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NONPROFIT ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS WIN NATIONAL AWARD

February 15, 2016

A team of Lindenwood University's Department of Nonprofit Administration undergraduate students and a faculty member were presented a national award by the Small Business Institute in New Orleans at a conference Feb. 11 to 13.

The students (Cynthia Fyfe, Trisha Ishikawa, Cydney Kramer, and Meghan Norris) placed second nationally for their nonprofit business plan/feasibility analysis research project for Frigga's Fiber Arts Studio as part of the NPA 100 Introduction to Nonprofit Organizations course.

This is the second consecutive year Lindenwood University students have received recognition from SBI, a significant achievement, said Dr. Patrick Walker, associate professor at Lindenwood's Department of Nonprofit Administration.

"This award resulted from students fully embracing intellectual rigor, entrepreneurial decision-making, and experiential learning both in the classroom and community," Walker said. "Their final report included recommendations that are already being implemented by Frigga's as they prepare to empower women immigrants and refugees in the greater St. Louis area who are potential victims of sex trafficking. The unique goal of the business is to be a profit-making social enterprise committed to paying artisans a living wage and investing in their personal development."

In a studio space, under the tutelage of Frigga's founder Susan Terrill, local immigrant artisans will design and create unique hand-crafted baby clothes, little girl and boy outfits, pillows, and bags for sale in a socially-conscious market, Walker said.

This year's Small Business Institute academic conference in New Orleans marked the 40th anniversary of the Small Business Institute, a national organization dedicated to advancing entrepreneurial education amongst colleges and universities. The organization includes over 100 members who are actively involved in projects with small businesses, nonprofit organizations, entrepreneurial firms, and other organizations in their communities and regions. Through its journals and annual conference, the organization is the only academic organization in the U.S. that focuses intently on student experiential learning in business.

This award provides external validation and further reinforces a collective commitment and dedication to the value of making the community part of the learning paradigm. While organizations benefit from free nonprofit business consulting, students apply lessons they've learned in the classroom.

In the end, the student teams deliver a comprehensive consulting document to their respective clients, along with an oral presentation. Walker said the students, under the supervision of faculty, make significant contributions to communities by providing nonprofit organizations with tools that enable them to deliver more services to many more community stakeholders.

Lindenwood University's award-winning undergraduate and graduate programs in nonprofit administration offers a BA degree, BA/MA degree, traditional and online executive MA degree, and a minor in nonprofit administration.

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From left: Students Cynthia Fyfe, Meghan Norris, Cydney Kramer, and Trisha Ishikawa and Professor Patrick Walker

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