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MANUFACTURING COMPANY PARTNERS WITH LOCAL STUDENTS
TO DEVELOP GLOBAL MARKETING STRATEGY

BERLIN, NEW YORK, September 5, 2006 – W.J. Cowee, LLC, a large manufacturing company located in Berlin, New York, has asked a team of top students at Berlin Jr./Sr.High School to develop a plan for its expansion into the international market.

W.J. Cowee, the nation's oldest and largest manufacturer of wooden floral picks and plant stakes, has asked students enrolled in the Cowee Program at Berlin High School to develop a marketing and distribution blueprint for expanding sales of the company's products into the international floral trade. W.J. Cowee currently sells its line of wired and unwired floral picks, plant stakes, and other floral design accessories to wholesalers throughout the United States and Canada. With the help of the Cowee program students, W.J. Cowee hopes to launch its product line in the United Kingdom and throughout Europe in 2007.

“We'll be asking these students to create a strategic business plan for our market expansion to the U.K. and beyond. There are a multitude of factors to consider and explore, but these are bright, creative students and they're being taught and mentored by some of the finest thinkers,” said Brian E. Suslak, President and CEO of W.J. Cowee, LLC. “I'm looking forward to learning from them and ultimately, implementing their recommendations for our shift into the global marketplace.”

Students in the course will study a range of topics relating to international trade, such as currency exchange, transportation and distribution logistics, trade barriers and legal issues, marketplace differences, and international economic factors. With a broad understanding of the global marketplace, students will then create a plan for launching Cowee products internationally.

Eight students are participating in this year's Cowee Program, a rigorous exploration of the issues and challenges facing the manufacturing industry today. The course is taught by Michael Tentnowski, who also serves as the Director of Incubator Programs for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy. A number of renowned American business leaders are scheduled to participate as guest lecturers for this year's program. David Zimmerman, Professor of Economics at Williams College, and Lester Gerhardt, Associate Dean of the Engineering School at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute both serve as mentors, guest lecturers and judges in the program.

At the end of the course, students will make final presentations that will be judged by a panel of experts. The presentations are scheduled to be broadcast on WAMC as part of the Youth Media Project.

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