NSSI Update

Welcome to the summer newsletter from the National Strategic Selling Institute! As you can imagine, our Spring 2020 semester started normally and then changed dramatically as both students and faculty quickly moved to a fully-online environment. Although the transition was somewhat stressful for all, we took away many great lessons about teaching and learning online (including the pros and cons of different technologies). We are very grateful for our amazing students, who responded to the uncertainty with positive attitudes and flexibility.

We still were able to hold branded events for Corporate Partners, sales competitions, sales team tryouts, and sales ambassador interviews via Zoom. We attended the National Collegiate Sales Competition virtually, and junior Cecilia Nancarrow took first place for top individual role play! Cecilia and team member Kaitlyn Porter performed extremely well and walked away with the third place team award. And although our benefit auction was unfortunately canceled, our students still raised $40,000 for student merit awards and $10,000 for our charity partner Coming Together for a Cure. We did not let a pandemic slow us down! You will read more about our spring successes in the coming pages.

We continued to add new students to the Certificate and Major programs this spring. Our current numbers stand at 220 students (41 majors, 155 certificates) and we had our largest graduating class ever in Spring 2020: 72 students (18 majors, 54 certificates). Even in a pandemic, our students continue to get great jobs and experience success in their sales roles after graduation, and companies continue to express interest in our program.

Finally, we are excited to welcome a new faculty member this fall: Jen Riley! Jen has been teaching as a Visiting Instructor at Alabama A&M University and is completing her Ph.D. at Kennesaw State University, where she is focusing her research on sales. Jen also has significant consulting experience in the area of digital marketing. She will be teaching the Fundamentals of Professional Selling Course. We are thrilled to have Jen join the NSSI team!

Our achievements would not be possible without the ongoing support from our Corporate Partners and friends of the NSSI. As we continue to grow and expand, we value your support and advice for our program and students. I hope you enjoy this newsletter. Please let me know if you have story ideas or suggestions as we continue to move forward.

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Ashlynn Knoll - Spring 2015
Mansfield Energy
New Development Account Executive
Denver, Colorado

Major: Marketing
Certificate: Professional Strategic Selling

What was the most applicable thing you learned from the K-State Sales Program that you find yourself using in your professional career?
Deeter always had the sales team practice responding to buyer questions with an open ended question. At the time, one lucky winner would sit in the center of a circle surrounded by our sales teammates and have rapid fire objections thrown their way while having to respond with a question that started with how, what, who, etc. The exercise was to help us discover more about the prospect before word vomiting our solution to them. Mike Schonwetter (also a K-State Sales Team Alum and current coworker) and I still practice forming these questions together.

What do you find most rewarding about your position at Mansfield Energy?
I love the freedom and competitiveness.

How has a mentor impacted your career? What role did they play?
Deeter is the best mentor out there. It might sound silly but I had never put much thought into life after basketball or having a career. Deeter got me on the sales team, knocked some sense into me, and helped me land a great career.

What is one thing you wish you would have known while you were in college that would have helped you transition to your professional career?
The interview process is two ways. Go somewhere that offers training. Find a company that has a strong sales culture (ask to speak with other representatives within the company). Ask questions about what you will be selling and if it is price driven or what value the company sees in their product/service. Find out if they will train you on actual sales (speaking, asking questions, and presenting) or just on product/service knowledge.
Why did you choose a major in PSS?
I enjoyed taking sales classes, networking with professionals, and building self confidence through role plays and other sales scenarios.

What did you value most from your time at K-State?
I will really miss the family culture atmosphere at K-State. It truly made my experience at K-State better by knowing that professors were driven to see me succeed and the students were friendly and personable.

Where do you hope to see your career take you in the next three to five years?
With my career path at Hormel changing slightly due to COVID, my career path is open between consumer goods and foodservice. I’d like to stay in the sales route and eventually become a manager in either one of these divisions.
The National Strategic Selling Institute (NSSI) recognizes two sales students each academic year to be recipients of the Outstanding Senior and Service Award. These awards go to two students that exemplify the hard-working and talented students in the sales program as determined by the faculty. This year, the two students to be recognized are Lanessa Aurand, senior in professional strategic selling and marketing from Belleville, and Preston Maurer, senior in finance from Overland Park. Both students will receive a trophy and a $1,000 student merit award for their recognition.

Lanessa Aurand is the recipient of the Outstanding Senior Award. This award recognizes a student in high academic standing who is actively involved with the NSSI. Aurand has been involved in the NSSI since her freshman year when she competed at her first sales competition on the K-State Sales Team. Her success didn't stop there, as she has been active on the K-State Sales team all four years of college competing at numerous on-campus and external sales competitions. She has also been a member of the Ambassador organization and worked as a teaching assistant. After graduation, Aurand will be going to work for Hormel Foods as a Foodservice Sales Representative.

Preston Maurer is the recipient of the Service Award. This award is given to a student who always goes above and beyond to help volunteer at events and make a positive impact on the NSSI. Maurer is a true advocate for the NSSI by helping build the program’s brand on campus. He is an active member of Sales Ambassadors, a teaching assistant, and a student coach for the K-State Sales Team. You can always find him there to lend a helping hand and is an individual who understands the true meaning of doing something out of the goodness of his heart because he cares about developing younger sales professionals. After graduation, Maurer will be going to work for MetLife as a Group Benefits Account Executive.

"Lanessa Aurand and Preston Maurer are so deserving of these awards," said Dawn Deeter, director of the National Strategic Selling Institute. "They are accomplished, hard-working, and humble. They care about their fellow students and our program. It truly has been a pleasure to watch them develop into top-notch sales professionals."

Abbie O’Grady, senior majoring in professional strategic selling and marketing from Overland Park, was selected as the recipient of the Spring 2020 College of Business Outstanding Senior Award. She has been involved with the Sales Program as a sales ambassador, member of the sales team, teaching assistant, and sales team student coach. O’Grady has been very successful during her time on the sales team which included competing at 14 competitions with three first-place finishes, one second-place finish, and she was a semi-finalist for the National Collegiate Sales Competition. After graduation, Grady will be working for Adobe as a Associate Inside Sales Representative.
SALES TEAM RECAP - SPRING 2020

Selling with the Bulls Intercollegiate Results

K-State Sales Team brought home second-place team honors at the Selling with the Bulls Intercollegiate 2020 Sales Competition. Hosted by the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida, on February 6-7, 2020, the competition had 84 competitors from 18 schools representing 11 different states. Lanessa Aurand, senior in professional strategic selling and marketing, Belleville, placed second in the cold call prospecting, second in the e-mail, and seventh overall individual. Cecillia Nancarrow, junior in professional strategic selling, Overland Park, placed third in customer conversation, seventh in the e-mail, and sixth overall individual. Abbie O’Grady, senior in professional strategic selling and marketing, Overland Park, placed third in the cold call prospecting, sixth in email, and fifth overall individual.

Challenger Sales Institute Results

The K-State Sales Team competed in the Challenger Sales Institute Regional Sales Competition on March 5-7, 2020, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The team placed third overall in the competition. Lucas Johnson, junior in professional strategic selling, Lawrence, made it to the finals for speed selling, placing in the top 12 out of 65 competitors. The case competition team consisted of Johnson and Alex Wilcox, senior in management and supply chain management, De Soto. They advanced to finals and placed third out of 11 teams. Skylar Holsinger, senior in professional strategic selling, Overland Park, Sarah Kerrigan, senior in professional strategic selling, Lincoln, Nebraska, and Kara Krannawitter, junior in professional strategic selling, Lawrence, competed in the individual role-play scenario. Krannawitter made it to the finals and placed third out of 36 competitors. Holsinger made it to the semi-finals, placing in the top 16.

NCSC Results

The K-State Sales Team competed in the National Collegiate Sales Competition (NCSC) on March 27-30, 2020, through a virtual environment. With Gartner as the 2020 NCSC product sponsor, there were 68 universities and 133 competitors participating. The team took home the top honor in the individual competition and placed third overall in the competition. Cecilia Nancarrow, junior in professional strategic selling, Overland Park, placed first in the competition. Kaitlyn Porter, senior in organizational management, Manhattan, advanced to the quarter-finals, placing 39 overall.

Cecilia Nancarrow
Junior - Professional Strategic Selling
Overland Park, Kansas

Kaitlyn Porter
Senior - Organizational Management
Manhattan, Kansas
Students continue to raise money despite auction cancellation

The National Strategic Selling Institute (NSSI) was unable to hold its 8th Annual NSSI Benefit Auction this spring. However, this did not stop the students’ fundraising efforts. Through this hands-on experience, students in the Advanced Selling class learned about territory management, prospecting, phone sales, and the sales process in a real-world setting. The sales students enrolled in the class transform into true sales professionals, learning how to prospect, deliver value, and use a customer relationship management system in the process.

Even with the changes and event cancellation, students were able to raise money this year by selling raffle tickets for a K-State themed golf cart. Together the students raised $10,000 for Coming Together for a Cure, Wichita, which was chosen as the charity partner for the event. Founded by a recent K-State graduate, Coming Together for Cure raises support and awareness for adult stem cell therapy to help people battling Muscular Dystrophy and other terminal diseases.

The winner of the K-State themed golf cart was LJ Walker, Gilbert, Arizona. To help underwrite the cost of the golf cart, students asked for financial support from companies so more money could be given back to the charity partner. Sponsors for the golf cart were Johnson Granite Supply, Eddy’s Independent Group, McQueeny Group, and Turner Construction.

The NSSI also awarded more than $10,000 in merit awards to 42 students. The Student Merit Awards are based on students’ participation and performance in the Marketing 570 Advanced Selling classes that raise funds for the annual benefit auction. The four top-performing students earned the Ninja Sales Cat Award in recognition of class performance. Additionally, ten students earned merit awards as finalists in a role-play competition hosted by Security Benefit Corporation of Topeka, Kansas.

Earning top performer in the Ninja Sales Cat award, along with $1,500, was Morgan Meadows, junior in entrepreneurship, Dallas, Texas. Additional winners of the Ninja Sales Cat award included Kylee White, junior in professional strategic selling, Overland Park ($1,200), Lucas Johnson, junior in professional strategic selling, Lawrence, ($1,000), and McKenna Dome, senior in professional strategic selling, Wichita ($800).

Top performers in the Security Benefit Sales Competition included Paige Molstad, senior in kinesiology, Ellis ($400) and Kaitlyn Porter Moldrup, senior in management, Manhattan ($400). Other finalists included Adam Sale, junior in marketing, Branson, Missouri ($300), Rylee Walker, senior in mass communications, Highlands Ranch, Colorado ($300), Anna Arends, junior in professional strategic selling, Leawood ($200), McKenna Dome, senior in professional strategic selling, Wichita ($200), Ryan Henington, senior in professional strategic selling, Junction City ($200), Jenna Kibler, senior in animal sciences and industry, Manhattan ($100), Chase Vander Hart, junior in personal financial planning, Topeka ($100), Mindy Absher, junior in marketing, Overland Park ($50), and Dane Freberg, senior in professional strategic selling, Overland Park ($50). Porter, Moldrup, and Henington each earned a $50 bonus for the class favorite role-play performance as chosen by their classmates.

“I’m so proud of our sales students,” said Dawn Deeter, Director of the National Strategic Selling Institute. “Through this experience, they learned what it’s like to be a professional salesperson, including making a sale and encountering rejection. Their task was especially difficult this year, as they made sales calls during a pandemic! In the face of incredible odds, they performed well and surpassed our expectations. Moreover, they now know the effort and persistence required to be successful in their sales careers.”
The National Strategic Selling Institute (NSSI) was recently recognized by the Sales Education Foundation (SEF) magazine as a top program for sales education for the ninth year in a row. To be considered for this honor, the program must offer a minimum of three sales-specific courses, receive accreditation from an external source, and have university recognition of the program.

“We are honored to once again be recognized by the Sales Education Foundation (SEF) as a top university for sales,” said Dawn Deeter, director of the National Strategic Selling Institute. “Companies are eager to hire graduates of university sales programs because these students achieve success faster and are better-prepared for the sales role. This recognition from the SEF provides our students with even more opportunities.”

The NSSI has 180 students enrolled in the certificate in professional strategic selling and 60 students enrolled in the major for professional strategic selling. The program has continued to grow since its inception in 2011 and currently has a 25% yearly growth rate. Students within the program are invited to a variety of sales-related activities throughout the year, including the Fall and Spring Sales week where they can participate in keynote speaker events, guest speaker discussion panels, and attend a sales career fair where companies are looking to fill internships and full-time positions.

The program has partnered with over 25 companies to provide students with professional development events and networking opportunities to help prepare them for a career in sales. They also host an annual benefit auction where students raise money for student merit awards and get hands-on experience with prospecting, managing a sales funnel, and learning how to use a customer relationship management system. The award-winning K-State Sales Team participates in various competitions across the country. These sales competitions allow students to broaden their skills outside of the classroom while competing against other universities’ sales students.

University Sales Center Alliance visits K-State and reaccredits program

This spring we received the exciting news that the National Strategic Selling Institute (NSSI) has been reaccredited by the prestigious University Sales Center Alliance (USCA), after a site visit by USCA Immediate Past-President Dr. Jimmy Peltier, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

“The Kansas State University National Strategic Selling Institute is one of the best in the world,” said Peltier. “Combined, K-State’s outstanding sales faculty, curricula, programs, and facilities create an environment conducive for student learning and success.”

Founded in 2002 by an initial group of nine universities, the USCA is a consortium of 56 sales centers and programs from across the globe dedicated to excellence in sales education. The USCA’s stated mission is to advance the selling profession through setting and monitoring sales program standards, sharing best practices, enhancing sales curricula and preparing students for a career in sales. Membership requires that university offer at least three distinct sales classes taught by qualified faculty and with a heavy focus on role-plays and experiential learning, among other things. Members meet twice a year to discuss trends and share best practices in sales education.

Kansas State University has been a USCA member since 2010, and received full membership in 2012. NSSI Director Dr. Dawn Deeter is a USCA Past-President.

“The USCA has helped our program move to the next level,” said Deeter. “It is an amazing group comprised of the best sales academics and top sales programs. The ideas we share and the support we receive through USCA is invaluable. I’m proud that K-State and the NSSI remains a USCA member in good standing!”
One of the over-arching goals of the National Strategic Selling Institute (NSSI) is to develop outstanding learning and professional opportunities for our K-State sales students. Beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, the NSSI partnered with Lockton Companies, Inc., the world’s largest privately-held independent insurance brokerage with over 100 offices worldwide and more than 7,500 employees. This partnership has resulted in a distinctive program for students.

With its headquarters based in Kansas City, Missouri, Lockton Companies, Inc., includes three divisions: Lockton, which focuses on risk management; Lockton Affinity, which provides insurance products for franchises, fraternal organizations, common-cause groups, etc.; and Mylo, which focuses on insurance products for small businesses. Students have the opportunity to complete an internship with one of the three divisions each summer. They will subsequently continue their learning in the fall by completing a work-study with Dr. Mike Krush, the Lockton faculty liaison.

We are piloting the program this summer and are very excited about the preliminary results! Students are participating in the Lockton summer internship program currently, albeit virtually due to COVID-19. Our Lockton student interns include Madeline Dercher, Matthew Dercher, Paige Erickson, Remmie Monahan, Hanna Stram, and Colton Williams.

“Amidst a global health crisis we are proud to invest in our partnership with K-State and the future of the K-State students that have joined us this summer,” said Nate Lindstrom, Vice President of Operations at Lockton.

Lockton has committed resources toward the NSSI partnership with great enthusiasm by speaking to students during classroom talks, attending career fairs and networking events, and hosting a sales competition for students in Kellie Jackson’s Fundamentals of Professional Selling class. Mike Krush invited representatives from Lockton to speak to his Salesforce Leadership students.

“During their presentation to the sales leadership class, the Lockton team provided fantastic insight regarding sales mentors and sales management practices to our sales students,” Krush stated. “Our students left the session with a heightened understanding of sales from one of the premiere leaders in the insurance industry.”

We are excited to see how this internship model progresses, and look forward to continuing our work with the great folks at Lockton!

NSSI and two faculty featured in new sales book

The National Strategic Selling Institute (NSSI) was recently featured in the book #SalesTruth: Debunk the Myths, Apply Powerful Principles. Win More Sales. by sales expert Mike Weinberg. Two of NSSI’s faculty members, Dawn Deeter and Mike Krush, are featured for their work in the book.

In the book, Weinberg discusses how the NSSI uses Weinberg’s books to supplement the sales program curriculum. He highlights the value of our sales program and ability to prepare students to succeed in sales. Weinberg specifically highlighted how K-State’s students enter into the field confident and are effective in their abilities to sell.

Weinberg is a consultant, coach, speaker and best author who has become one of the most trusted and sought after sales experts in the world today. His specialties are new business development and sales management. Weinberg is on a mission to simplify sales and create high-performance sales people and teams. He is known for his blunt practical approaches. Weinberg works with companies in all industries ranging in size from a few million to many billions of dollars. He has also spoken and consulted on five continents in the past year.
Dawn Deeter recently received the Professional Performance Award from Kansas State University. This award is presented to recognize those of full professor rank who continue a strong performance. She is currently the Director of the National Strategic Selling Institute at K-State. Deeter founded the NSSI in 2011. She is the president of the Global Sales Science Institute and a former president for the University Sales Center Alliance. Deeter is a recipient of the Innovative Marketing Award from the Marketing Management Association.

Kellie Jackson was recognized as the 2019 Professional Staff Excellence Award recipient presented by the K-State College of Business. She is the Managing Director of the NSSI and has been with NSSI since 2017. This award goes to a professional staff member who has demonstrated outstanding performance in their work area. With the NSSI, she helps to grow the institute through her relationships with corporate partners - both building and developing old and new partners. She handles the budgeting and curriculum needs, and works with faculty, students, and vendors. She works tirelessly to make sure the annual NSSI Auction is a hit for students, corporations, and the rest of the college. Kellie teaches Fundamentals of Professional Selling and is a part of the K-State First faculty teaching a CAT Community and coaches the K-State Sales Team.

Mike Krush received a promotion to Associate Professor and tenure effective in August 2020. He has been with the NSSI since 2018. Krush and his colleagues’ research was recently recognized for the best paper in its track at the 2019 American Marketing Association Conference in Chicago, Illinois. The track was B2: Selling and Sales Management in Business and Consumer Markets with paper submissions focusing on effective business communication, best sales practices and emerging opportunities in sales and selling in era of expanding technology. He teaches Sales Force Leadership within the NSSI curriculum.

Doug Walker received the 2020 Commerce Bank and W.T. Kemper Foundation Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher Award. Doug started the Sports Marketing course and also teaches Customer Relationship Management, he makes it his goal to demonstrate the value of his classes to each student by engaging them in the material through interactive learning. Walker is also a strong proponent of experiential learning and provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate this throughout the semester.
UPCOMING EVENTS

First Day of Fall Classes
August 17, 2020

Fall Sales Week
September 14 - 18, 2020

Fall Advisory Board Meeting
October 1, 2020

NSSI Alumni Tailgate
K-State vs. Texas
October 3, 2020

Fall Commencement
November 24, 2020

9th Annual Benefit Auction
May 7, 2021

CONTACT US

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Alumni Tailgate
Saturday, October 3, 2020

*Note: Due to the current situation, the event will be dependent based on guidelines from K-State Athletics.