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Public Affairs, Roger Williams University

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# Students Capture Third Place in Student Advertising Competition

Interdisciplinary team scores third-place seat for project-based course work



The presentation team — Cole Rice, Brendan McQueeney, Alyssa Otis, Brianna Smith and Marquis Caesar — pitched the campaign to a panel of judges to secure the win.

April 19, 2016 | Public Affairs Staff

**BOSTON, M.A.** – For a fourth time in recent years, Roger Williams University students continued to build on their success in a competitive student advertising competition with a third-place win this month.

This year, an interdisciplinary team of 22 students – comprised of majors in marketing, graphic design, web development and media communication – competed in the regional round of the 2016 National Student Advertising Competition, earning the top-three finish against nine other colleges and universities from Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

In the annual competition, the National Student Advertising Campaign, sponsored by the American Advertising Federation, enlists a corporate sponsor to provide a case study that identifies a real-world problem, as well as associated campaign objectives and a campaign budget. The challenge this year was to generate greater brand engagement for Snapple and appeal to consumers beyond the beverage company's traditional stronghold in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region.

From conducting their own research to thousands of actual consumer interviews and surveys, the students developed an integrated communications campaign for the client, including a comprehensive plans book that suggested a new brand slogan and expanded focus on unique advertising opportunities – like mobile screen takeovers on Spotify and Pandora apps, gas-pump ads and pop-up Snapple facts that appear when scanning a phone over an in-store advertisement. Many of the students worked on the yearlong campaign through a project-based course – which also bridged several disciplines – led by Professor of Marketing Geraldo Matos.

When they presented all this work at the regional competition in a 20-minute multimedia pitch to a panel of judges (comprised of advertising professionals and client representatives), the Roger Williams students stood out among the nine other teams, according to Matos.

“The judges lauded both the quality of the work and the presentation skills of the students,” Matos said. “This competition is a truly immersive, hands-on experience that closely mimics what it takes to work in an advertising agency. These students will have a leg up among their peers when they enter the workforce.”

Securing the third-place regional victory, the RWU team bested students from Emerson, Quinnipiac, the University of Hartford, Simmons, Fitchburg State and Salem State. Boston University won the competition.

Team member Brendan McQueeney, a marketing major and global communication minor, credits the group’s success to drawing on the strengths of their interdisciplinary skillset and the expert guidance of Professor Matos.

“The class was completely hands on from day one,” McQueeney said. “Professor Matos pushed us beyond our potential while providing direction based on his years of experience in the marketing world. We generated our own work. The product and experience is something we’re not only very proud of, but will also be able to show to employers as the work we can complete and have already done.”

This is the fourth time that the RWU team has placed in the competition: the team took fourth in 2010 and second in 2011 and 2012. The University did not enter the competition for the past two years.

This year’s team included Evan Beck, Marquis Caesar, Kevin Cameron, Aaron Comak, Emily Crafts, Clayton Durant, Kate Fickett, Taylor Hawes, Carmel James, Eric Jones, Zoe MacDonald, Brendan McQueeney, Alyssa Otis, Madison Reslow, Cole Rice, Kelsey Rogers, Brianna Smith, Kelly Sobolewski, Sarah Wojtusik, Sara Swanson, Michelle Taylor, and Ashley Williams.

