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Wiss & Company, LLP provides Montclair State Students with Hands-On Business Lesson

LIVINGSTON, NJ – May 6, 2010 – Wiss & Company, LLP recently introduced the Wiss Campus Connections case study competition developed by a team of accountants from the firm. The exciting pilot program of this case study competition challenged Montclair State University accounting majors to utilize their knowledge, creativity and communication skills to the highest level during the spring semester.

The Wiss case study planning team, who worked diligently to develop the case study competition and all of the supporting materials, included Arnold Macalintal, Jay Jenco, Stephanie Hirsch and Thushar Nalval.

“This competition allows us to give accounting majors the opportunity to develop hands-on experience relevant to their field of study,” said Jeff Campo, Managing Partner, Wiss & Company, LLP. “Through this competition we are creating a much-needed business focus on providing students with an education in the core values we live every day – communication, teamwork, integrity, execution and energy.”

The very detailed case study created by the Wiss team featured a fictitious soft drink company with a business goal of expanding into the growing energy drink market. “After several brainstorming sessions, our planning team felt that energy drinks would be an ideal topic for the case study, since they are so popular with college students,” said Lisa Calick, Director of Human Resources, Wiss & Company, LLP. “Our team worked closely with professors at Montclair State

University, who were so impressed with the program that they integrated the case study competition into the class curriculum.”

The Wiss Campus Connections Case Study competition featured 18 teams of students from three different classes at Montclair State competing against one another for a top prize of \$500 per team member. Once the case study was introduced to each class by the professor, the Wiss team visited the classrooms to discuss the case study in greater detail, gather feedback, and answer student questions. They were also available to answer any questions that arose during the competition.

Each group of 4 to 5 students worked closely together as a team, utilizing the knowledge they had gained inside the classroom, as well as the important skills of communication and thinking outside the box. Armed with background information, a project plan, financials, and an array of other business communications, each team carefully executed a presentation of their overall plan of action for the soft drink company. Each team then presented completed plans to their professors, who narrowed the field to 6 team finalists. The finalists went on to present before a Wiss judging panel on Saturday, April 17. The judging panel consisted Wiss team members David Gannon, a partner, Macalintal and Jenco, both managers, and Hirsch, a senior.

The individual teams were judged on creativity, knowledge of the subject matter, interpretation of the facts presented, their belief in the conclusions they had come to, and their arguments that backed up their decisions. They were also judged on their presentation skills, which is such a valuable asset in today’s workplace.

The winning team of juniors from Montclair State, were honored along with the 2nd and 3rd place teams, who also received cash prizes, at a recent awards dinner hosted by Wiss & Company, LLP.

“We were thrilled with the results of this pilot program and look forward to expanding it to other area colleges and universities in the coming semesters,” Campo said. “A strong focus of our philanthropic activities at Wiss & Company, LLP is the betterment of the education of area students, because we feel that helping students develop a strong educational foundation will help them develop the knowledge and skills they will need to succeed in today’s business world.”

In addition to recognizing the students for their exemplary performance in the case study competition, Wiss also recognized its employee volunteers, without whose dedication this program would not have been possible. Macalintal, Jenco, Hirsch and Nalval, each received a Peak Performers Award (PPP) for their extraordinary work on behalf of the firm. A Wiss & Company internal award, PPP is designed to recognize and reward employees who "think outside the box" and demonstrate a sincere desire to improve the work environment with actions that result in a superior work product.

Wiss & Company, LLP is a leading regional accounting firm that has served the New Jersey/New York metropolitan area since its inception in 1969. Representing clients across a wide array of industries, Wiss is committed to providing technical expertise, insightful problem solving and proactive business advice. Wiss possesses specialists in key areas such as accounting & auditing, business valuation, employee benefit plan audits, corporate & individual taxation, estate & succession planning, forensic accounting services & litigation support, merger & acquisition consulting, and consulting & business advisory. Their core philosophy is to combine the personal attention of a small firm with a broad scope of resources and experience that a large firm has to offer. Wiss has also been named one of New Jersey’s best places to work in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

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