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## Business Scholars competition focuses on social enterprise

By Allie Peterson

The Oakland University Business Scholars faced off at its second case competition. The case competition requires the Scholars teams to plan and present a creative and unique business plan to a panel of judges.

For the most recent competition, each team was challenged to create a business plan to help ME to WE grow retail sales, refine products and create new partnerships. ME to WE is a for-profit social enterprise that provides socially responsible services, and donates half of its net profits to charity.

After studying the case and company, each team presented its recommendations to the panel of judges.

The Kicking Assets won the competition with its outstanding plan that stayed true to the company's vision. Specifically, the plan called for the business to focus on partnering with larger companies with the same values and ideals to reach a greater customer base while staying true to the company's social conscience mission.

Team members, Kristine LaRue, finance; Frank Pino III, marketing; Paulina Pappas, operations management; Mansimran Singh, marketing; and Jacob Norman, finance, each received \$350.

"Their solution to the problem went above and beyond what was required," says panelist Razzaaq McConner, MKT '01, head, powertrain controls and electronics purchasing, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. "I was impressed with how the team created the material for the presentation, and how each person presented and responded to the questions from the judges."

Judges Amy Coe, regional associate vice president, OU Credit Union; Whitney Anderson-Harrell, vice president, sales and financial education, OU Credit Union; and David Rooney, executive in residence, OU business school, were equally impressed by the thoroughness of the Kicking Assets presentation.

"All of the teams had creative solutions," adds McConner. "It's clear these students are dedicated, because it takes a lot of effort to take part in a competition like this on a Saturday morning."

Business Scholars is a selective program that gives business students at Oakland University the chance to apply the knowledge they learn in classes to real life in business situations.

Along with case competitions, Business Scholars develop real world business skills such as working with a team while under pressure and leadership as well as practice public speaking and presenting.

To learn more about the Scholars program visit, [oakland.edu/business/scholars](http://oakland.edu/business/scholars).



*Case competition judges Razzaaq McConner, MKT '01, head, powertrain controls and electronics purchasing, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles; David Rooney, executive in residence, OU business school; Whitney Anderson-Harrell, vice president, sales and financial education, OU Credit Union; and Amy Coe, regional associate vice president, OU Credit Union, congratulate Frank Pino, Paulina Pappas and Kristine LaRue of the Kicking Assets team.*

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