

# CSUF Investment Students Place in the Top Six Among 1,300 Schools Worldwide

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How prestigious is Cal State Fullerton’s investment program?

It’s in the top six globally.

And it might become the top in the world later this spring with its showing at the CFA Institute Investment Research Challenge, which pits university teams of finance students from across the world in competition with each other for stock analysis and evaluation.

“Winning the local round of the CFA competition is a tremendous accomplishment demonstrating teamwork, dedication and commitment. Winning the subregionals is exemplary. Advancing to the regional is amazing. But getting to – and winning – the Americas competition is out of this world.”

That’s how Kelly Ko, director of Cal State Fullerton’s student-run investment program Titan Capital Management describes the progress that four of his students have made this spring in the competition.

Out of approximately 1,300 student teams from around the world, the Titan team is now one of only six teams advancing to the global finals in Washington D.C. on May 3.

The four exemplary Titans are finance seniors Jericho Cezar '23, Sam Fedrow '23, and Jacquelyn George '23, and MBA student Brandon Leon '23.

The competition involves students providing an investment recommendation for a local company in front of a panel of professional judges. This year's CSUF team profiled Chipotle.

The students consulted with Ko and industry mentor Derek Derman.

“We didn't start Titan Capital Management to win championships,” says Jeff Van Harte '78, donor and namesake of the program's state-of-the-art trading lab. “But good process drives success as opposed to a singular focus on a desired outcome. What distinguishes TCM as an academic program is its high degree of experiential learning that allows students to explore and challenge their interest in becoming professional investors.”

Clearly, this approach is working. At the recent TCM investment conference on April 18, The Investment Pivot in an Uncertain World, the student team gave their presentation to a seasoned group of investors, who were all impressed by the thoroughness of the report and the poise of the students.



The winning Titan Capital Management team at Chipotle headquarters in Newport Beach.

## **World Champs?**

In the May 3 finals, two teams from each of the global regions – the Americas, Asia, and Europe/Africa – will vie for a single global title that will be displayed at CFA headquarters.

According to Ko, the key to this team’s success is their willingness to use feedback from judges at each step of the competition to make their presentation stronger for the next round. In other words, they kept working. Since last August, the team has put in 900 hours of study, research and preparation.

Says Ko: “Regardless of what happens, we’ve demonstrated that Cal State Fullerton can compete at the same level as any other school in the world, and our students can rise to the same level of opportunity as their peers anywhere else. We have what it takes to be champions.”

The Titan Family will be rooting for the success of these four students on May 3. But already, they have made history by putting Cal State Fullerton into a new category in the eyes of the global investment world.

“This is the SUPER BOWL of the investment competition world for college students!” says Dean Sri Sundaram. “This requires deep knowledge about security analysis, the skills to apply this knowledge in the context of an actual company, and the ability to communicate their analysis clearly. I am truly proud of our team for how they have represented Cal State Fullerton and grateful for the dedication and commitment of Kelly Ko who has been their constant support and guide during this process. Go Titans!”