded the 3rd annual Education Innovation Case Competition first place award and \$2,000 prize to the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. Second place was awarded to Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

Held in downtown Chicago October 29, [The Mind Trust](#) and the [Kellogg School of Management](#) 3rd annual Education Innovation Case Competition invited teams from the top graduate business and education schools across the country to compete for the Education Innovation Case Competition title. This year, teams were asked to envision the most effective way to grow and scale a city's charter school sector. They were asked to design from scratch a charter school incubator model that will grow as quickly as possible the supply of high-performing charter schools in one city. In the past, teams have been given a week to reflect on a current challenge in education innovation and reform and then asked to present their findings and recommendations to a panel of expert judges.

This year's expert panel of judges included Janet Knupp, Founding President of the Chicago Public Education Fund, Greg White, Kellogg Faculty and CEO of LEARN Charter Schools, Amy Slothower, Executive Director of Get Smart Schools, Pablo Sierra, Principal of Pritzker College Prep in the Noble Network of Charter Schools, Angela Rudolph, Program Officer of the Joyce Foundation, Ann Walden, Chicago Program Director of Education Pioneers, and Patrick Herrel, Vice President of Education Initiatives for The Mind Trust.

While each team presented a compelling and exciting innovation in this year's theme of charter school incubation, two teams in particular stood out.

The winning team, comprised of members of The University of Chicago's Booth School of Business and led by Niranjana Rajagopal, proposed an incubator that would recruit and train four school leaders per year and cluster them in the same geographic location. This co-locating approach would allow each school leader to take advantage of economies of scale for shared services such as office administration, transportation, food service and information technology, among others. Their model proposed a shared platform to ease new startup schools' financial and operational challenges, and by reducing these challenges, school leaders would be more able to focus on the academic success of students.

The second place team, hailing from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, proposed a School Takeover Incubator that would recruit and train experienced school leaders to take on the daunting challenge of school takeover and turnaround. The group's presentation focused on the growing need for investment and innovation in successful school takeover models.

The event, which was co-hosted by The Mind Trust and Kellogg School of Management and supported in part by Education Pioneers, reinforced the need for continued innovation and entrepreneurship in the field of education reform. The competition is an opportunity to engage talented graduate students in the challenge of improving public education by means of innovation and entrepreneurship. Ideas generated by teams are shared among education entrepreneur organizations across the country.

The Mind Trust continues to support education entrepreneurs through the ongoing [Education Entrepreneur Fellowship](#) and the newly announced [Charter School Incubator](#), through which The Mind Trust will award 3-5 \$1 million awards in its first year to teams of leaders who intend to start networks of charter schools in Indianapolis. Applications for the Charter School Incubator are due February 17th, 2012.

For more information about the Education Innovation Case Competition or The Mind Trust call 317.822.8102.

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