



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two Door County Businesses are Finalists in Statewide Competition

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Two innovative and “green” Door County businesses, both with strong ties to the Door County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC), were recently named finalists in the fifth annual Wisconsin Governor’s Business Plan Contest. **PeaPod Homes LLC**, a newly established tenant company in the Door County Business Development Center (business incubator), advanced for their design concept for homes that achieve a dramatic reduction in energy consumption. John and Ann Hippensteel, owners of **Lake Michigan Wind & Sun**, an engineering firm specializing in alternative energy systems, are alumni of the entrepreneurial training course sponsored annually by DCEDC.

Twenty-five contest finalists were selected from a field of 250 first-round entries by an independent panel of judges organized through the Wisconsin Technology Council, the Wisconsin Innovation Network, the Wisconsin Angel Network and other affiliates. First prize in the statewide contest will be worth at least \$50,000 in cash and services and will be announced in June at the annual Wisconsin Entrepreneurs’ Conference in Milwaukee. (www.govsbizplancontest.com)

PeaPod Homes LLC (www.peapodhomes.com) is an innovative design concept for homes that achieves dramatic reduction in energy usage. PeaPod Homes will design, manufacture and market truly “green” high thermal mass passive solar envelope kit homes. The homes are beautiful, functional spaces engineered for performance and designed for living. Each core model is designed for further expansion, allowing the home to grow with the customer’s needs. On February 28, Mark Rittle, co-owner of PeaPod Homes, took both second place and the People’s Choice Award in an Elevator Pitch Competition held as part of the Entrepreneur’s Connection Conference in Green Bay, netting the company \$750 in prize money.

Lake Michigan Wind & Sun (www.windandsun.com) provides over 25 years of experience in the design/build and engineering of solar electric, solar thermal and wind energy systems. An industry leader, the company has recently developed a line of solar sculptures which combine aesthetics and function in energy-producing solar arrays. Designed for highly visible project sites, the Solar Flairs™ product line will help to bring renewable energy into the mainstream. Lake Michigan Wind & Sun was also recently a semifinalist in the Northeast Wisconsin Regional Business Plan competition.

Door County Economic Development Corporation (www.doorcountybusiness.com) is a public/private partnership dedicated to improving the economic vitality of the county and its residents. Founded in 1989, DCEDC has been successful in helping existing businesses create and retain thousands of jobs through a myriad of programs and initiatives. Additionally, DCEDC places strong emphasis on fostering entrepreneurial instincts in county residents as well as those who vacation on the Door County Peninsula. Door County Economic Development Corporation offices are located within the small business incubator DCEDC founded in 1997 at 185 East Walnut Street in the Sturgeon Bay Industrial Park.