



COURIER

Vol. 39, No. 4 • February 2014

NEWS FROM CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Drew Collins Takes Up Baton as Director of Choral Activities
- 3 Robbin Smith Grows Civic-Minded Graduates
- 4 President Miller's America's Most Literate Cities Study Receives National Coverage
- 5 Department in the Spotlight: Management Information Systems
- 6 Student in the Spotlight: Alayna James
- 12 Construction Management and Civil Engineering Students Tour CT Fastrak
- 14 CCSU Faculty and Students Work to Preserve New Britain African American History
- 18 Alumni News: Scott Pioli '88 Endows Scholarship for CFES Students

Commercial Build Team Excels at Regional Competition



CCSU's winning Commercial Build Team: Ian Rogers, Sean East, Anthony Diana, Kristen Cortigiano, Mike Fallat, and Douglas Hess.

In the construction industry, planning a building project is as important as the actual build, and can be more time consuming.

The CCSU construction management majors who participated in the Associated Schools of Construction (ASC) student competition in November didn't have the luxury of time, but they still managed to create an award-winning construction proposal.

Each year, the ASC competition challenges student teams to create a proposal, complete with construction timeline, material requirements, and costs, in one of three categories—commercial build, heavy civil, and design/

build—during a very compressed, stress-filled three-day timeline.

Teams arrive late on Thursday and receive specifications from an actual construction project, previously completed by one of the judging companies. They then work around the clock on Friday to analyze and specify job requirements, formulate a construction timeline, and produce a detailed proposal, without internet access or assistance from their faculty advisor. The final proposals are presented on Saturday morning, with first place teams in each category winning \$2,000.

continued on page 8

"This competition let me put my classroom learning to a real-world test."

Commercial Build Team Excels at Regional Competition

continued from page 1

CCSU's commercial build team took second place in a field of more than 15 teams, including students from powerhouse engineering schools at RIT and Drexel University. The CCSU team—Kristen Cortigiano, Anthony Diana, Sean East, Mike Fallat, Doug Hess, and Ian Rogers—was mentored by Professor of Manufacturing and Construction Management Raymond Perreault.

The real-world basis for this year's project—the renovation of a dormitory building with heavy repairs and asbestos removal—was actually completed at a cost of \$3.5 million. CCSU's team estimated project costs of \$3.7 million.

Team leader Cortigiano described the experience as “challenging, realistic, and intense.” This was the senior's second year at the competition, and she said she felt that helped give the group a competitive edge.

“From last year, I knew what the judges would look for on presentation day, so that helped. Everyone dug right in and really worked hard to come up with the best information for our proposal.”

Fallat, who competed for the first time, said, “This competition allowed me to add some marketable, upper-level skills to my resume, even before I graduate. I've worked in construction since I was 14, but this experience let me put my classroom learning to the test.”

Involved with the student competition for 24 years, Perreault noted, “When this competition started out, there was just one division and seven schools. This year, there were 17 universities and 36 teams involved in three separate competitions.”

“Our construction management graduates are well-rounded and prepared for the rigors of a career in the field.”

In addition to the commercial build team, CCSU also entered a team in the heavy civil competition, led by Professor Edward Sarisley, and a design/build team, led by Associate Professor Linda Reeder.

Perreault continued, “Each year, the bar is raised, and each year, these students meet the challenge in creative and innovative ways.”

The weekend event also includes a career fair, which attracts local companies looking for top students for internships and permanent positions. During this year's event, two of the commercial build team members had scheduled interviews with one of the sponsoring companies before the weekend was over.

CCSU's construction management undergraduate program evolved into its own major in 2001 from an industrial technology concentration established in the late 1970s. The master's program was approved in 2007. Both degree programs prepare students for technology-oriented supervisory, middle management, and leadership positions, responding to increasing industry demand for highly qualified personnel who have a combination of technical and managerial skills.

According to Associate Professor of Construction Management and department chair Jacob Kovel, there are currently 220 undergraduate and 40 graduate students enrolled in the program.

“By necessity, the major is very hands-on, with required lab work and internships,” Kovel said. “But there is a strong foundation in business coursework as well, so our graduates are well-rounded and prepared for the rigors of a career in the field.”

Field trips to job sites are common (see page 12 for related story). Sarisley has even taken student groups to his house to learn about solar panels, which he has installed at his home.

The department organizes industry-specific career fairs each semester, which attract more than 50 employers. Students have the opportunity to learn more about the companies that attend, and to meet with hiring representatives to discuss internships and permanent jobs. Many students, including Cortigiano and Fallat, secure permanent positions before they graduate.

Fallat said, “I think we are part of the first generation that will need a college degree in the construction industry, and with all of my studies and the experiences I have had here at Central, it can only lead to success.”

— Patrice Dumond

Students who also competed at the ASC student competition: Design/Build group, led by Associate Professor Linda Reeder: Nicholas Centore, Nicholas Chmura, Michael King, Chris Martello, Henry Nickerson, and Michael Schaller; Heavy Civil group, led by Professor Edward Sarisley: Steve Dayton, Jason Mikulski, Brendan Sampieri, John Swaney, and Greg Taylor.