

# Education company top innovator; iMAN honored

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FORT WAYNE — Honor Education LLC, a company formed by four Fort Wayne siblings to help children better grasp scientific and mathematical concepts and learn computer programming skills, was named the Innovator of the Year for 2010 at the Greater Fort Wayne Business Weekly's fifth-annual Innovation Awards event Thursday afternoon.

Honor Education, which also captured the competition's emerging company award, was started more than a year ago by Sean, Jared, Alyssa and Tristan Dugan in their home. Sean, 24, and Jared, 23, both graduated from Indiana Tech in the spring with degrees in software engineering. Alyssa, 21, and Tristan, 19, are both seniors at Indiana Tech majoring in elementary education.

At the heart of Honor Education is Forge, a virtual world creation kit developed by the Dugans that students can use, independently or in school, to turn things like mathematical equations, scientific formulas and other abstract information into tables, graphs and two- or three-dimensional dynamic visualizations.

They also have a second product, a visual version of the programming language Python. Instead of typing code, users drag and drop blocks of code to build programs.

In August, Honor Education moved into the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center in Fort Wayne, where the Dugans teach more than 22 middle school children in their Tech Academy that was launched in September.

Six other businesses and organizations received awards at the luncheon event Thursday at Sweetwater Sound in Fort Wayne. They were:

- Indiana Metropolitan Area Network Inc. in Angola, winner of the technology category for its efforts to build a fiber-optic network throughout Steuben County.

- OrthoPediatrics in Warsaw, winner of the health care category for its children's cast saw;
- Whitley Steel Products & Fabrication in Larwill, winner of the manufacturing and distribution category for its water fountain for dogs;
- Summer's Sky LLC in Fort Wayne, winner of the professional services category for its caregiver navigation service;
- Pathfinder Community Connections in Huntington, winner of the real estate, construction and design category for its program that rehabilitates houses and improves neighborhoods;
- The Green ABC's in Fort Wayne, winner of the retail category for its products that teach children vocabulary through the use of environmentally friendly concepts; and

A panel of judges selected the Innovator of Year after the category winners were chosen by representatives of Innovation Awards sponsors.