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PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM TEAMS SWEEP TOP HONORS

STUDENTS EXCEL AT VMI CONFERENCE.

by [Jim Hanchett](#) | November 5, 2021

Above: The Christopher Newport Blue Team

Read time: about 1 min

Two teams of [President's Leadership Program \(PLP\)](#) students swept first and second place in the inaugural student case study competition at the Virginia Military Institute's Leadership and Ethics Conference.

While the competition is new, the conference is a longstanding tradition at VMI as cadets, students from other institutions, faculty and other participants discuss the qualities necessary for effective civic leadership.

In the competition, student teams developed a real-world case and learned about the systemic leadership complexities associated with a selected social problem.

The Blue Team's presentation was titled "The Evolution of Gender Equality Under the Law, Pervasive Issues of Gender Inequality Persistent in Contemporary Society," and the members included Kimberly Beasley '22 (captain), Irene Thornton '23 and Eden Baroody '24.



The Christopher Newport Silver Team

The Silver Team's presentation, "Civic and Ethical Responsibility of the Media to Provide Factual and Accurate Information to the Public," was led by Rachel Ricard '22 (captain), Jamie Canty '23 and Rebecca Le '25.

The Christopher Newport teams were the only groups to meet all the necessary requirements to progress to the final round. Once the Blue and Silver Teams presented their cases, they then faced tough questions from senior VMI leaders. At the conclusion, the judges awarded the Blue Team with first place and the Silver Team with second. First place was accompanied with a \$1,000 cash prize; second place included \$500.

"Our students were praised for their ability to connect leadership theory to contemporary issues and to see a project all the way through to the end," said PLP Director Lacey Grey H. Hunter '08. "Administrators from other military institutes such as the Citadel, the Coast Guard Academy and VMI complimented our PLP students' excellent speaking skills and keen ability to demonstrate a strong understanding and application of leadership."

PLP fellow Laila Pirnazar, assistant director of PLP Erin Coiley, and Department of Leadership and American Studies professor Lori Throupe '07 mentored and coached the students through the process.

This has been a successful semester for PLP teams in major competitions. A Christopher Newport team earned first place in the International Leadership Association Case Competition, competing against prominent U.S. and international universities.

PLP is one of Christopher Newport's signature scholarship-based programs. The four-year leadership education experience empowers students to recognize their leadership potential and develop personal and social responsibility for the betterment of self and society. Learn more at cnu.edu/plp.
