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Alumni Newsletter

We Are Number #1! Rider SBI Teams Are National Champions!

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In February, at the National Small Business Institute® Annual Meeting, Rider’s undergraduate and MBA SBI teams won the student Consulting Project of the Year competition. This is the first time ever that a Rider MBA team won, and only the second time a Rider undergraduate team finished first, and the only time that both teams were the top winners in their categories in a single year. Those students placed first among more than 200 competitors from around the country.

The competing undergraduate students were Kristen Lopez, Kai Wright, and Caroline Romanelli (all entrepreneurship majors who graduated in 2013) and the competing graduate

students were MBA graduates Matt Nowlin, Brian Janvoksky, and Jeremey Hopewell as well as current MBA student Kimberly Cook. The two teams produced reports as part of consulting classes taught by Dr. Ron Cook.

This accomplishment continues the success that the Rider’s Small Business Institute® has had in preparing students for these events. Since 1998, with the support of the SBI’s corporate sponsor, Grand Bank in Hamilton, Rider has garnered 24 top 10 or better national finishes in this competition, including national titles.

In the SBI, the students develop consulting reports for local organizations or

businesses. In preparing their reports, students were required to meet with the clients, understand their needs, create a consulting contract, conduct the analysis and develop recommendations. In this case, the client for the undergraduate report was the Breast Cancer Resource Center, which is part of the Princeton YWCA, and the client for the graduate students was Spruce Industries, located in Rahway, N.J.

The projects were judged by an outside panel that examine several different aspects of the report: thoroughness and depth of analysis, value of the information to the client, logic of analysis, clarity and justification of recommendations,

Rider SBI Teams Are National Champions! (cont.'d)

implementation of procedures, effectiveness of the executive summary, and the overall professionalism of the final product.

The process of putting together the reports provides students with the kind of active learning they cannot get from just listening to a classroom lecture on consulting, or practicing on a hypothetical case. “Students have

come into this project with a mindset of inquiry, saying, ‘I need to understand what’s going on with this company and keep myself open to all options.’ In creating these reports, they are learning how to advocate for the client—how to find the best solution,” Cook explains.

“Developing this kind of critical thinking is a vital skill, one that can transfer to the workforce, to

an entrepreneurial situation, or to almost any kind of business environment.”

Photo: Ron Cook in the center, with undergraduate winners (left) Caroline Romanelli, Kristen Lopez and Kai Wright; and graduate winners (right) Jeremey Hopewell, Matt Nowlin & Kimberly Cook. Not pictured is Brian Janovsky.



Rider University and Grand Bank team up to offer a Veteran Entrepreneurial Program

Rider’s Center for Entrepreneurial Studies will be offering an entrepreneurship program in summer of 2014 that will guide veterans in the development of a business plan from a venture idea or an existing venture. This program is being funded by Grand Bank,

located in Hamilton, NJ, so it can be offered free of charge to veterans. The program will be comprised of seven weeks of classroom training, and will begin with two workshops in the first week: one on library research skills and another on accounting fundamentals. In the remaining six

weeks, sessions will be held once a week to allow veterans adequate time to develop their plans as they learn. This program structure will allow for vital instructor feedback on the plan creation.



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Veteran Entrepreneurial Program (cont.'d)

Upon completion of the program, veterans will receive 1 year of mentoring as they pursue their ventures.

Rider alumus Mark Wolters, President and CEO of Grand Bank, noted that, “When we proposed this idea to Rider University, they were immediately on board with our concept of the program and how it would benefit our returning service men and women. Our

banking and financial experts will be able to provide information and mentorship to the veterans who participate in the program and work with them individually to help achieve their business goals.”

The Center is excited to provide business plan development training to help veterans start a venture, expand a company, or help a family firm. Participants will gain essential entrepreneurial

information over this seven week program, and have free mentoring for an additional year. If you know a veteran who would benefit from this program, please inform them of this opportunity. Registration deadline is June 1.

For further information about this new program, go to www.rider.edu/entrepreneurship and click on “Veteran Entrepreneurial Program” under the “What’s New” box on our homepage.

Alumni Profile

James McNamee Jr.
Class of 2012

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Throughout my time at Rider University, I always knew that I wanted to be an entrepreneur for a variety of reasons. First and foremost is that I wanted to follow in my family’s successful history of entrepreneurs. Today I can proudly say I am a fifth generation entrepreneur! The professors at Rider were all very caring and supportive with any questions or help that I needed. Many of them have an entrepreneurial background and bring real life experiences to the classroom. Without their guidance early on; the two businesses I co-own with my brother, Brothers Landscaping & Contracting and Benelli LLC would not be where they are today.

Our first business we started when

we were only 12 and 13 years old. We were the typical kids who rode the lawnmowers to our neighbors and mowed their lawns. Once I turned 16 years old, we began to travel and started to pick up more clients. The following six years I would come home from Rider to upstate NY to slowly continue expanding our business. In May of 2012, when I graduated, I put my education to work. I was now able to take on this business full-time and used skills I learned from my marketing, accounting, and management classes. In the following year, our business grew dramatically.

With the success of Brothers Landscaping and Contracting we were able to open Benelli LLC (named after my young pure bred British Lab Benelli). With this business, we “flip” houses. We were fortunate enough to purchase our first flip house this past fall. In the coming days this house’s updates

will be complete and be on the MLS for sale. We have our sights on expanding this business and hope to see the rapid growth that we experienced with our landscaping business.

I am also in the middle of opening up another business where I will be one of the first to market. Hopefully this business gets off the ground and I can share it with everyone a year from now. If you asked me where I saw myself two years after graduation; this would not be it. I am extremely fortunate for the success my brother and I have experienced with our businesses. Without the guidance from all the professors in the Entrepreneurship and Management Programs at Rider; I would not be where I am today.



Alumni Updates

Stephen Johnston, '13, is the owner of Tabhair Records & Music Publishing LLC (908-938-6099), and is producing it's third album, "Table For One". The new record is scheduled for release in July 2014. Tabhair's

second CD, "Highway Signs and Highway Lines", was named one of the Top Ten CD's of 2013 by the Irish Voice newspaper in New York City. **Steven Spaulding**, '11, works in his family-owned business, Spaulding Fabricators in

Brick, NJ. Based on the firm's need, Steven build a customized online inventory system. This system allows both customers to place orders and Spaulding Fabricators to keep an accurate count of inventory.

Alumni Marketplace

The Rider University Office of Alumni Relations has created the ALUMNI MARKETPLACE. This is a benefits program that will support alumni-owned businesses and offer alumni customer discounts on products and services, thus strengthening the bond between alums and Rider and Westminster. The business owner chooses the special offer they want to share on their

product(s) or service(s) to anyone who brings a Rider or Westminster alumni card to their business. As a result, they offer fellow alumni an attractive reason to visit their business.

By participating in this free program, alumni business owners can increase their customer base, create a benefit for other alumni, and keep the business local and in

the Rider family. Check out participating companies at alumni.rider.edu/alumnimarketplace. To participate in the Alumni Marketplace simply fill out and submit the Company Authorization Form found in the link above. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 609-896-5340 or email to alumni@rider.edu.

Stay Connected

Do you need interns for your company and want to give Rider students that opportunity? We are always looking to help Rider students, so if you are aware of any internship openings, please let Dr. Cook (cookr@rider.edu) know.

Would your company benefit from being involved in the Small Business Institute® program? We are looking for firms to participate in our award-winning student consulting program, for fall 2014 semester. Contact Dr. Cook (cookr@rider.edu) for details.



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