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Chapman University Media Relations

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Chapman Student Ad Team Wins National Championship

ORANGE, Calif., June 14, 2010 Chapman University's student advertising club has won first place in the American Advertising Federation's prestigious National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC), held this year on June 9 -11 at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Orlando, Florida. The Chapman team traveled to Florida to participate in the contest, in which it triumphed over student teams from Texas State University, the Universities of Nebraska and Wisconsin, and 15 other colleges and universities that had earlier won their respective regional NSAC competitions.

The final standings were:

1. Chapman University
2. Texas State University
3. University of Wisconsin
4. University of Nebraska

Nationwide, 120 university teams competed in regional competitions this past spring. Chapman won its region (victorious over USC, UCLA, UCI, CSUF and UNLV, among others) and progressed with 18 others to the national competition in Orlando to present its ad campaign in front of a panel of judges.

Each year, NSAC partners with a different corporate sponsor or client, which provides an assignment outlining the history of its product and current advertising situation. The assignment always reflects a real-world situation. Students must research the product and its competition, identify potential problem areas and devise a completely integrated communications campaign for the client. Each student team then "pitches" its campaign to a panel of judges. This year's NSAC client was State Farm Insurance, which gave the teams the task of creating a hypothetical \$40 million media advertising campaign for auto and renters insurance targeting young adults, ages 18-25. Three State Farm marketing/advertising agency executives judged the national competition.

The Chapman team, led by their advisor, Professor Cory O'Connor of Chapman's Dodge College of Film and Media Arts, and student account directors Andreas Robichaux, Kimmy Kirkwood and Jon Blomgren, was made up of students representing a multidisciplinary mix of majors, including advertising, public relations, business, film production and graphic design.

It's a pretty surreal feeling to win nationals, said Robichaux, an advertising major from Anaheim who just graduated from Chapman a few weeks ago. I'm not entirely sure it's actually set in yet, but it means a lot. To participate in the competition for four years and to see such improvement each year, culminating in a national championship, is more than I could have ever wished for. We had a team of 54 individuals who were all passionate and dedicated, and at the end of the day the strength of our work is evident to everyone who sees it. I couldn't ask for a better way to end my time at Chapman University.

This is the most exciting moment in my career, said a jubilant Professor O'Connor. It took seven

years and several hundred students over those seven years to forge the Chapman model for success, but we hit it this year with State Farm. Most importantly, I have to acknowledge Jon (Hercules) Blomgren, Kimmy (The Mom) Kirkwood, and Andreas (The Actor) Robichaux, the Chapman account directors who've led this team for the past 12 months, through every manner of turbulence and elation. It was a hard-fought victory during which Jon, Kimmy and Andreas proved themselves to be warriors of the highest caliber."

Chapman first competed in NSAC in 2004, placing seventh out of nine schools in the regional contest. In the years since, the Chapman team has placed first in the regionals three times, and ranked fifth in the nation in 2006 and fourth in the nation in 2009. This is its first national championship.

The university teams competing in the NSAC national competition, in alphabetical order, were:

Art Center Design College, Tucson

Ball State University

Boston University

Butler University

Chaminade University of Honolulu

Chapman University

Florida State University

George Washington University

Marshall University

Purdue University, Calumet

Savannah College of Art and Design

Syracuse University

Texas State University, San Marcos

University of Houston

University of Nebraska, Lincoln

University of Nevada Reno

University of Oregon

University of Virginia

University of Wisconsin, Madison