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Huntsman Student Team Secures Top Rank

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The Jon M. Huntsman School of Business is known for encouraging its students to 'dare mighty things' and supplement their education through outside-the-classroom experiences. The Master of Science in Financial Economics (MSFE) is a rigorous graduate program that prepares students for a wide range of careers both inside and outside the financial industry, including risk management, asset management, macroeconomic and financial forecasting, trading, and financial and economic research.

During their coursework, MSFE students have the opportunity to put their knowledge to the test and participate in a unique fixed income portfolio activity, hosted by Salt Lake City-based Zions Bank, as part of an Investing Practicum course.

The program is one of a kind, with Zions Bank providing five million dollars to each school involved in the program. The students then manage and invest the money for six months, Oct. 1 to March 31, and make all asset allocation, trading, risk management, and credit decisions.

The students use Zions Direct, Zions' state-of-the-art online bond store and auction platform. There are thousands of offerings for the students to bid on and sell to meet their objectives. By March 31, the portfolio must be liquidated and all funds returned to Zions. If the portfolio value falls by more than 5 percent, Zions requires immediate liquidation.

At the end of the six months the schools are then ranked according to the highest return. The student team for the Huntsman School, advised by faculty member Paul Fjeldsted, CFA, achieved a total return of .75% annualized, which secured the top rank. The nine MSFE student managers were Ahmed Baig, Tim Burgess, Ross Ellis, Stew Higham, Scott Jones, Dan Mosman, Rob Petty, Aristides Romero, and Cuyler Strong.

This is the second time the Huntsman MSFE team has placed first in the past three years of participating in the program. The other schools which participated were Boise State University, Brigham Young University, Rice University, University of Oxford, University of Utah, University of Wyoming, and Westminster College.