

Rancic trumps business scene in the Okanagan

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By J.P. SQUIRE
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KELOWNA — Bill Rancic had no idea how radically his life would change after winning the first season of Donald Trump's *The Apprentice*.

Rancic now travels around the world as an entrepreneurial expert and motivational speaker. He wrote a New York Times bestseller, appears regularly on TV shows, co-produces TV shows and even met his wife as a result of the wildly popular *Apprentice* TV show.

He's been a guest speaker all across Canada

Ottawa,
Saskatoon,
Calgary and
Vancouver — but never made to the Okanagan Valley. That will change on March 18 when he is the guest of honour at the 31st annual



Rancic

business banquet of the Okanagan Business Students' Association.

The banquet — set for 5:30 p.m. at the Coast Capri Hotel — is the most prominent public function for Okanagan College business students.

Tickets are available through www.selectyourtickets.com.

In a telephone interview from Chicago on Tuesday, Rancic said life has been "great, no complaints, busy, but a good busy" since winning the first *Apprentice* competition.

"Can you believe it? That was almost seven years ago. I had no idea what I was getting into. I didn't know how it was going to affect, literally, the rest of my life. It was such a new concept, people weren't sure if it was going to be well-received when the first episode aired. And sure enough,

it was a monster hit."

Rancic won the coveted one-year contract from Trump and returned to the show as a judge for the next five seasons. "It was certainly a lot more than I bargained for, in a good way. And indirectly as a result of the show, I found my wife."

Along the way, he was interviewed by E! News anchor Giuliana De Pandi and they married two-and-a-half years ago.

He plans to share his story, the power of persistence and overcoming fear with college students.

"My story is pretty unique because I grew up with parents who were school teachers, didn't come from a wealthy family and didn't go to an Ivy League school. If I can do it, they certainly can do it," he said.

"I'll talk about some of the lessons I learned from Donald (Trump). I just finished doing a show with the A&E network, *We Mean Business*, where I go into small businesses that are failing and I try to turn them around. So I've also learned what not to do in business," he said.

"And hopefully weave in some funny stories about my years with Donald, competing in *The Apprentice* and some of the assets that allowed me to win out of all the people (16) who wanted to win the first season."

Rancic said he likes talking to students "because I give them straight talk. I'm not a guy who goes in and talks about what you can do. I talk about how to do it."

The goal of the not-for-profit association, which consists of students enrolled in business administration at Okanagan College, is to provide a platform for students to learn in a non-competitive environment, to raise funds for student bursaries and scholarships, and to connect business students with the community.