

Left to right: Professor Jason MacCulloch, Associate Dean Larisa Volman, Professors Tara Dinyer, Zina Lombardi, Nick Petrella, Chantal Szpak

# Pitching forward

Fit to Pitch competition is showing Health, Wellness and Fitness students the potential of an entrepreneurial future

**A** capstone project in Health, Wellness and Fitness that culminates in the Fit to Pitch competition is helping students see entrepreneurial possibilities for themselves.

The team project bridges three courses and requires students to conceptualize a business and develop business and marketing plans.

“This program graduates students with the skill sets to pursue various career paths, including entrepreneurship,” says Larisa Volman, Associate Dean of Health Studies.

“Innovation intersects all aspects of Mohawk’s strategic plan. Fit to Pitch is a great example of innovation because it calls on students to tap into their inventive and creative ideas and work as a team to build a business case. It’s a very practical and valuable experience regardless of where their career takes them.”

All students present their ideas and course instructors choose the top three to go on to the Fit to Pitch event in April, which offers up to \$20,000 in in-kind prizes.

“We are looking for businesses that have identified a problem and found a creative solution for it,” says Professor Tara Dinyer. “We get some amazing ideas and it’s hard to pick the top three from them.”

Fit to Pitch brings in expert judges and alumni from the community and includes a speed networking event in which all program students meet with industry representatives to ask questions and seek advice.



Christopher Spack, Your In Home Chef

Some concepts have led to immediate business launches out of school, says Dinyer, while others happen years after graduation.

“It’s very rewarding to see ideas come to life.”

Program graduate Christopher Spack says his experience in Fit to Pitch allowed him to test taking an idea full circle. He is now the owner of Your In Home Chef, which prepares healthy meals for day-to-day life, events, health retreats and parties.

“The capstone helped a lot to prepare a vision for a career to build towards that combined my interest in health and in cooking. Fit to Pitch let me see it was plausible to create a career for myself.” ■■■