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Georgia Southern Wins Top Advocacy Team at International Mediation Tournament

MARCH 27, 2015



Pictured are (L to R): Jonathan Quintyne, Dylan John, Dick Calkins (with the International Academy of Dispute Resolution), Jessica Shanken and Tashai Gilman.

Competing against graduate law students from around the world, Georgia Southern won first place in the advocacy category of the International Law School Mediation Tournament in Des Moines, Iowa, held March 18-21.

The event marked the first time that a team from the University was invited to the international tournament. Even more impressive, however, is the fact that it was also the first time an undergraduate team made it to the finals in the tournament's history.

"It was unprecedented for an undergraduate team to make it to the finals, let alone win, in a competition against law school students," said Dr. Laura Agnich, assistant professor in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology and advisor to the University Mock Mediation Club. "The president of INADR [International Academy of Dispute Resolution], Dick Calkins, who hosted

the competition, emailed me to let me know how amazing our students are and how shocked the law schools were when they won.

"I'm not surprised that they won considering the amount of work the students put into training," she added. "They meet multiple times a week leading up to competitions and invest countless hours into understanding all facets of the cases they mediate."

The team from Georgia Southern consisted of members of the Mock Mediation Club: Dylan John, Jonathan Quintyne, Jessica Shanken and Tashai Gilman. The club was founded in 2013 in order to train students in international mediation, and has trained mediation teams from Sri Lanka, Canada, Brazil and the U.S. The Sri Lankan ambassador to the U.S. has recognized the club for its work.

"Our Mock Mediation Club is very unique in its approach and inspires members to engage the subject of advocacy and mediation more than just looking at it from a competitive angle," said John, club president. "We, as a team, are known for attending competitions and helping train other teams prior to and during the competition. We see this as the right thing to do and a further refinement of our skill sets even if these teams could potentially be our opposing teams when the competition rounds kick off."

The Mock Mediation Club had been in existence for only a year when it attended the Intercollegiate International Mediation Tournament for undergraduate schools at Brenau University in November 2014. Despite being relatively new to the experience, the team placed second in the advocate client category and ninth in the mediator category. Because of their performance in this tournament, they were invited to compete in Iowa.

In addition to winning the advocacy category outright, the team also placed ninth in the world for the mediator category, making it to the semi-finals among their international and graduate counterparts. Quintyne and Shanken also received fifth place Outstanding Individual awards in the advocacy category.

Students' travel to the tournament was supported by the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, and the SGA.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125-degree programs serving more than 20,500 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. www.GeorgiaSouthern.edu.

Women's Empowerment Conference Highlights "A Woman's Worth"

MARCH 27, 2015



Award-winning political strategist, women's activist and lifestyle expert, Valeisha Butterfield-Jones, will be the keynote speaker for the annual Women's Empowerment Conference at Georgia Southern on Saturday, April 11, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Russell Union.

The theme for this year's conference is, "A Woman's Worth," and will provide diverse sessions, lectures and strategies for women to achieve academic success, personal growth and professional development.

Butterfield-Jones is no stranger to success. She is the co-founder and chair of the Women in Entertainment Empowerment Network (WEEN), CEO of The Butterfield Group LLC and author of *The Girlprint*. She has been recognized by *ESSENCE* magazine, *EBONY* magazine, *JET* magazine, *The Business Insider* and *TheRoot.com* as a leading executive in the U.S. She has been profiled by such national magazines as *Glamour*, *Marie Claire*, *Lucky Magazine*, *Black Enterprise* and *Sister 2 Sister*, as well as a host of television and other media outlets.

The event is open to all women in the community, and participants can register from 8 – 9 a.m. Tickets are \$10 for students with school ID, and \$15 for non-students. The cost includes a continental breakfast, lunch and access to all sessions.

For more event or registration information, visit the Women's Empowerment Conference website at GeorgiaSouthern.edu/MSc/wec-2015.

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