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**Inaugural Grant competition for Veteran-owned businesses helps  
move high-tech armor closer to production**

**Knoxville, TN, March 20, 2013** – TVBA (Tennessee Veterans Business Association), in partnership with The Lawyers of Brown & Roberto, created a Veteran-owned Business Plan Competition as a grant program for TVBA members. Entrants were required to be owned and controlled by a Veteran and in business less than five years.

“We had a lot of interest in the grant program and it was challenging to narrow the selection,” said Jonathan Williams, TVBA Executive Director. “Business plans submitted ranged from companies that were staffing-oriented to digital startups.”

On March 19, 2013, a shortlist of three finalists were given the opportunity to share their business plans and explain how the \$5,000 grant would be allocated, should they win. The presiding judge for the competition was Amy Cathey, Ph.D., Director of the MBA program, University of Tennessee-Knoxville. She was joined by the following other judges: Jonathan Williams, Chairman and co-founder of TVBA; Milton Tookes, co-founder of TVBA; Ralph Brown and Andrew Roberto, Partners at The Lawyers of Brown & Roberto; Barry Allen, Of Counsel at The Lawyers of Brown & Roberto; and David Avery, Senior VP, The Tombras Group.

“Presentations from the finalists were particularly thorough and organized,” said Ralph Brown. “It was rewarding for us to learn more about what’s going on in the veteran community, and in this case we were given access behind the curtain so to speak. It helped the judges more clearly understand the challenges that small businesses face in today’s economy,” Brown added.

The winner of the inaugural TVBA-Brown & Roberto Veterans Grant Program is CERMET-Metal Composite, Oak Ridge TN. “Scott Ewing, President, and Scott Williams, CERMET Project Entrepreneur, both former military aviators, presented a buttoned up business plan with clear cut objectives and positive outcomes,” said Brown.

CERMET, utilizes a process patents license from B&W Y-12 as a basis for a new CMC (Ceramic Metal Composite), a proprietary material that will be used in forming of new, lightweight ballistic protection for a wide range of applications; the first proposed use will be in body armor for servicemen and women. “This is an exciting opportunity for our company as we test and validate the product we ultimately intend on bringing to market,” said Scott Ewing. “We are very appreciative that The Lawyers of Brown & Roberto, working with TVBA, created the business plan competition. The \$5,000 grant will speed

up our testing, and hasten when we can start manufacturing and selling our first product,” Ewing added.

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The Lawyers of Brown & Roberto, PLLC, is a law firm located in Knoxville, Tennessee. The firm handles: personal injury cases, with a focus on auto accidents; worker’s compensation claims; social security disability; and Veterans’ Disability claims, as well as various other injury cases. The firm lists two partners, Ralph Brown and Andrew Roberto, along with attorneys George Maifair and Barry Allen. For more information about the Veterans’ Disability claims practice, please contact the firm at 865-691-2777.

*Attached image:*

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT IN THE PICTURE:

Jonathan Williams – Chairman and founder of TVBA

Shawn Carson – Tech 20/20 Venture Development

Scott Ewing – Pres. & CEO, CERMET (Venture Incite), Inc.

Scott Williams – Market and Competitive Intelligence Manager, CERMET (Venture Incite), Inc. and Project Lead on CERMET Armor

Andrew Roberto – Partner, The Lawyers of Brown & Roberto

Milton Tookes – co-founder of TVBA

Ralph Brown – Partner, The Lawyers of Brown & Roberto

Barry Allen – Of Counsel, The Lawyers of Brown & Roberto, retired Colonel, USAFR and Chair of VA Disability Claims practice