Freeman team a finalist in PwC Case Competition

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A team from the A. B. Freeman School of Business has been selected to advance to the finals of the PwC Challenge Case Competition.



Freeman students Sarah Lawhorne, Andrew Landsiedel, Michael Kreisman, Neil Barot and Sara Scott, left to right, were selected as national finalists in the PwC Challenge Case Competition.

As one of four national finalists, the Freeman School's team — Neil Barot, Michael Kreisman, Andrew Landsiedel, Sarah Lawhorne and Sara Scott — edged out peers from 48 other universities competing in this year’s event. Freeman has participated in the PwC Challenge since 2010, but this year marks the first time a Freeman team has been selected for the finals.

“The PwC Challenge is the longest-running, most prestigious case competition for accounting students, so to make it to the final round is a tremendous achievement,” said Ira Solomon, dean of the Freeman School. “I sincerely congratulate Neil, Michael, Andrew, Sarah and Sara on this outstanding accomplishment.”

PwC created the Challenge — originally called the Extreme Accounting Competition — in 2002 to expose students to careers in public accounting while giving them a chance to put their academic skills to work. Participants take on the role of PwC consultants and have two weeks to analyze a business case and put together a presentation for a panel of PwC partners acting in the role of the client’s upper management. The preliminary round took place at the Freeman School on Oct. 23, with 14 student teams vying to represent the Freeman School in the semi-finals. Playing the role of the client and serving as judges for the round were PwC partners Kathy Nieland, Ted Orihel (A&S ’78, MBA ’80) and Chuck Tilis (A&S ’77, MBA ’78).

Videos of the winning presentation at each participating school were then submitted to a panel of judges in New York, who selected the four national finalists. The Freeman School and fellow finalists Indiana University, University of California-Berkeley and University of Southern California will travel to Washington, D. C., in January 2016 to deliver their presentation to a panel of PwC’s national judges and compete for a grand prize of $10,000.

“The PwC Challenge is a phenomenal learning experience and all our student participants get so much out of it,” said Christine Smith, professor of practice in accounting and faculty adviser to the competition. “The resources that PwC devotes to the competition in terms of both time and money are immense, so I am sincerely grateful for this incredible investment they’ve made in our students.”