



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 24, 2015**  
**CONTACT:** Sara Parkinson, LEAP  
(517) 702-3387 x 209 office

---

## **LEAP Announces 2016 Lansing Youth Startup Challenge Program**

*Local competitions already underway, expo held in Spring 2016*

**LANSING, MI** – Calling all student entrepreneurs and innovators! The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Lansing Youth Startup Challenge is underway with local and regional pitch competitions already taking place. LEAP has partnered with 5 Minutes Tops to offer local “prep” competitions to student entrepreneurs looking to refine their ideas in an effort to compete at the Lansing Youth Startup Expo on March 25, 2016.

By partnering with 5 Minutes Tops creator and educator, Lucas Schrauben, LEAP can offer smaller local competition environments for the students and teachers to vet their ideas and refine their pitches. The culmination event will take place on March 25<sup>th</sup> at the Lansing Center in an expo style that is open to the public. Students from all organizations are welcome to participate.

“LEAP has been evolving our youth startup program each year to partner with the teachers, students, and groups to create an environment for these students to tap into the region’s entrepreneurial ecosystem at a younger age,” said Bob Trezise, President and CEO of LEAP. “We are eager to work with these students throughout the winter and spring and see what they present next year. These students are the region’s future CEOs, executives, and creative workforce. LEAP’s emerging entrepreneurial ecosystem works hard to support them.”

LEAP’s youth startup programming began in 2010 with the Next Bright Idea pitch competition. In 2013, LEAP began working with the Generation E Institute to offer educators with the tools to teach entrepreneurship in the classroom. In 2014, LEAP held the first-ever regional Lansing Celebrates Youth Entrepreneurship expo at the Lansing Center for students to present their ideas to judges and the public while competing for \$10,000 in prize dollars. In 2015, LEAP worked closer with the school districts and other youth programs to offer this opportunity to students who are already developing their ideas. This year, LEAP has formalized a partnership with 5 Minutes Tops to offer a series of events, across all three counties for students to participate in that will help them prepare for the Lansing Youth Startup Expo in March.

“We are offering students many opportunities to get involved in this program at the local, county, and regional levels,” said Tony Willis, Director of the New Economy Division. “Students can participate in all of the events or register for the Expo directly. The students will have a guided path through this process so they can further their ideas even before graduation.”

Registration for the Lansing Youth Startup Expo opens in January at [www.purelansing.com/youthstartup](http://www.purelansing.com/youthstartup). To get involved in the local 5 Minutes Tops competitions this fall and winter, students can register at [www.5minutestops.com](http://www.5minutestops.com).



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 24, 2015**  
**CONTACT:** Sara Parkinson, LEAP  
(517) 702-3387 x 209 office

---

Already this fall, two 5 Minutes Tops events have taken place in Holt and Grand Ledge. Additional Lansing Youth Startup Challenge - 5 Minutes Tops Events include:

- **Michigan State University/Boys & Girls Club Get City** – December 3, 2015, 4:30PM  
The Boys & Girls Club, 4315 Pleasant Grove Road, Lansing
- **Capital Area Career Center** – February 24, 2016, 8:30AM & 12:30PM  
Ingham ISD: Capital Area Career Center, 611 Hagadorn Road, Mason
- **Maple Valley** – TBD
- **Regional 5 Minutes Tops Event** – March 10, 2016, 6PM  
Lansing Community College West Campus, 5708 Cornerstone Drive, Lansing
- **Lansing Youth Startup Expo** – March 25, 9AM – 1:30PM  
Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing

###

*The Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) is a coalition of area leaders committed to building a prosperous and vibrant region where business can thrive. To do this, we help entrepreneurs start new businesses, help existing businesses grow, and attract new businesses to the region. For more information about LEAP, please visit [www.purelansing.com](http://www.purelansing.com).*