VaqueroConnection

UTRGV
WHERE CHAMPIONS ARE MADE

This spring semester, UTRGV students proved they had the desire, dream and vision to bring home several national and state titles, including the university's first national chess championship. Meet our champs who are showing that UTRGV students can shine bright on any stage and academic competition.

CHECKMATE!

The UTRGV Chess Team pulled off a stunning win over five-year reigning national champs Webster University on April 1 in the annual President's Cup, the Final Four of College Chess competition, at the Marshall Chess Club in New York City.

UTRGV beat Webster 7.5 to 7.0 after what was called "the strongest Final Four in the history of this tournament." Teams in the Final Four this year were St. Louis University, Webster University, Texas Tech and UTRGV.

Members of the championship team included: GM Vladimir Belous (2684), GM Kamil Dragun (2686), GM Andrey Stukopin (2683), and GM Carlos Antonio Hevia

Alejano (2569), GM Hovhannes Gabuzyan (2679).

UTRGV President Guy Bailey applauded the team on the victory, and thanked them for a win that brings great pride for the entire UTRGV community.

"We're going to be thinking of the depth of this accomplishment for years to come, and I don't expect this to be the last one," Bailey said.

CME GROUP TRADING CHALLENGE WINNERS

A group of undergraduate business students from UTRGV's Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship beat out more than 500 teams from 37 countries to capture their first ever championship win in the 15th annual CME Group Trading Challenge in March.
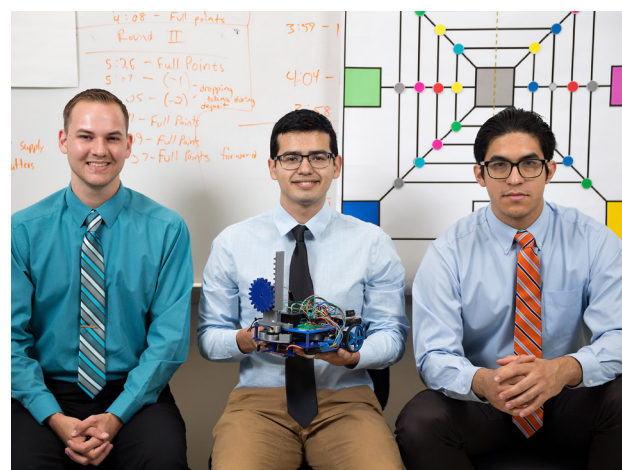
The UTRGV team, named UTRGV-EDINBURG-2, is made up of students Christopher Martinez, of McAllen; Michael Villarreal, of Rio Grande City; and Jose Naveja, of Progreso – who finished the competition with a total of $706,585, handily beating out second-place competitor Kansas State University, who earned $533,910.

The Trading Challenge is a complimentary four-week electronic trading competition in which teams of university students trade CME Group products from different asset classes. "We believe that teamwork pushed us through to victory by allowing us to check each other's ideas," the team members said.

BUILDING ROBOTICS CHAMPS

The UTRGV Robotics team ranked first among all Texas university teams, during the annual Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Region Five Robotics Competition, held April 7 in Austin. Of 31 teams competing, UTRGV placed fourth overall, going up against high-profile universities like Louisiana State University, UT Austin, UT Tyler and the University of Houston.

UTRGV Robotics Team members included Joshua Acosta, of Edinburg, computer engineering major; Samuel Roberts, of Brownsville, electrical engineering major; and Salvador Garza, of Edinburg, electrical engineering major. All team members are seniors and slated for graduation in May. Their statewide and regional success marks the first recognition for a UTRGV Robotics team.

The team started its project in September 2017, providing reports and presentations for class grades along the way. Built of infrared sensors, color-filtered photo diodes and electromagnets, the robot navigated the playing board by using a control system.

Extra elements, such as the sorting mechanism within the robot, sparked from the team's creativity and garnered attention during competition.

Their statewide and regional success marks the first recognition for a UTRGV Robotics team. "We learned a lot and enjoyed it. Now it's up to the next class to get first place and continue where we left off," Roberts said.