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FINANCE MONTHLY

Graduate students compete for M&A award from ACG Detroit

By Tom Henderson

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The winner of the second annual ACG Detroit Cup will be announced at the annual Crain's Detroit Business/Association for Corporate Growth mergers and acquisitions awards night March 19 at Meadow Brook Hall.

The event, open to teams of graduate students from business schools, has grown, but it will be hard to top the drama of last year's contest, when a team from **Walsh College** eked out a win — and first prize of \$10,000 in scholarship money — over a team from the **Stephen M. Ross School of Business** at the **University of Michigan**.

The five teams of finalists were given a case study on mergers and acquisitions by ACG members to develop solutions to problems in the study and present their findings to a panel of judges.

The Walsh team won by seven-tenths of 1 percent.

Fourteen teams entered the competition last year. Eighteen entered this year from five schools.

Round-one eliminations will be held Jan. 23-31 at UM, Walsh, the **University of Detroit Mercy**, **Wayne State University** and the **Eli Broad College of Business** at **Michigan State University**. Teams will make 30-minute presentations.

The winner at each venue will advance to the finals on Feb. 21 at Walsh College in Troy. On Feb. 7, ACG members will again distribute a case study for the finalists to analyze, with teams of three to five students submitting their executive summaries by e-mail on Feb. 18.

They will present 40-minute summations before a panel of judges at Walsh three days later.

First prize will again be a \$10,000 scholarship, with the runner-up team getting \$5,000 and the other three finalists getting \$1,000 each.

Leslie Sheidler, senior director of strategic initiatives at Troy-based **Kelly Services Inc.**, a board member at ACG and chair of the cup event, said the goals of the competition, in addition to doling out scholarship money, include providing networking opportunities to the graduate students with their exposure to ACG members, and to serve as a recruiting tool for ACG.

"It's a chance to get exposure for ACG, and it's a way to show students how to do a deal and what's going on with us. It's a grassroots initiative," she said.

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Last year, Detroit became the third ACG chapter to sponsor a cup competition, following Los Angeles and Philadelphia. This year, a second state competition was added, in western Michigan.

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