

CAL POLY ORFALEA COLLEGE MBA STUDENTS

COMPETE IN BUSINESS ETHICS COMPETITION

SAN LUIS OBISPO, California, April 21, 2008 – A team of five Cal Poly Orfalea College of Business graduate students won the Kerrigan Award as Runners up in the Loyola Marymount University's National Business Ethics Competition. The annual event was hosted by Loyola Marymount University's Center for Ethics and Business.

Gary Chou (MBA), Matt Fencil (MBA), Marty Flores (MBA) Jeff Mohr (MBA), and Nick Miura (MBA/MS AERO) competed against 31 teams (graduate and undergraduate), including teams from Loyola Marymount, UCLA, Dartmouth University, Duquesne University, New York University, University of Arizona, Villanova, and the US Naval Academy.

The students presented a compelling case about transparency in the retail market for organic foods. The team presented the legal, financial, and ethical dimensions of this business practice to a panel of judges, and then proposed a solution to the problem that maximized all of these considerations. The purpose of the competition was to help students see that it is possible to be both ethical and profitable in business at the same time.

Business leaders from around the nation judged the overall persuasiveness of the presentation, the legal, financial and ethical dimensions, as well as the students' presentation skills. Five of the 31 teams advanced to the final round, which included McGill University, Cal Poly, Montgomery College, St. Joseph's University, and University of San Francisco. According to Marty Flores, "As MBA students at Cal Poly, we are frequently asked to look at business cases in terms of ethics in addition to profitability. This competition gave us the opportunity to go in-depth with a current and controversial topic that affects millions of Americans."

Cal Poly's team is proud to have placed so well in such a large field of respected competitors from around the nation and world. "It's actually a very humbling experience to witness and learn from so much outstanding research done by other teams," said Gary Chou. Sean Martin, an alumnus of the MBA program and previous winner of the Ethics competition, coached the Cal Poly team. Jeff Mohr described Sean as "an adviser, a mentor, and most of all--a friend. He provided us with great insight and pushed us to do our best. He was a big part of our success." Overwhelmingly, the Cal Poly team enjoyed presenting a dilemma they were passionate about, benchmarking themselves against other programs, and networking with ethically likeminded graduate students.

For more information on the competition, please visit <http://www.ethicsandbusiness.org>.