

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

OU's SIFE team to participate in national exposition

Oakland University's Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) qualified as one of the four regional teams to participate in the SIFE National Exposition Competition to be held May 13-15 in Kansas City. At the national competition, hundreds of students from around the country will gather to compete for a spot on the SIFE World Cup, which will be held in Singapore. According to SIFE president Brennon Edwards, the competition this year at regionals was tough and he knows the national competition will be just as challenging.

"This year, there were eight teams in our league and six of the teams had won the regional competition in the past," Edwards said. OU's SIFE team has a strong history of participation in the national exposition.

SIFE works with businesses to mobilize university students around the world to utilize knowledge learned in the classroom to address real work business and economic issues in their communities.

"Our projects reach out to the community close to us," Edwards said. OU's SIFE team presented six of their initiatives at the regional competition.

- Entrepreneurship Camp — Economically disadvantaged high school students live on campus and attend classes to learn about entrepreneurship for two weeks during the summer. Each student who completes the program and successfully presents a business plan receives a \$500 scholarship.
- King-Chavez-Park — Working with the OU KCP program and Detroit's Coleman A. Young Foundation, SIFE runs workshops that teach students about free enterprise, trade, social responsibility and business ethics.
- Introducing Middle School Pupils to All Characteristics of Trade (IMPACT) — SIFE members teach students at Pontiac's Jefferson Whittier Middle School about global economics.
- Bridge to Life — Four days a week through the school year, SIFE members teach students from two different schools about entrepreneurship while also mentoring them about personal and academic issues.
- Attaining Life Changing Opportunities Via Entrepreneurship (ALCOVE) — SIFE plans to open a retail store in the Oakland Center to provide SIFE students the opportunity to develop and manage the retail location while raising money for SIFE.
- Achieving Profitable Opportunities and Life Lessons in Organizations (APOLLO) — Partnering with regional store managers from Walgreens, SIFE has placed products from Bottle Crew Inc. in 25 local stores, raising funds for SIFE. Walgreens also provides internships to OU students as part of the partnership.

In addition to qualifying for nationals, undergraduate students Alex Cherup, Edwards, Paul Vance and Jenny Van Vliet and graduate students Roslyn Taylor and Wes Arnold were chosen as national finalists in the areas of market economics and success skills.

The SIFE National Exposition will be held May 13-15 in Chicago. Edwards says OU's team has a goal of reaching the semi-final round.

This year has been a rebuilding year for the OU SIFE team. After being inactive at the beginning of the academic year, Edwards stumbled into the leadership role after looking for an entrepreneurship organization for students. He immediately took the challenge and began recruiting students. Now with 23 members in SIFE, Edwards said he is proud of the success the team has had this year.

Edwards plans to continue working with SIFE next year. He said the organization has provided him with experience in entrepreneurship and an internship with Walgreens. Students who would like to get involved can e-mail Edwards at bdedward@oakland.edu.

OU's SIFE team is part of the School of Business Administration's Entrepreneurship Institute. For more information, visit the [Entrepreneurship Institute](#) Web site.

SUMMARY

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