

Friday, April 24, 2009

Students in Free Enterprise become regional champions

By Eric Reikowski, media relations assistant

The Oakland University Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) team took first place in its league at the 2009 SIFE USA Regional Competition held April 2 in Chicago, Illinois. The competition featured roughly 40 teams who delivered presentations on community outreach projects before a judging panel of esteemed business leaders.

The OU SIFE team gave a presentation on a slew of service projects it has initiated in support of community outreach and business development. One such project, called Achieving Profitable Opportunities & Life Lessons in Organizations (APOLLO), led SIFE members to create and manage a business that generated more than \$14,000 in profits.

In addition, OU SIFE facilitates education and mentoring programs, including Bridge to Life (BTL), Introducing Middle School Pupils to All Characteristics of Trade (IMPACT), Entrepreneurship Camp and financial literacy workshops. Through these initiatives, the OU SIFE team works with young people, helping them succeed academically while learning the fundamentals of business and finance.

These projects and others presented at the regional competition were evaluated based on seven criteria: success skills, entrepreneurship, sustainability, financial literacy, market economics, business ethics and environmental sustainability. This year's regional victory was the ninth in a row for the OU SIFE team.

"It's really exciting," said Brennon Edwards, who recently stepped down as president of OU SIFE. "Our goal is to win the national competition."

As a regional champion, the team will go on to compete against the top 200 SIFE teams in the national championships May 10-12 in Philadelphia, PA. The overall winner will represent the United States at the international SIFE competition in Berlin, Germany. Regardless of the outcome, Edwards is pleased with the positive impact the team has made on the community.

"I'm extremely proud to be a part of my SIFE team and am grateful for all of the work that the members and E-board have put in this year," said Edwards. "This organization offers experiences that you simply can't get anywhere else."

He added, "You get to experience all aspects of business and see the day-to-day impact you are making in the community. Our sponsors donate money, products and resources. These companies know what we've been doing and they end up recruiting SIFE students, so it's a win-win."

Throughout its efforts, the OU SIFE team has enjoyed support from partners in the business community, including Comerica Charitable Foundation, Walgreens, Enterprise Rent-A-Car and Credit Union One.

SIFE is an international organization that promotes community outreach through free enterprise, entrepreneurship and education. With more than 1,500 chapters worldwide, the organization helps prepare future business leaders to pursue socially responsible solutions to global challenges. For more information on OU's SIFE team, visit <http://w3.sba.oakland.edu/studorg/sife/>.

SUMMARY

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