

|| AFTER HOURS ||

# Business students drink in wisdom at Virox Forum

Business isn't for the faint-hearted. You need to be light on your feet and resilient.

That was the message delivered to 100 Sheridan College business students who attended the 2013 Virox Future Forum, held last month at the college's Hazel McCallion campus in Mississauga.

The conference, now in its fifth year, was started by longtime Mississauga resident and Sheridan alumnus Randy Pilon, CEO of Oakville infection control company Virox Technologies.

A three-man roundtable discussion was held between Pilon, demographics expert, Dr. David Foot (author of Boom, Bust & Echo), and Sean Wise, author, professor, and special advisor to the CBC's popular Dragon's Den series.

The back-and-forth discussion was interactive, with plenty of input from the students invited to the special forum.

The event also included presentations by Foot (author, professor, and expert on the relationship between economics and demography), Wise (author, professor of entrepreneurship, host and advisor for CBC's Dragons' Den, columnist for the Globe and Mail, Dr. Ginger Grant (author, Sheridan professor of marketing and innovation, strategist in using corporate culture to drive organizational performance, and Pilon. Following the talks, the students participated in small, roundtable break-out sessions hosted by the speakers, panelists, and additional Faculty of Business professors to discuss related topics.

Three \$1,000 scholarships, supported by Virox Technologies Inc. were randomly drawn and awarded to student entrepreneurs in attendance.

"It doesn't matter if you win, but if you want to win," said Pilon, responding to a question about the recent trend of not letting children and youth fail — be it at school, sports or in other realms.

He urged the students to be willing to take a chance, especially since many of them believed they had a family safety net in place.

Another question from the students dealt with the generational gap. Many of the students belong to a generation that has access to the internet and computers, unlike some of the people they'll be dealing with in the business world.

Wise had the audience chuckling when he told a story about purchasing his father an iPhone and his dad asking where the mouse for it goes. Wise said, rightly or wrongly, some people feel the younger generation has a sense of entitlement and expect work to be fun. He urged the students to keep that perception in mind and show possible investors or employers how they aren't like the stereotype.

One student said he felt he had a great idea but worried his youth might work against him as many investors prefer someone with experience.

"We choose experience so we don't have lessons learned on our money," said Wise. "But, lucky for you, you live in a country where the government actively underwrites investments that aren't economically viable."

Wise said there are a number of government business grants directed at youth that young entrepreneurs can tap into.

(With files from Chris Clay of the Mississauga News)



Seated in the orange chair, on the left by poster - Author Dr. David Foot. Middle - Randy Pilon. On the right, foreground - Sean Wise. Back row: Left - Dr. William (Bill) Holmes Dean Faculty of Business at Sheridan College. Right, standing - Dr. Ginger Grant Professor Faculty of Business at Sheridan College.

## Great new looks at Int'l Auto Show



Top: Maria Soklis, VP Kia Canada Inc., headquartered in Mississauga, takes part in the International Auto Show at the Metro Convention Centre last month. Above: Mitsubishi Motors Shin Fujioka president and CEO, speaks at a large gathering on media day. Mitsubishi is also headquartered in Mississauga. Photos by Stephen Uhraney