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RESTAURANT CROWNS NOVI'S FIRST 'SEAL THE DEAL' CHAMPS

NOVI, Mich., January 10, 2018 – Some upperclassmen earned their bacon Tuesday in a recently concluded reality-based learning competition at Novi High School.

Seniors Josh Brucker, Peter Koomen and Neha Challa, and juniors Evan Barthlow and Hunter Goodman created an award-winning entrée in The Big Salad's Seal the Deal program that ended last month.

John Bornoty, president of The Big Salad restaurant chain, and Chris Pike, franchisee owner of the Novi restaurant on Grand River Avenue, formally announced the winning team in front of teacher Robert Armstrong's marketing class.

"We certainly had some unique and really good products," Bornoty said. "We never like to say how close it was, but the top two and three teams were really close, within a couple (unit sales)."

The winning team was presented with a trophy that will reside in Mr. Armstrong's classroom, and their tasty creation – the Chicken Bacon, Lettuce & Tomato Salad – is now part of the Novi restaurant's current menu.

"It sold well and I think it may have been a tad easier for people, who came in to purchase a salad, to buy this salad," Pike said. "In the past we actually had wraps that have won at other locations, but this year it looked like salads were the way to go."

The semester-long program featured four teams of five students each that were tasked with creating, marketing, and selling their product. Each team was assigned a different day in December to market and sell to customers at the Grand River location.

The Chicken BLT Salad outsold the Mediterranean Mania Salad, the Big Baller Wrap, and the No.VI sandwich.

"The one that won will be in the store as an official product to purchase," Pike said during the award presentation. "Some of the other teams – with the ingredients that were used or how they were

combined with other toppings – I think that’s something we’re going to look at as we move forward. So thank you for that feedback.”

Armstrong and The Big Salad plan to collaborate on another Seal the Deal program during the upcoming winter semester at Novi High School.

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