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Accountancy Students Post Strong Showing at Regional Tax Competition

UM team takes second place in finals

MARCH 14, 2018 BY MICHAEL NEWSOM

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Three graduate students from the UM Patterson School of Accountancy, (from left) Grayson Giles, Freda Sun and Hannah Farmer, won second place in the Southeastern Regional Tax Challenge Competition. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – Three graduate students from the **University of Mississippi Patterson School of Accountancy** recently won second place in the Southeastern Regional Tax Challenge Competition.

The competition, which was hosted by the University of Alabama, included 19 teams, including teams from all Southeastern Conference schools. The team from Ole Miss – Hannah Farmer, Grayson Giles and Freda Sun – made it to the final round to compete against two teams from the University of Tennessee and one from the University of Missouri.

J Shaw, associate professor of accountancy instruction, served as the team’s faculty adviser.

“I am proud of these students,” Shaw said. “They worked very hard to research and understand the case and they did an excellent job of presenting their findings.”

“I am grateful to have such high-quality students in the Patterson School of Accountancy. Hannah, Grayson and Sun are very smart and were impressive representatives of the University of Mississippi.”

The students gave presentations about how to tackle complicated tax problems, and a panel of judges selected the winners. The team was excited to finish second in a very strong field, said Farmer, a master’s student in taxation from Tupelo.

“The competition was a really great way for us to get more involved in tax research,” Farmer said. “While tax is considered a part of accounting, tax relates more to law, since the all tax law derives from the Internal Revenue code.

“The main point of the competition was being able to find the issue in the law, properly interpret the law in order to provide the best answer, then communicate this answer to the client.”

Giles, a master’s student in taxation from Madison, said the experience should serve the students well in their careers.

“The competition was an excellent opportunity for us to gain real-world, practical experience,” Giles said. “Our success wouldn’t have been possible without the support from our adviser, J Shaw, and the Patterson School of Accountancy.

“It was an honor to be given the opportunity to compete and represent the School of Accountancy.”

Sun, a Master of Accountancy student from Chengdu, China, said the tax situation was open-ended and required a lot of research and understanding.

“It helped me build my critical thinking skills and analysis skills, as well,” Sun said. “I felt honored to represent Ole Miss at the competition, especially when the judge announced that we won second place and participants from other schools came to say congratulations to us.”

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