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## Success in Selling

University of Dayton

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# NEWS



SELECT LANGUAGE

Monday February 15, 2016

## Success in Selling

They trained for hours every day for weeks. They ran drills. They practiced their pitches. Two University of Dayton seniors put all that preparation to work in a fast-paced, high-profile competition and took home the first national title for the University's Fiore Talarico Center for Professional Selling.

Caroline Crabtree and Mitch Fowler beat 36 teams from across the country to win top honors in the ninth annual National Sales Challenge in New Jersey.

Their victory is a major milestone for the selling center, created just two years ago through a \$1 million gift from alumnus Fiore Talarico, '74.

The center prepares students for careers in high-dollar, business-to-business, technology and medical sales through an innovative curriculum and nationally-recognized best practices in sales management education. The emphasis is on experiential learning.

Students hone their techniques with sales executives from the center's six corporate partners — Reynolds & Reynolds, Henry Schein Dental, LexisNexis, TEKsystems, Crown Equipment Corporation and Gartner, Inc. — serving as customers. The sessions are recorded and critiqued.

That depth of training sets the students apart, said Director Anthony Krystofik.

Last May, 96 percent of the graduates with an emphasis in sales had written job offers before graduation, Krystofik said. Corporate sponsors hired at least 42 sales graduates for full-time positions and another 23 students landed summer sales internships. Other sales alumni have gone on recently to jobs with Johnson & Johnson, Cisco, Oracle, IBM, Cardinal Health, Hewlett-Packard, Google and other Fortune 500 corporations.

One reason center graduates are in high demand is because the cost of a single bad sales hire can be a staggering \$220,000, according to the latest estimates from the [Chally Group](#) Worldwide and the Sales Education Foundation.

“Companies that have hired our students are sold on their in-depth consultative selling skills and sales process knowledge, the technological edge our sales center system provides, and the ‘inch-wide, mile deep’ strength of our Sales Management Emphasis curriculum,” Krystofik said.

Recently, the center added new courses in negotiations and advanced selling skills, and founded a local chapter of Pi Sigma Epsilon, the only national co-ed professional fraternity for sales, sales management and marketing.

National competitions, such as the National Sales Challenge, are a great way for students to learn and take their skills to a larger stage. And for students from a center that's only two years old to take a top national prize speaks to the quality of their skills and hours of training, Krystofik said.

Further proof comes in terms of job offers: Crabtree and Fowler have both secured positions with

multi-billion dollar companies after their graduations in May.

Crabtree will start a job in her hometown of Boston with Henry Schein Dental, a Fortune 500 company.

She also earned an individual first place out of 72 undergraduates in the selling competition, and is the only student in the nine year history of the National Sales Challenge to place in the top four overall in both categories of the National Sales Challenge — sales call role-play and speed selling.

“I still can’t believe it,” said Crabtree, a communication management major with minors in marketing and French. “These competitions are beneficial because this is how corporations are hiring.”

Fowler, a marketing major with a sales management emphasis from St. Marys, Ohio, placed fifth in the competition. He will work for Crown Equipment Corporation after graduation at their Indianapolis office. He said training with the selling center helped him learn how to be comfortable in unknown situations.

“When you get outside your comfort zone, that’s when you grow as a person and set yourself up for success,” he said.

Undergraduates Tim Coyne, Kyle Gulley, Joe Mancewicz and Allie Stewart also served as alternates for the competition.

Crabtree and Fowler will compete again in the spring at the National Collegiate Sales Competition, the largest and oldest sales role-play competition in the world.

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