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Construction on the new College of Business auditorium continues. The new auditorium, which is slated to open in midspring, is expected to seat 160 students as a lecture setting or 110 students classroom setting. The auditorium will include state of the art technology along with movable tables and chairs.



Eric Brailsford-Cato, right, co-mediate with students from the University of Texas-Dallas and Texas Wesleyan University at a mediation tournament in Chicago. WCU placed third in the competition, and Brailsford-Cato was named All-American Mediator.

WCU Mediators Place Third in National Competition

Hard Work and Collaborative Skills Pay Off

For the last month, five business law students have been practicing their mediation skills for nine hours a week. The effort paid off when they won three awards at the 10th annual Intercollegiate Mediation Tournament in Chicago on Nov. 5-7. The International Academy of Dispute Resolution sponsored the competition. A mediator is a neutral third party who facilitates discussion among parties to help them resolve disputes.

WCU's Campus Mediation Society held tryouts for the tournament in September. The mediation team included Eric Brailsford-Cato, Robert Greeson, Michael Doherty, Tiffani Giesy and Nicholas Fracassi. Hannah Beck was an alternate team member. Brailsford-Cato placed third as mediator and was named "All-American Mediator." The team won "Outstanding New School Award" and placed third in the competition.

The top two finishers were the University of North Texas and Boston University, which edged out WCU by .02 points. Thirty schools participated in this event, with 36 teams competing for the top prize.

At the tournament, Fracassi became the first president of the student board of directors of the International Academy of Dispute Resolution Student. Brailsford-Cato was elected as the secretary.

The team was coached by Jayne Zanglein, professor of business law, and William Mauldin, adjunct professor and professional mediator. Zanglein directs the North Carolina Agricultural Mediation Program and has taught mediation for 20 years. She is on the board of directors of Mountain Mediation Services.

This was the team's first tournament. "The best part of the experience was working collaboratively with a mediator from another school a thousand miles away," Doherty said.

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College of Business Hosts International Seminar on Supply Chain Risk Management



Western Carolina University's College of Business hosted the ninth annual seminar for the International Supply Chain Risk Management Network at Lake Junaluska and WCU on Oct. 26 and Oct. 27.

Seminar attendees included scholars from institutions in the United States as well as Norway, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

"This group has routinely worked together to publish research to guide businesses in better managing supply chain events that can disrupt business functioning, such as failures to deliver necessary materials in a manufacturing environment, or affect customers negatively, such as lead in the paint on toys," said Michael Smith, WCU associate professor of global management and strategy, and one of six network members from the United States. "Well-publicized events including contamination of food and pharmaceuticals, and dangerous products further emphasize the importance of proactive supply chain risk management."

At a meeting three years ago, the group developed a handbook titled "Supply Chain Risk: A Handbook of Assessment, Management and Performance," which was published in 2008.

"We are currently working on a new book that will consist of cases intended to inform the work of business professionals," Smith said. "The content is based on our meetings last year in Norway and the previous year in Finland."

For more information, contact Smith at (828) 227-3697 or mesmith@wcu.edu.

Back row, from left, are Jukka Hallikas (Finland), Øyvind Berle (Norway), Bjørn Asbjørnslett (Norway), Gandolf Finke (Switzerland), Josef Oehmen (Switzerland and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and Edward Wright (WCU).

Front row, from left, are Jennifer Blackhurst (Iowa State University), Helen Peck (United Kingdom), Hollye Moss (WCU), Sten Wandel (Sweden), Michael Smith (WCU), George Zsidisin (Bowling Green State University), Omera Khan (United Kingdom), Bob Ritchie (United Kingdom) and Yang "Chris" Chu (United Kingdom).

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Mediators Place Third

"Despite our differences in background and education, we were able to work well together."

Brailsford-Cato agreed. "The competition was a great experience to network with top students, mediators and lawyers around the country who share our passion for alternative dispute resolution," he said.

"The competition was exciting, and I learned a lot about mediation," said Greeson.

Brailsford-Cato is a former student case coordinator for the WCU Campus Mediation Program and is president of the Campus Mediation Society. He has been mediating for several years. The rest of the team members learned their mediation skills this semester in Law 285: "Mediation," co-taught by Zanglein and Mauldin.

"It was an honor to represent WCU so well," said Geisy, adding that "mediation is a great way to resolve disputes."

Zanglein was proud of the team's mediation, negotiation and advocacy skills. "They are a remarkable group of students," she said.

The team not only has strong mediation skills, but strong negotiation skills as well. When the team missed its return flight because of competition delays, team member Fracassi negotiated with the airline to waive a \$3,000 fee for last-minute change of reservations.



The WCU mediation team members, from left, are Robert Greeson, Eric Brailsford-Cato, Michael Doherty, coach Jayne Zanglein, Nicholas Fracassi and Tiffani Giesy.