

May 2014 Valuation Challenge

Reviews

Student teams from 18 universities entered the Third Annual BVR/SPU Valuation Challenge—now the Private Business Valuation Challenge.

Six teams were chosen to come to Seattle on May 9 by a distinguished panel of 17 judges who hold senior positions in their valuation firms. The 2014 Challenge winners are: University of Denver followed by Portland State University and Seattle Pacific University in that order. Middle Tennessee State University, University of Maryland (University College), and William Paterson University provided strong competition. Congratulations to all! The list of participants and their professors will follow in a subsequent blog.

We used an eight question survey to evaluate the Challenge. Questions 4 and 5 in the survey summarized the experience. Question 4 (“My overall experience with today’s competition”) asked for a ranking using a range of 5 to 1, where 5 was excellent and 1 was poor, and it asked for comments. Question 5 (“Do you believe the Valuation Challenge experience will be worth the time and effort you put into it?”) asked the respondents to circle one of the following: definitely yes, yes, maybe, no, and definitely no. Comments were also requested.

All three judges gave question 4 an excellent (5) rating and all circled “definitely yes” for question 5. Among other comments was the following: “It was an awesome experience to see everything the students learned.”

Four faculty members filled out the survey; the fifth was unable to attend the competition due to illness. I organized

the event, so I did not participate. Two faculty members rated the Challenge as excellent on question 4. The other two faculty members did not provide a number rating on that question. The first of the two simply commented "Amazing" and the second commented: "Very positive." The judges did a good job of explaining how to conduct non-classroom presentations." All four faculty members circled "definitely yes" on question 5.

Twenty-five of the 27 student participants returned the survey. On question 4, 13 checked 5, and six marked 4. Six did not record a number; here are the initial comments of those six: "Very good"; "It was great"; "I had a very good experience"; "Good flow, lots of fun, overall very good"; "I love this, learned so much"; and "I really enjoyed being part of this event", and "it's such a great experience..."

On question 5, 21 of the students circled "definitely yes." Four circled "yes"—they believed that the Valuation Challenge experience will be worth the time and effort they put into it.

Thanks to the judges for their great work. Willis Eayrs, Independent Valuation Consultant and Deputy Chairman of the International Association of Consultants, Valuators, and Analysts (IACVA) brought an international perspective to the judging. Joseph Maas, Founder and Principal of Synergetic Finance, not only judged but also contributed the Joseph Maas \$1,500 Award, the opportunity to use the magnificent Columbia Tower Club for the event, his new book *Exit Insight: Getting to Sold*, and the all-day beverage service. Miranda Rickert, Senior Financial Analyst, represented Moss Adams, the firm that provided the valuation report we used as the case.

William Hanlin, Jr, President & CEO of IACVA spent most of the day as a consultant to the judges and participants. Marek Omilian, Managing Director of Value Prism Consulting, dropped in as observer and consulting judge.

We also welcomed Joseph Marasco and Adam Manson of Business Valuation Resources (BVR). It was Manson's offer of access to BVR materials, the assistance of the two in finding judges and gaining Moss Adams' support, and BVR's financial contribution that made the Challenge possible.

A special thank you to Grant Learned, Attorney at Law, who recorded the day's events on camera and video recorder and to Mark Sabo, Principal of Financial Horizons, who monitored the presenters' slides and kept the presentations on time. I wish to express my gratitude to Kathy Stegman at SPU for all her significant support and assistance and my thanks to Dean Joseph Williams for his encouragement.