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2-19-2018

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Recommended Citation

Smith, Katie and Ouachita News Bureau, "Ouachita seniors Chandler Blake and Chris Clark win OBU/HSU Business Plan Competition" (2018). *Press Releases*. 467.

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For immediate release

Ouachita seniors Chandler Blake and Chris Clark win OBU/HSU Business Plan Competition

By Katie Smith

February 19, 2018

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.



ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University teams won first, second and fourth place in this year's OBU/HSU Business Plan Competition, hosted on Henderson State University's campus Feb. 12. Chandler Blake and Chris Clark earned the \$4,000 first place prize for their WinterTerm.com proposal.

The OBU/HSU competition brings together the top three teams from each school's individual business plan competitions, which were held in the fall.

Blake, a senior finance and business administration major from Frisco, Texas, and Clark, a senior finance and business administration major from Arkadelphia, Ark., worked with Bryan McKinney, dean of Ouachita's Hickingbotham School of Business, as their faculty advisor, to develop their plan.

WinterTerm.com is a database of winter term courses from colleges and universities around the nation. Blake and Clark developed this idea with the purpose of helping college students easily find and enroll in winter term courses to complete their degrees. WinterTerm.com also earned first place at the OBU Business Plan Competition, which was held Dec. 6.

Blake and Clark made adjustments to their business plan based on feedback from the OBU Business Plan Competition. One of the changes was making their presentation more aesthetically appealing. They worked closely with Shelton Wooley, a senior graphic design major from Ruston, La., to develop a new logo and graphics for their presentation.

"There was a ton of preparation that went into the competition," Blake explained. "We wanted to make sure we knew our presentation, business model and industry inside and out so that we could better explain how WinterTerm.com will be able to capitalize on some of the problems we've seen in the marketplace."

"It just felt really good for all of our hard work to pay off in the form of another win," Clark said. "It also just serves as more validation that we can really make this a successful business outside of the competitions."

Chandler Ferrell, a senior finance major from White Hall, Ark.; Ancil Lea, a senior finance major from Conway, Ark.; Matthew Phillips, a senior finance and computer science major from Piperton, Tenn.; and Emma Shortes, a junior accounting and finance major from Fort Smith, Ark.; placed second in the competition with their business, My401k, and received a \$3,000 cash prize. Their faculty advisor was Dr. Chris Brune, associate professor of finance and holder of the George Young Chair of Business. Their business will help people choose the funds to invest in for their 401(k)s to match the level of risk they prefer. Dr. Brune wanted to pursue this idea after realizing people did not understand what funds were included in their retirement accounts. He invited Ferrell, Lea, Phillips and Shortes to further develop the idea for the competition. They earned third place in the OBU Business Plan Competition.

Braden Lunday, a senior finance and accounting major from Sheridan, Ark., placed fourth in the competition with Lil E's Cupcakes and received a \$1,000; he was advised by Dr. Jim Files, associate professor of accounting. His business is centered around a self-serve cupcake bakery featuring a robot programmed to perfectly ice the cakes. He earned second place in the OBU Business Plan Competition.

Each of these students now have the opportunity to enter their written plans in the statewide Governor's Cup Business Plan Competition. The Governor's Cup selects 12 of these written plans submitted by students from around Arkansas to present their plans in Little Rock.

"It would be an honor to represent OBU at a state competition, and we want people from around Arkansas to see that our school can compete with schools many times our size," Blake said.

"We feel that winning the OBU and the OBU/HSU competitions make a strong case for us to move forward in the Governor's Cup," Clark added. "We're just really excited to be in the position we are."

Ouachita's business plan competition, which is hosted by the Hickingbotham School of Business, is open for participation among students and faculty from all areas of study.

"Our desire is that these competitions will help infuse the campus with a spirit of entrepreneurship," McKinney said. "It is a testimony to the value of a liberal arts education that great ideas emerge from all disciplines."

For more information on the OBU Business Plan Competition or the OBU/HSU Business Plan Competition, contact Bryan McKinney at mckinneyb@obu.edu or (870) 245-5513.

PHOTO OF WINNING TEAM AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT <https://obu.edu/news/2018/02/19/ouachita-seniors-chandler-blake-chris-clark-win-obu-hsu-business-plan-competition/>.