

ILA Denver Conference Highlights

University of San Diego Team Takes Top Honors in ILA 2012 Case Competition, Undergraduate Division

by Melissa Wagoner

Four Leadership students from USD's School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES) won first place in ILA's 6th Annual Case Competition in the Undergraduate Division.

The competition, sponsored by Kravis Leadership Institute at Claremont McKenna College and Northwestern University, consisted of a three-stage process: a written brief, a poster presentation, and a formal professional presentation. The first stage occurred one month before the conference, when the initial case was distributed to participating university teams. Teams analyzed the case and wrote a five-page brief that was submitted for judging one week prior to the conference.

On the first day of the conference, teams presented a poster of their analyses and solution while answering questions from judges. Scores were tabulated from both their written brief and poster presentation to determine the top three teams. These teams were then required to integrate lessons gained from the conference and implement them into a final fifteen-minute presentation. A panel of judges held a question and answer session to quiz team members about their project and their presentation. Students were scored on their analysis, content, argument support, delivery, persuasiveness, team participation, and responsiveness to the panel's questions.

Brian Wisdom '14 said of the experience: "It has been a life-changing experience that I will never forget. I was pushed to the edge of my intellectual capacity. There were times that I felt

that I wanted to give up. I had to sacrifice so much to purely focus on the case. I did this because of the amazing individuals I had the fortune to work with."

Coached by Crystal Dujowich, who is also an instructor at SOLES, the team consisted of Wisdom, Leonice Brown-Young '14, Aaron Rivera Dominguez Bours '15, and Taylor Harrell '13. USD beat out 13 other teams to take home the top prize. This was the first time USD had entered the competition.

"Students are often surprised to hear about the leadership minor for undergraduates because SOLES is known for its graduate work. However our undergraduates go on to be change-makers in business, politics, education, the non-profit sector, and the military and each year several of our graduates go on to AmericaCorps, Teach for America, or the PeaceCorps. Winning this competition demonstrates that our leadership minor is cultivating more than just initiative, it is cultivating inspiring minds that can tackle complex challenges and articulate that knowledge in powerful ways," said Dujowich.

"Attending and presenting in ILA was an experience that pushed what I thought were the limits of my knowledge, perseverance, and ability which I shared with the most excellent people I have met at USD," said Bours.

Asked by Professor George Reed whether all the hard work and sacrifice had been worth it in the end, senior Taylor Harrell replied without pause, "We got much more out of this than a first place finish."



The winning team pose next to their poster with their advisor, (L-R) Leonice Brown-Young, Brian Wisdom, Taylor Harrell, Crystal Dujowich, and Aaron Rivera Dominguez Bours

Scenes From ILA Denver



Aztec Dancers at Conference Opening



A Standing Room Only Concurrent Session



Visiting the Sage Booth in the Exhibit Hall