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STUDENTS WIN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP COMPETITION

CAPTAINS SURMOUNTED SETBACK TO EARN VICTORY.

by [Jim Hanchett](#) | November 23, 2020

Above: (photo courtesy ILA)

Read time: about 1 min

Overcoming challenges and competing against teams from many universities, [Christopher Newport leadership](#) students emerged victorious in the International Leadership Association's (ILA) 2020 student case competition.

The competition, held in conjunction with ILA's annual conference, showcases undergraduates and graduate students as they demonstrate knowledge about leadership. Each team identifies a contemporary socio-political-economic problem on the global or national level and proposes a leadership based solution at the conference.

Christopher Newport fielded two undergraduate teams, nicknamed Silver and Blue, in the competition. Both excelled and were among the three top contenders. The Blue Team finished in first place.

The Blue Team included Colin Bunn, Zoe Page and Grant Wiley. Page says her group focused its presentation on Saudi Arabia and how that nation is transitioning away from dependence on oil revenue. With a poster and a presentation, the students argued that Saudi Arabia should shift from using fossil fuels to solar power and they outlined the adaptive leadership skills needed for the transition.

Page says the Blue Team also demonstrated its own adaptive skills. A week before the elements of the case were due, the team captain had to step down due to a personal emergency. The three remaining teammates rallied to finish the work but didn't expect to excel in the competition due to their lack of experience. Surprisingly, they advanced to the final round and then worked through a weekend to prepare for the live (virtual) presentation and

question and answer session that followed.

“I could not be prouder of the work my team members put into this project,” Page said. “A tremendous amount was asked of them in the midst of midterms and they put in whatever effort was required to deliver.”

Both the Blue and Silver teams were honored at the closing ceremony of the ILA conference. Members of the Blue Team will receive complimentary one-year memberships in the ILA and divide a \$1,000 cash prize.

“To have two teams in the top three is testament to the quality and commitment of our students and faculty,” said leadership professor Nathan Harter. “The saga that Zoe's team went through is all the more amazing. We couldn't be prouder of them.”

This is the second win in the ILA case study competition for a CNU team. A Captains team also won in 2018. You can [read that story here](#).
