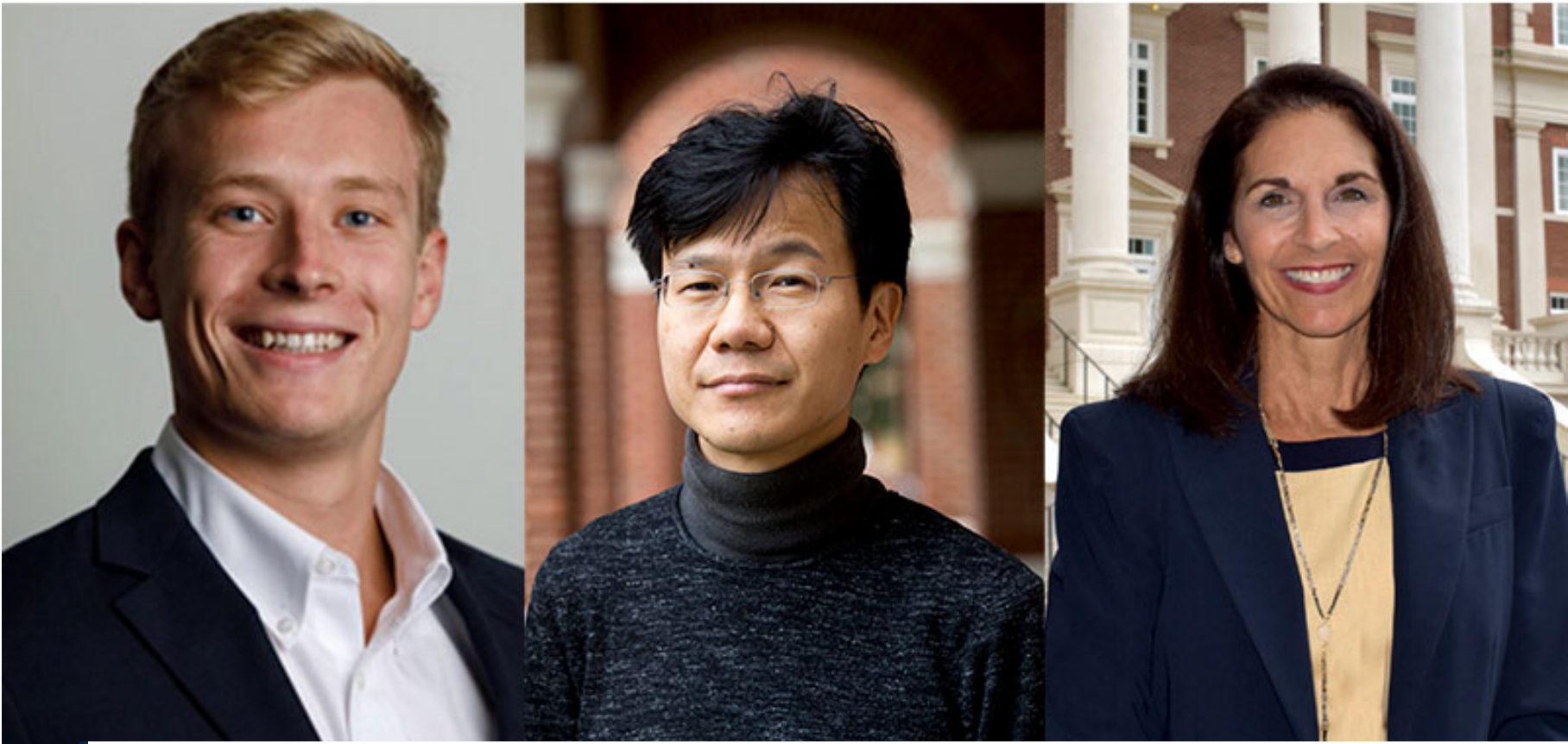


NEWSROOM

[Home](#) / [News](#) / [2021](#) / [March](#) / Two Professors and Alum Earn International Honors

TWO PROFESSORS AND ALUM EARN INTERNATIONAL HONORS

LISA SPILLER, DAE-HEE KIM AND TROY AITKEN PUBLISH 'SALES ARTICLE OF THE YEAR'

by [Jim Hanchett](#) | March 11, 2021*Above: Left to right, Troy Aitken, Dae-Hee Kim, Lisa Spiller**Read time: about 2 min*

Marketing professors Dr. Lisa Spiller and Dr. Dae-Hee Kim and alumnus Troy Aitken '18 have been honored with the prestigious "Sales Education Article of the Year for 2020" award from the *Journal of Marketing Education* (JME).

JME's judges called the CNU article "a significant and timely contribution to the field of sales and marketing and it is notable for its methodological rigor and detailed analysis." JME is a highly selective journal with an acceptance rate of 15% based on Cabell's Directory, which is the go-to authority on journal quality. All manuscripts go through a "double-blind review" process which entails three anonymous reviewers providing feedback and ultimate publication recommendations.

"I'm absolutely thrilled!" Spiller said. "Given that JME is the leading international scholarly journal in marketing education, achieving a publication in the journal alone is worth celebrating, and earning the article of the year award is a real honor."

In addition to the accolade for the authors, the ultimate benefit to the university will be a boost to the fast-growing reputation of the [Joseph W. Luter, III School of Business](#). "Right after the research paper was published, multiple articles in the top marketing journals investigating advanced methods for sales education started to cite what we reported," Kim said.

The article, "Sales Education in the United States: Perspectives on Curriculum and Teaching Practices," is an empirical study that originated from a research proposal on sales made by Spiller as part of her 2017-18 Brout Professorship, a Luter School distinction that asks faculty members to conduct meaningful research over the course of a year.

Meanwhile, Aitken, a finance major, had expressed an interest in enhancing sales education at Christopher Newport and was connected to Spiller and Kim. The trio spent the next two semesters gathering information and performing data analysis. They submitted their article to JME shortly after Aitken's graduation, and after two separate revisions entailing additional data collection and analysis, it was finally accepted for publication in April 2019, and published in 2020.

"It was an absolute honor and pleasure to work alongside Dr. Spiller and Dr. Kim," Aitken said. "I'm excited to keep playing a role in the development of a sales program at Christopher Newport and giving back to the aspiring young sales professionals at the university." Aitken is now in sales professionally, working at OpenWater in northern Virginia.

Faculty-student research alliances are a hallmark of a Christopher Newport education. While common for graduate students at most universities, it's a rarity to have such productive relationships with undergraduates, as at Christopher Newport.

"Teaching both inside and outside of the classroom with a student-first focus is paramount to what faculty do here on a day-to-day basis," Spiller said. "Involving our students in our research projects, especially studies that directly impact our teaching delivery and curriculum design, is a win-win strategy. In this case, our scholarly research on sales education will potentially impact the teaching and curriculum decisions of colleagues in our discipline at universities throughout the world. That's quite an accomplishment of which we can all be proud."

The authors say there is an increasing demand for business school graduates with sales savvy even if sales isn't in their job title because, as Spiller puts it: "Everyone sells!" The article offers an overview of the sales education landscape in the U.S. and describes the curriculum and classroom practices of marketing educators who teach sales courses. That information should prove especially valuable to educators contemplating launching a sales program.

In addition to a cash prize, Spiller, Kim and Aitken will be honored with a virtual presentation at the 2021 Marketing Educators' Association annual conference in April.