

# RISING STARTERS

## 2019 STUDENT GUIDE

### What Is Rising Starters?

The 17 archdiocesan Catholic high schools in the Greater Philadelphia area are challenging students to reach for new heights, develop an idea for a business (profit or not for profit), then pitch to a panel of judges. Each high school will hold individual pitch competitions for its student entrepreneurs. Throughout competition preparation and execution, students will gain skills such as recognizing needs, developing opportunities and moving ideas forward - all crucial skills that students can apply to any field they pursue.

The winning teams/individuals from each school have the opportunity to compete for a **\$2,500** cash prize in a final competition hosted by the Charles D. Close School of Entrepreneurship at Drexel University.



# How Does Rising Starters Work?

## Phase 1: High School Competitions Before March 30th

All 17 archdiocesan Catholic high schools run their own entrepreneurship pitch competition (by March 30<sup>th</sup>) and select one winner (individual or team) to receive private pitch coaching from the Close School of Entrepreneurship (pitch coaching is optional, but recommended) and participate in the next phase of competition to be held at Drexel University (on May 13<sup>th</sup>).

## Phase 2: Drexel University Competition on May 13th

**Round 1:** All 17 competition winners from the archdiocesan Catholic high schools pitch their entrepreneurial ideas to a panel of expert judges. 6 winners are chosen.

**Round 2:** All 6 winners from Round 1 pitch their entrepreneurial ideas with the chance to win one of three cash prizes: \$2,500 (1<sup>st</sup> place), \$1,500 (2<sup>nd</sup> place), and \$1,000 (3<sup>rd</sup> place).



# How Do You Prep For Your High School's Competition?

## Step 1: Contact Your High School's Business Faculty

Ask your high school's business faculty about the pitch competition details.

## Step 2: Craft Your Pitch For Your High School

Craft your pitch well in advance! Here are some DOs and DONTs to consider while crafting your pitch...

**DO** identify a specific problem that you can solve through entrepreneurship

**DO** select a target audience that you want to help

**DO** ask your target audience for honest feedback on your entrepreneurial idea

**DO** plan the business details (programming, pricing, promotion, funding, sales, and/or operations)

**DO** write a clear, detailed, and memorable pitch that leaves a lasting positive impact on listeners

[Click here to watch a short video on what makes a strong pitch!](#)

**DON'T** confuse your audience with overly technical language (make your pitch easy to understand)

**DON'T** try to solve too many problems with your entrepreneurial idea (solve one specific problem)

**DON'T** try to reach the whole world with your entrepreneurial idea (focus on one target audience)

**DON'T** overload your slides with too much information (less is more!)

**DON'T** read directly from your slides (speak to the audience and make eye contact with them)

## Step 3: Practice Your Pitch At Your High School

Practice your pitch in private, video your practice session, and critique yourself. Practice your pitch in public and ask your friends and family for feedback. Pick professional clothing that you feel comfortable wearing and presenting in. Practice some more until you feel prepared and confident to compete!