



Grand Valley State University Senior Named PRWeek Student of the Year

Daltyn Little, advertising and public relations student, wins award for national public relations campaign competition

Grand Rapids, Michigan – Grand Valley State University (GVSU) Advertising and Public Relations senior Daltyn Little has been named the 2015 PRWeek Student of the Year. The national competition was sponsored by Toyota and garnered individual campaign entries from students across the country.

“Nervous is an understatement of what I’ve been feeling over the past three months as I progressed through each round of the competition,” said Little. “The additional opportunity to attend the PRWeek industry awards in NYC was phenomenal, and the people I met were some of the most talented and respected professionals in the public relations, advertising and communications world.”

Each year, PRWeek hosts the Student of the Year competition with different sponsors and opportunities for students who excel in all aspects of public relations. The 2015 challenge was a campaign for the Toyota Mirai, a revolutionary hydrogen fuel cell vehicle. In the challenge, Little crafted creative solutions to position Toyota as a leader in fuel cell technology and educate consumers and public officials on the importance of hydrogen as an alternative fuel.

The competition consisted of two rounds. The first was the initial submission of the full public relations campaign, followed by the announcement of the top five finalists. Finalists included: Little, GVSU; Amber Mayfield, University of Maryland; Katie Mckee, Texas Tech University; Laura Plumb, Drake University; Jessica Schram, University of Maryland. These finalists were then put through a second round of the competition including a phone pitch to PRWeek news editor Frank Washkuch and a 100-word essay, followed by a secret announcement of the top two finalists.

“It is a highly prestigious award,” said Adrienne Wallace, who attended the award ceremony with Little. “The PRWeek Awards are a national event with nominees from across the globe, and that type of recognition is a great accomplishment for the GVSU School of Communications, the Advertising and Public Relations program and Daltyn especially. The knowledge and experience she has gained since beginning the project in September is going to be exceptionally beneficial for her future endeavors as a young professional.”

GVSU professors Wallace and Derek DeVries were among Little’s top supporters and advisors throughout the process. With their help, a team of public relations and creative professionals was assembled – all of them current students or alumni of Grand Valley State University’s School of Communications:

- Professor Adrienne Wallace, 834 Design & Marketing, plan and strategy
- Professor Derek DeVries, Lambert, Edwards & Associates, social media
- Daniel Wiltshire and Dustin Foster, Chop & Hue, video creation and assistance
- Marie Brown, 834 Design & Marketing, graphic design coaching
- Kristi VerHage, GVSU student, graphic design coaching

- Kim Bode, 834 Design & Marketing, media relations coaching
- Brianna Blust, ZF North America, media pitching coaching

Little's submission consisted of a five-page campaign plan, two pages of supporting material and an educational video explaining fuel cell technology. Chop & Hue, a Grand Rapids-based creative boutique specializing in post-production and production, paired their technical skills with Little's narration, creative direction and imaging ideas to develop the visual component.

As the first place winner, Little received a \$1,000 cash prize and was given the opportunity to attend the PRWeek Award Ceremony held in New York City on March 19, 2015. According to the PRWeek website, the competition "has proven to be a springboard for numerous successful PR careers."

Little is an intern at 834 Design & Marketing and also serves as CEO of GrandPR, GVSU's student-run public relations firm, which was recently awarded the honor of national affiliation through the National Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA).

For more information about the GVSU School of Communications, visit: www.gvsu.edu/soc. For more information on the PRWeek Student of the Year competition, visit: www.awards.prweekus.com/student. For more information on GrandPR visit: www.grand-pr.org.

About GVSU School of Communications

The School of Communications at Grand Valley State University considers creative activity and scholarly achievement an important part of the construction of meaning in society. The curriculum within the School of Communications reflects a commitment to integrate professional and liberal education. The study of communication at Grand Valley State University emphasizes a broad understanding of the field combined with a solid knowledge of specific technical skills. Foregrounding a liberal arts context, emphasis is placed on learning-by-doing.

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