

### Three to be Eagle Scouts

ST. CHARLES— Three new Eagle Scouts from Troop 10 at St. Patrick Church in St. Charles will have a combined Court of Honor Ceremony June 17. They are Lucas Oesterlin, Connor Jacobs and Amaan Mohammad. Look for more details in a future edition.



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Young Observer



By FATHER MANUEL GOMEZ | Assistant Vocations Director

### VOCATION CORNER

## God calls by name

Our name is something so important that when God calls, He does it by our name. We are so special that we are not called in a generic or group way, but we are called individually, personally.

Our name is given by our parents because they have given us life. When we say our full name, we want to express who we are and where we come from. By saying "I am Gerardo Gomez," I am saying that my parents decided to give me that name, and that I belong to the Gomez family. And if I want to be

more specific I could include my first name, and my maternal surname to indicate more specifically where I come from and who I am.

When I arrived in this country, Father (Michael) Lavan asked me two questions: "What is your name?" and "How do you want us to call you?" The first question was easy, I told him my name is Manuel Gerardo Gomez Reza; but the second question was more complicated to answer. Even though I was 26 years old, I was never asked before "How do you want us to call you?" I answered, "I have two names and

two surnames. Call me as you wish, or make the best combination out of them." Father Lavan answered, "I'm going to call you Manny," and from that moment on, I've been Manny.

There is something interesting and important that each culture contributes to a better understanding of what our name represents. In the Hispanic culture Mom and Dad give you a name, but when you grow up friends or family give you some nickname, or some way to identify you, that they will use for the rest of your life. In the culture of this country also Mom and

Dad give you a name at birth, but when you have the use of reason you can say how you want to be called.

So we discover the name as something that we receive, but also something that we decide to be, something that we embrace.

Something similar happens with our vocation, God calls us by our name and gives us a mission in life, but He respects our freedom. It is precisely in that freedom that we can choose to be what God wants from us or something different that may not lead us to happiness.

# Exciting Entrepreneurs

## Marian students pitch their products before live audience

By SHARON BOEHLEFELD | Observer Features Editor

For anyone familiar with the TV show "Shark Tank," pitch night is nothing new.

For others, though, a little explanation is in order.

Pitch night matches students with judges who evaluate their prototypes, business plans and the research they were based on, and decide whether to fund any of their businesses.

Marian Central Catholic High School in Woodstock offered its first INCubator.edu class to students who were interested in a hands-on business approach.

On "Shark Tank," the money is real. On pitch night, the plaques are.

For some of the teams, the projects were the culmination of a full year of work. In the case of Rustic Woods, the business is real and running. In the pitch, the team asked for additional funding to expand.

For other teams, their initial ideas didn't make it through the year. So a key lesson for them was flexibility.

"In the beginning of the year my group ... decided to roll with a shower organizer named ShowaUp," said Quick Cakes member Julia Jenker. "We were never very enthusiastic about it ..."

When a team member dropped the class at midterm, "We dabbled in other ideas," Jenker said. That's when she told them about Quick Cakes, a business plan she helped develop last summer at the National Student Leadership Conference at Northwestern University in Evanston. Through the program, she took classes in advertising, finance and entrepreneurship from Northwestern professors.

The project she worked on there was "a storefront bakery where you would come and sit in the cafe and you were able to customize your own cake. It was our thought to make it like a Chipotle for cakes and cupcakes."

At Marian, though, "We realized it was very unrealistic for four high school students to create a bakery especially since three of my team members



Members of the Athletic Sign Source team show some of their prototypes during their pitch.

don't know how to bake," Jenker said.

They adapted their idea to "a website where you visit, type in your zip code and a list of the closest bakeries show up. You would then click on your desired bakery, and it will take you to that specific bakery website (to) order any cakes, cupcakes, or other treats that the bakery provides, and you would then pick it up in store at your desired time.

"This is so that the mom and pop bakeries have an online presence as well as making it easier for you to order your baked goods without having to visit the bakery multiple times or call the store," she explained.

The site would also allow smaller bakeries to compete with larger, chain stores.

The first place team, Dorm Drop, created a care package for college students.

Team member Kevin Herbst said their boxes are "available as a single purchase or a year-long subscription. You can check us out at www.thedormdrop.com."

One element of Dorm Drop's pitch that set them apart from their competitors was a closing video with comments from satisfied customers — both senders and recipients.

"The idea for the video came from our mentor, Mr. (Mike) Domek, who was a huge help to us all year," Herbst said. "To put it together we emailed all our customers and asked if they could film a short video for our final presentation, and then I edited it on my computer."

The runner-up team developed TriGroom, "a three-in-one dog brush that dispenses soap and water while you brush," said team member Jacob "Jake" Potthoff.

While disappointed that his team didn't win, Potthoff said, "The class was a great experience for all of us whether we are majoring in business in college or not. We had a lot of fun working on our company .... Nonetheless, second place was a huge

### Marian CCHS INCubator.edu teams

**Athletic Sign Source** — yard signs to celebrate athletes and their teams. Grace Gibson, A.J. Leidig, Kevin Niehaus, Ben Polster, Ryan St. Clair; Travis McDonald, mentor.

**Dorm Drop** — care packages for college students. Kevin Herbst, Augie Rafie, Gaby Sarto, Zack Gustafson, Andrew Pascente; Mike Domek, mentor.

**LYD** — drink cup with temperature control. Riley Lamberty, Dylan Kuster, Alex Gilmore, Nick Shepard; Dr. Michael Rein, mentor.

**SAXSneaks** — collectable footwear. Tyler Saxelby.

**Rustic Woods** — craft items from recycled wood. Daniel Lowry, Bryce Radcliffe, Connor Kelly, Chris St. Leger; Kristi Patterson, mentor.

**TriGroom** — dog brush with shampoo dispenser and hose hook-up. Michael Bahl, Robert Einecker, Isaac Kaufmann, Blake Peterson, Jake Potthoff; Jim Stahl, mentor.

**Quick Cakes** — web service for independent bakeries. Julia Jenker, Jake Loy, Jackson Miller, Michael Morehead; Jody McRea, mentor.

**Cozy Cool** — water-resistant blanket for sporting and outdoor events. Tyler Gillum, Mitch Bughardt, Lukas Joosten; Dennis Adams, mentor.

accomplishment for us and we were happy to see our hard work pay off."

Jenker agreed the experience was good. "Our team grew closer throughout this process," she said, "and we learned a lot by working through the kinks. From this experience we saw the importance of pushing through and trying again even if we fail at first."



A Rustic Woods team member sets up samples of their woodcrafts for their pitch. The team also had matching Rustic Woods t-shirts, which they wore to make their pitch.



Dorm Drop, creators of care packages for college students, took first place.



TriGroom, designers of a better dog washer, took second place.

Herbst advised next year's students to plan for work outside the classroom.

"There's multiple projects and assignments that you can't get done in 45 minutes of class," he said. "Our group did its most productive work when we met outside of school."

"Don't be afraid to dive in," Jenker said. "I was afraid of having to come up with a business and actually carrying it out. I received so much help from my mentor (Jody McRea) as well as from Mr. (James) Sarther."

Sarther, business department chair at Marian, taught the class in a suite that was remodeled in the summer of 2017 with this class in mind.

"This class will inspire you to share your ideas with not only your classmates but also random people you meet on the street in order to find out what others may think of your plans. ... This class has really pushed me to be more confident in my ability to collaborate with others and be confident in my work," Jenker said.

Potthoff agreed the class was a good experience.

"If you put in the work and work well as a team you will be successful and enjoy creating a business from scratch," he said. "Even if you do not major in business in college, this class has other aspects that will help you in whatever field you go into. It teaches communication skills, working with others and public speaking, which are universal skills that you will need in any career."

### What's next?

Herbst talked about the plans for the winning Dorm Drop team.

"Personally, I'm going to Indiana University where I plan on studying finance. Zach Gustafson is going to Ripon College in Wisconsin and playing football up there, and Augie Rafie is going to Alabama," he said, adding "Gaby Sarto and Andrew Pascente are still stuck in high school."

For runners up from the TriGroom team, Potthoff said, "I will be attending Illinois Wesleyan University in the fall and plan on studying physical therapy or some



Everyone from Marian Central Catholic High School's first INCubator.edu teams pose with their teacher, James Sarther Jr. (far right), business department chair, after their pitch night on May 14.

other health science major, I'm not 100 percent sure."

As for his teammates, he said, "Robert Einecker will be studying electrical engineering at Bradley University, Blake Peterson will be studying business marketing at Clarke University, Isaac Kaufmann will be studying sports marketing and Mike Bahl will be working full time."

"Next year I will be attending the University of Dayton, said Quick Cakes' Jenker. "I will be majoring in business and minoring in political science. I hope to then attend law school and become a corporate business lawyer."

But, she added, "After

going through my summer program and this class I'm also looking into entrepreneurship. ... I am very determined to succeed and use my work to benefit others whether I am a lawyer or entrepreneur."



Tyler Saxelby (inset) wears samples of his SAXSneaks during his pitch. He spun off his own product when the team he was on went in a different direction.



Pitch night judges were (from left) Jonathon Smith, Andy Hartlieb and John Wember.