

California State University, Long Beach Wins Top Prize in PRSSA's 2019 Bateman Case Study Competition



NEW YORK, May 22, 2019 – PRSSA, the foremost organization for students interested in the public relations and communications fields, announced that California State University, Long Beach, has been selected as the first place winner of the PRSSA 2019 Bateman Case Study Competition. The University of South Carolina won second place and Brigham Young University – Team Blue finished in third.

This year's Bateman Case Study Competition challenged students to develop a strategic public relations campaign that focuses on diversity in the public relations field and promotes the book "Diverse Voices: Profiles in Leadership," which was developed by the PRSA Foundation in partnership with the Museum of Public Relations. The book features candid interviews with more than 40 accomplished communications professionals of diverse backgrounds, who describe the successes and challenges they have faced during their careers. "Diverse Voices" is the latest initiative of the PRSA Foundation to help advance diversity within the communications profession.

The Bateman Case Study Competition originated in 1973 as a national case study allowing PRSSA members to exercise the analytical skills required for public relations problem solving. In 1983, the name of the Competition was changed to honor the memory of the late **J. Carroll Bateman, APR**. Bateman was a past president of PRSA and was instrumental in the founding of PRSSA.

PRSSA received 66 entries from across the country. Teams were judged on their research, planning, implementation and evaluation. The top three finalists were invited to New York to present their campaigns to a panel of judges comprised of PRSA Foundation representatives and PRSA members.

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LBSU's winning campaign, "Diversity LB," created by five students to engage with Long Beach and surrounding Los Angeles and Orange counties, focused on one overarching objective: to raise campus and community awareness about the diversity and inclusion deficit and challenge in the communications profession.

The team accumulated more than 115,000 impressions through earned, owned and shared media, raised funds to purchase "Diverse Voices" for five college campuses, created a mentorship program, hosted networking opportunities, and compiled an e-book, "Stories of Diversity," through which students shared their own diversity experiences.

"Winning this award means so much to our students, who come from different backgrounds and were able to put together a campaign that will really help improve students' and professionals' future in Long Beach and beyond," said **Krista Coriaty**, Faculty Adviser and Lecturer in the university's Department of Journalism and Public Relations. "While they accomplished so much during a short period, one of the highlights of their campaign was the creation of a diversity and inclusion officer on the PRSSA Long Beach executive board, which will help ensure that many of the campaign's programs will be carried out for future students."

"This year's focus on 'Diverse Voices' provided a compelling and inspirational range of stories about the many paths to success for people of color in the communications industry," said **Jeneen Garcia**, Executive Director, PRSSA. "Our primary purpose at PRSSA is to prepare students for careers in public relations, and these real-life chronicles of grit, perseverance and reward are important guides for our future leaders."

"We were consistently impressed by the strategic thinking, creativity and thoughtfulness that went into these entries," said PRSA Foundation President **Joe Cohen**, APR. "Our heartfelt appreciation goes to all of the students and educators who embraced our cause and helped spread our mission of improving diversity and inclusion in communications. It was also very inspiring to see how the students brought the messages in 'Diverse Voices' to life and how the stories in the book resonated with college students throughout the nation."

Students from the University of South Carolina, through their Commit2Connect campaign, developed a comprehensive toolkit and created a networking event and panel discussion to help foster opportunities for young professionals of color to become leaders of tomorrow. They succeeded in sparking a conversation and taking a measurable step towards a more diverse and inclusive profession while creating a sustainable movement. Both tactics exceeded their goals by 50%.

The Brigham Young Embrace Diversity campaign focused on creating sustainable solutions to diversity needs across the campus and the surrounding community, which was named the least diverse urban area in the U.S. The campaign included introducing high school students with diverse backgrounds to the communications industry, piloting a curriculum to educate BYU communications students on how they can embrace diversity, and helped to bridge a gap between students and professionals through an alumni mentorship program.

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The three finalists will be recognized at an awards ceremony during the PRSSA 2019 International Conference, to be held in San Diego Oct. 18–22.

About the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA)

The Public Relations Student Society of America (www.prssa.org) is the foremost organization for students interested in public relations and communications. Founded in 1968 by its parent organization, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), PRSSA includes almost 10,000 student members and advisers, and is active on nearly 375 colleges and university campuses. For more information, please visit www.prssa.org.

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