

Kansas State University and Washburn University Bring Home the Gold in ILA's 8th Annual Student Case Competition

For the second year in a row, Kansas State University students departed ILA's annual global conference in San Diego as winners of the Student Case Competition, Graduate Division. Incredibly, their 2014 team was made up of three undergrads and only one graduate student. Case Competition rules stipulate that even if the majority of a team are undergrads, the presence of just one graduate student pushes the team into the graduate division of the competition. Washburn University took home the prize in the undergraduate division. A first time win for their Leadership Institute, team member Mary Ralston warns competitors in Barcelona to "watch out for Washburn University — we are on a roll."

Organized by ILA's Leadership Education Member Interest Group (LEMIG), the yearly Case Competition brings together teams of students to faceoff in an event where they analyze and develop a specific set of strategic recommendations that address key issues in a real world case involving contemporary leadership issues. The winning team from each division receives a \$1,000 cash prize to be divided amongst them and is honored at the closing plenary of the conference.

Rian Satterwhite, 2015 LEMIG Chair, notes that, "With 25 teams and approximately 100 students participating in the 2014 Case Competition, by many measures it was the ILA's most successful yet. The judges walked away from each of the three rounds very complimentary of the work, thoughtfulness, and application of theory that each team was able to bring to bear in responding to this year's difficult leadership challenge. Each team should be proud."

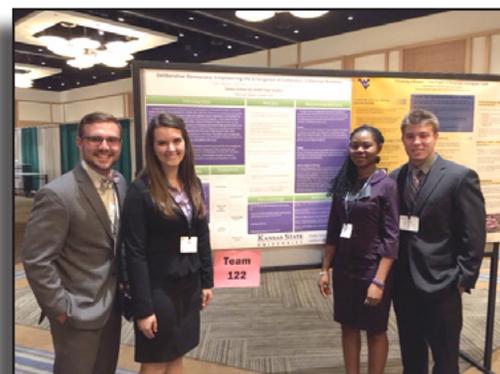
The case this year, written by ILA member Todd Murphy of Northwestern University, was titled, "Chasing a Dream" and was from the *New York Times* inCollege inLeadership. The case details the challenges faced by young adults who were children when they immigrated with their parents to the United States without the proper papers. These "dreamers," now considered illegal immigrants, face numerous obstacles impeding their ability to attend college and obtain employment in the U.S.

Prior to the start of the conference, teams were given the case and asked to create a two to four page brief (round one). Teams then prepared a poster of their analysis and recommendations, which they presented at the start of the conference (round two). After round two, the top three teams in each division were invited to compete in the third and final round. These teams spent the next two days attending conference sessions that contributed to the further development of their analysis and preparing a 15-minute final presentation, which they then delivered before a panel of judges and interested conference attendees.

According to Satterwhite, Rob McManus — past Chair of the LEMIG and an Associate Professor at the McDonough Center for Leadership and Business at Marietta College — "coordinated the judging and played a crucial role in the success of this year's event. We revised the judging system this year and involved many more people in the process." Satterwhite offered a "very special thanks to Rob and to all of the judges who are too numerous to mention by name."



*Washburn Students Celebrate Victory
on the Beaches of San Diego*



*Kansas State Students Pose with Their
Poster During Round Two*

"I volunteer to coach our team because I enjoy working with students on leadership ideas and issues. I really enjoy the ILA conference



and watching our students develop as leaders and engage in the conference in a meaningful way. Our students get so much out of being at the conference and participating in the case competition.

Some of our students who have participated in the Case Competition have come away from the conference with new ideas for their careers, some have changed their majors, and some have found meaning in their existing major and/or career paths. When I see that the conference can have that kind of impact on students, I really do say Wow!"- Andrew Wefald, Assistant Professor, Staley School of Leadership Studies, Kansas State University

Participating in the Case Competition is an incredible opportunity for students to more fully engage in an ILA annual global conference and traverse a large gathering of leadership folk with a team of friends. When asked what wowed them at this year's conference, the winners highlighted sessions that resonated with them and shared their feelings of being part of a larger leadership universe.



For Washburn student Jack Van Dam, "The best part was getting to meet and network with students, faculty, and scholars of leadership from all across the world. Although we were from different countries, and spoke different languages, leadership is the language that brought us all together."

Alix Carole Onmalela Bilip, originally from Cameroon, wrote, "Being from Kansas State University, I do not see a lot of other Africans pursuing the study of leadership. At the conference I was excited to see that I was not alone in seeking the knowledge that I think is necessary to build 'healthy' Nations at home, and all over the world. I was motivated to keep up my passion for leadership."

Kansas State teammate Colby Haverkamp shared, "I observed so many speakers applying leadership concepts and ideas in ways that I never would have even dreamed of. Individuals were taking ideas we often discuss up to the next level. I really felt empowered to know I can do so much more with what I am learning."



Lauren Edelman, Associate Director of Washburn's Leadership Institute echoes this with her advice to coaches, "Strongly encourage students to attend every conference session/workshop they can throughout the experience and have many conversations with people from different institutions and backgrounds. This takes

the competition to a different level as students expand their base knowledge of leadership theory and learn to apply new perspectives and approaches to their existing arguments."

Students who participate in the competition experience multiple facets of leadership firsthand. As scholars, they

analyze the case and develop theoretically sound strategies. "The ILA Case Competition offers students an amazing opportunity to apply concepts they are learning in leadership courses and brings related theories to life. My hope is that this will translate into the application of these theories in other situations in their lives," shares Michael Gleason, the Director of Washburn's Leadership Institute. As practitioners, students do their own leadership work by organizing their team, developing a division of labor, and learning how to navigate individual differences and ideas between colleagues to create the best possible solutions.

As Kansas State student Tyler Bedell describes, "The whole process was intense. I was able to work with very different individuals from different walks of life. We combined our knowledge and broke down our own stereotypes together. It was amazing how we grew."

Rebecca Maasen, a member of Washburn's winning team learned, "It is crucial that each member of the team agrees on the main goal of the project and is passionate about achieving this outcome." Teammate Mary Ralston added, "When we utilized each person's individual strengths, we were able to create the best possible product."

Perhaps Alix Carole Onmalela Bilip said it best: "Team work has always been the best way to come up with GREAT, in my opinion. One can tell that there was no possible way one brain could come up with such a perspective like the one we proposed. Our success spoke for itself. That is the strength of working as a team. Our differences make our strength."



Finally, Gleason points out that participation in the case competition benefits more than just the students who attend the conference. "I would encourage the coaches to consider ways in which students can share their learning back at their own institution. This increases opportunities for the students to reflect while also encouraging other students to participate in future years. On our campus, for example, the students presented to our Leadership Institute Advisory Board and were also selected to present at our Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol."

ILA's Leadership Education MIG is currently seeking a volunteer to coordinate the 2015 Student Case Competition in Barcelona. Contact Rian Satterwhite, Chair of LEMIG, at rsatter@uoregon.edu if interested. Look for the opportunity to serve as a judge in one of the three stages of the competition when you register for the ILA's 2015 annual global conference in Barcelona online. All non-student attendees are welcome to volunteer in this capacity, though space may be limited depending on the needs of the competition.