

Stock Pitch Competition Winners

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Emerald, Grace, Agustina, and Kaiya
in their matching pink shoes

The Women's Stock Pitch & Leadership Summit at William & Mary, launched in 2016, aims to motivate women to pursue finance careers and compete at the highest level using classroom-learned skills. In 2024, Emerald Spencer, Kaiya Green, Agustina Gularte, Grace Aspittle, and Grace Engst from The Huntsman School of Business took first place, marking the third consecutive year a Huntsman team has won, defeating teams from prestigious universities worldwide.

Hear from the 2024 women's stock pitch competition winners.

Q: Tell us how the Huntsman School prepared you for this event.

Emerald: The motto of "daring mighty things" means to me that I will say yes to an opportunity even if it's intimidating. I've been lucky to be surrounded by awesome faculty, staff, and students that have confidence in me for moments I don't have it for myself. My biggest skill sharpened at the Huntsman has been presentation skills. I feel confident talking in front of people because all the practice they facilitate us getting in and outside the classroom. They've created a student driven school and widely celebrate student success which creates momentum for more to dare mighty.

Agustina: The Huntsman School prepared me for this event through its rigorous finance classes and the hands-on experiences offered by the Investment Banking Club. The support from amazing peers and incredible faculty was incredible. We asked classmates and professors to listen to our pitches so many times, and they were always happy to provide feedback, which I believe made all the difference in our success.

Grace: The Huntsman School provided a strong foundation in finance and strategic thinking, which was crucial for the stock pitch competition. The coursework, combined with practical experiences like case studies and internships, gave me the analytical skills and confidence needed to participate in the competition. But most importantly, the support from professors and mentors was a huge contributor to our success in the competition. They gave us the guidance and the tools needed to really feel confident in our pitch and to go out and win!

Q: How did this experience help you grow as a person?

Emerald: It broadened my interest for careers in finance, specifically stock research. I didn't have much experience with the investing sector and it was cool to win at something challenging and out of my comfort zone. I also improved at working on a team and overcoming imposter syndrome when things were unfamiliar. I saw the unique value we all brought and that's why we worked so well together.

Kaiya: This competition taught me the power of never giving up. We walked in as the underdog non-target school and walked out with everyone's respect.

Agustina: Participating in the stock pitch competition was a transformative experience that significantly contributed to my personal growth. It pushed me out of my comfort zone and taught me the importance of perseverance, collaboration, and effective communication. Working under tight deadlines and presenting in front of seasoned professionals helped me gain confidence in my abilities and trust my instincts and analytical skills.

Grace: Participating in the stock pitch competition pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me develop important soft skills like public speaking and teamwork. The experience taught me the value of thorough research and the importance of articulating my ideas clearly and persuasively. It also taught me a lot about working in a team dynamic and being able to be adaptable to new situations.

Q: What was your pitch about? What made it great?

Emerald: Our pitch was Skechers, originally because it wasn't an obvious stock to buy. We grew to have genuine passion for the company after researching them more. Our pitch was about how even if you don't buy Skechers shoes, you can buy their stock and be apart of the company. Their products include shoes and stock and Skechers was strong in both stakeholders and shareholders. The company is healthy and there's a loyal market for their brand specifically. We've been amazed at how well it's performed since we pitched and our confidence was justified, it's proven to be valuable.

Kaiya: As a team, we pitched a highly undervalued consumer stock to the judges, highlighting the value opportunity, market initiatives, and potential margin improvements.

Agustina: Our pitch was about the shoe company Skechers. It was exciting because Skechers is not typically a company that many people are wowed by, so it was cool to change some perspectives on it. We highlighted Skechers' philanthropy efforts, which we really admired. Our pitch was great because we explained everything clearly and ensured that it flowed well, making it easy for the audience to follow and understand our points.

Grace: Our pitch was about the company Skechers, and why it was a great stock to buy. What really made me so confident in it was how much work we put into the presentation, and also the extensive research we had to back our data. It was fun to pitch this stock because we really believed in the company and had worked together to create a solid pitch that reflected our confidence.

Q: Tell us about the matching shoes and comradery/friendship you formed.

Emerald: Everyone couldn't stop looking at our hot pink shoes! We were changing the game. They were the most comfortable shoes I've ever worn in a pantsuit. We felt confident in them because they set us apart from the start for everyone to see. We knew what truly set us apart was our hidden gem, the Huntsman School of Business, and they didn't see that until the end when we won.

Kaiya: Our matching shoes were designed not only to make us stand out but also to uphold USU's reputation for spreading joy. Initially, we received curious stares for wearing bright pink shoes in a professional setting. However, we quickly became the talk of the event, with everyone eager to meet the girls in the Skechers who had just outperformed some of the top schools in the country.

Agustina: The matching shoes were bright pink Skechers because we couldn't do basic shoes—no one would get it. They needed to make a statement, and they certainly did! The bright pink Skechers became a symbol of our unity and team spirit. The competition fostered deep friendships and a sense of camaraderie that extended beyond the event. We pulled so many all nighters together and learned more than we could've imagined about Skechers, finance, and the retail industry. We supported each other through challenges and celebrated our successes together, creating lasting memories and a strong network of friends.

Grace: The matching shoes was to show that we were a team, and that we really truly believed in the business we were pitching. It was fun to wear the shoes because everyone knew we were the Skechers girls when we walked down the halls of William and Mary. As for the team, I spent countless hours with the group and going through all the challenges of the stock pitch. It was a lot a lot of hard work and we pulled way to many all nighters trying to finish this project but it was such a great experience and I have grown so incredibly close to the girls on the team because of it!

Q: How did it feel to win?

Emerald: We were shocked. We didn't see any other team pitch so we didn't know how we did relative to our competition. It felt like the capstone of a long journey; from choosing the stock, then changing it, lots of research, practicing, and late nights. After they announced us, I was most excited to go hug the other girls because it was a shared victory and we all felt a shared sense of accomplishment. I also was excited to tell the Huntsman faculty and staff who gave us the opportunity and resources to succeed.

Kaiya: Honestly we were all so shocked because it is one thing to walk in and be prepared and give your all, but another to not know who you are going up against. All I can say is the aggies can dominate anywhere they go.

Agustina: Winning the competition was an exhilarating and humbling experience. It validated all the hard work, late nights, and collaborative efforts we put into our pitch. It was incredibly rewarding to see our ideas and analysis recognized at such a prestigious event, and it motivated me to continue pursuing excellence in my financial career.

Grace: Winning the competition was an incredible feeling. It was a validation of all the hard work, late nights, and dedication that went into our pitch. The sense of accomplishment and the recognition from peers and professionals were immensely gratifying. It also boosted my confidence and motivated me to continue pursuing excellence in my academic and professional endeavors.

Q: Who helped you the most during this experience?

Emerald: The other girls on the team helped me learn the most during this experience. I didn't have an investment banking background like them so they taught me a lot. We were an unlikely team because we all have very different

personalities but this was our secret weapon. They are great role models to be surrounded with. They're some of the smartest people I know and are wildly successful. We shared many laughs.

Kaiya: We couldn't have done this without the support of Paul Fjeldsted, Janette Goodridge, and Kristyn Allred.

Agustina: I owe a great deal of gratitude to our mentors, Paul Fjeldsted, Angela Luo, and Janette Goodridge, whose guidance was invaluable throughout this journey. Their insights and feedback were crucial in refining our pitch. They were with us every step of the way and we couldn't have done it without them. My teammates also played a pivotal role; their dedication and expertise made this experience both successful and enjoyable.

Grace: Several people played a crucial role in my success. My faculty advisor provided so much guidance and feedback throughout the preparation process. My teammates were also a huge support, since we were all learning and figuring out the process together. Additionally, alumni who had participated in previous competitions spent countless hours going over our pitch and giving feedback that was incredibly helpful. We definitely could not have done the competition without all of their support!