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USFSP Entrepreneurship Club members win second national championship in a row

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Winning Entrepreneurship Club members Chris Carpentier, Mark Lombardi-Nelson, Lazar Anderson, Brown Charite and Kevin Mircovich are congratulated by Entrepreneurship Director Bill Jackson during Entrepreneurship Day.

Members of the USF St. Petersburg Entrepreneurship Club at have won a prestigious national competition for the second year in a row.

The Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO) Startup Simulation Challenge requires a team of students to take a new business and make the right decisions to out-perform nine other teams from across the country. The computer simulation took two months.

The winners were announced Wednesday during Entrepreneurship Day at USFSP, held three months after the Entrepreneurship Program at the USFSP College of Business was named the Outstanding Emerging Entrepreneurship Program in the United States by the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

The USF St. Petersburg team was led by Kevin Mircovich and included Lazar Anderson, sophomore Chris Carpentier, senior Brown Charite and Mark Lombardi-Nelson. The winning team is awarded \$1,000 and will be honored at the 2013 National CEO Conference in Chicago. Everyone but Mircovich were members of the 2012 championship team.

The top three schools finished just several points apart. This was the third annual simulation challenge hosted by CEO, the premier entrepreneurship network with 240 chapters at universities in 43 states.

Quinnipiac University placed second and the University of Northern Iowa was third.

In February, USF St. Petersburg Entrepreneurship Club students dominated a pitch competition in Tampa that drew 200 students from across the Southeast, with four of the seven finalists and a first and third place showing.

In November, a team that included three USF St. Petersburg students won first place in the People's Choice Award, and third place overall at Startup Weekend Tampa in November.

“We are proud that USF St. Petersburg students are once again the national champions in entrepreneurship,” said Entrepreneurship Program Director Bill Jackson, Ph.D. “These students worked hard for this achievement and showing the way for others.”

Norine Noonan, Ph.D., vice chancellor for academic affairs, said the recent string of victories by the students shows the value of USFSP's growing Entrepreneurship Program.

“Our goal is to build the best undergraduate entrepreneurship program in the country and Bill Jackson and his team deserve our hearty congratulations,” Noonan said. “This is a great example of the importance of this program to the economic vitality of Pinellas County and the Tampa Bay area.”

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