BYU TRIUMPHS IN GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS COMPETITION

The following information was released by the Marriott School of Management at Brigham Young University:

At one of the most elite and grueling information systems competitions in the world, a group of three Brigham Young University undergraduates won first-place at the APEX Global Business IT Case Challenge in Singapore. As newcomers to the competition, the team went up against 24 of the top ISys programs in the world.

"This win represents what our ISys program is designed to produce — students who are bilingual in business and technology," says Paul Benjamin Lowry, assistant professor of information systems and the team's coach. "There's no question that the information systems curriculum at the Marriott School of Management prepares our students to compete with the best."

Besides winning the top prize at the five-day competition, the BYU team also received the Coach's Choice Award, which was based on votes from the 24 team coaches.

The BYU team, InnoTech, consisted of senior information systems students Braden Molyneux, from Salt Lake City; Britton Kowalk, from Sandy, Utah; and Matt Ehle, from Pottstown, Pa. Kowalk also received the award for best case presenter.

"Our win is proof to me that the education we are getting really is top-notch," Molyneux says. "Our faculty is amazing; they work hard to teach the students what they need to know to succeed."

Lowry adds that he could not be more proud of the ISys program and the students' accomplishments. "The Marriott School puts its students in the enviable position of being able to combine world-class management training with world-class technology training — all in an intensive, mentored environment that focuses on global, entrepreneurial, ethical and critical thinking," he says.

The team advanced into the finals after winning the first two major rounds of the competition. A panel of 30 judges, consisting of CEOs, senior executives, managing partners and chief information officers from some of the largest companies in the world evaluated each team's strategies and solutions. The judges grilled the students on everything from the most business-oriented aspects of the case to the more technical aspects.

"We were able to stand out in the competition because we work on business cases as part of our program's core curriculum," Ehle says.

Also shining under interrogation from the judges, Singapore Management University took home second place and Texas AandM University placed third.
"While winning the competition was a great experience for us, it was only a small part of what we took away from Singapore," Ehle says. "We made great friends from around the world, learned a lot about business and IT, and represented BYU and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints among world-class students and faculty."

Financial support for the BYU team came from the Whitmore Global Management Center, the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology and the information systems department.

The Marriott School is located at Brigham Young University, the largest privately owned, church-sponsored university in the United States. The school has nationally recognized programs in accounting, business management, public management, information systems, and entrepreneurship. The school's mission is to prepare men and women of faith, character and professional ability for positions of leadership throughout the world. Approximately 3,000 students are enrolled in the Marriott School's graduate and undergraduate programs.

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