

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



## Semi-Finalists Announced For FWE's Pitch for the Purse Program

Vancouver (November 15, 2016) – The Forum for Women Entrepreneurs (FWE) just announced the semi-finalists for its [Pitch for the Purse](#) program, which culminates in a \$25,000 cash award for the best pitch. Access to capital remains a key barrier for women entrepreneurs. This program enables women entrepreneurs in Canada to acquire expertise around access to capital through education and helps the group speak about their business, whether it's to investors, vendors or potential clients. To date, the program has provided education to over 100 women entrepreneurs from BC, Ontario, Alberta and Quebec.

There was an overwhelming response from entrepreneurs and the quality of applications was excellent. FWE has selected 10 semi-finalists who represent a group of growth-oriented business owners working in a range of industries, such as food, technology, health, events, safety and more. The list includes **Suzanne Solsona** of MyMayu, a North Vancouver-based company manufacturing an ultra-lightweight, collapsible outdoor boot with a flexible rubber sole for kids; and **Dionne Laslo-Baker**, who manufactures organic tea pops through her company DeeBee's Organics in Victoria, BC selling through retailers such as Whole Foods Market, Choices Markets and Safeway.

The top 10 will be pitching live at the Pitch Semi-Finals on **Friday, November 25, 2016 at the Vancouver Club, from 8:30 – 11:30 am**. Semi-Finalists will receive feedback on their pitches and growth plans, and three finalists will be selected and paired with top-notch mentors including **Tracey McVicar**, Managing Partner, [CAI Private Equity](#), **Wayne Deans**, Co-Founder of [Deans Knight Capital Management Ltd](#) and **Dave Bustos**, Founder + Partner, [Fort Capital](#).

Meet the 10 Semi-Finalists:

Tara Bosch, [SmartSweets](#) (Vancouver, BC)  
Stacy Irvine, [Totum Life Science](#) (Toronto, ON)  
Corinne Kessel, [Greenscape Design & Decor](#) (Burnaby, BC)  
Dionne Laslo-Baker, [DeeBee's Organics Ltd.](#) (Victoria, BC)  
Carlyn Loncaric, VodaSafe Inc (Vancouver, BC)  
Katie Reiach + Beth Boyle, [Talk Shop Media](#) (Vancouver, BC)  
Nicolette Richer, [Green Moustache Licensing Inc.](#) (Whistler, BC)  
Andrea Scott, [skoah franchising Inc](#) (Vancouver, BC)  
Suzanne Solsona, [MyMayu](#) (North Vancouver, BC)  
Shelley Wallace, [Hagensborg Chocolates Ltd.](#) (Burnaby, BC)

The Pitch finale will be featured at The Odlum Brown FWE Gala on February 20, 2017 at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. Celebrity judges will ask questions of the finalists on stage, while 600+ guests including Vancouver's top business leaders and entrepreneurs select the winner of the \$25,000 prize. The three finalists will have a guaranteed spot at E-Series 2017, FWE's immersive 3-day educational program held from April 19-21, 2017.

“We’re thrilled with the response that Pitch for the Purse has received across the country, and are excited to provide coaching, mentorship and an opportunity for collaboration, to our semi-finalists and finalists. With so many options for accessing capital today, FWE’s work is vital to helping women understand that there is the right fit for them, whether it’s getting funded through angel investors and various angel networks, SheEO, Futurpreneur, Women’s Enterprise Centres, or by traditional means such as banks, for example,” said Christina Anthony, FWE’s Founder + Chair. “What matters is that entrepreneurs know their options, and know how to talk about their businesses.”

More information about Pitch for the Purse can be found at [www.pitchforthepurse.ca](http://www.pitchforthepurse.ca).

Questions, interview opportunities and requests of Media attendance at the Semi-Finals on November 25<sup>th</sup> are welcome to:

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**About FWE:**

The Forum for Women Entrepreneurs (FWE) energizes, educates, mentors and connects women entrepreneurs to be wildly successful, promoting strong economies and thriving communities. Founded in 2002, FWE is entering its 15<sup>th</sup> year of providing game-changing education and support. With the goal of building the economy, one woman-owned business at a time, FWE has mentored over 800 women and provided education to over 380 women through its signature program, E-Series.