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For Immediate Release

Oakwood University Crowned Champion at 28th Annual Honda Campus All-Star Challenge

- ***Oakwood University awarded \$75,000 institutional grant from Honda***
- ***Bowie State University, Florida A&M University and Tuskegee University rounded out the top four teams***
- ***Robert Batten, Dean of Bowie State University, named Coach of the Year***

TORRANCE, Calif., April 11, 2017 – After twenty rounds of intense competition, Oakwood University was crowned the 28th annual Honda Campus All-Star Challenge (HCASC) National Championship Tournament (NCT) champion on Monday, April 10, taking home the championship trophy and earning a grant of \$75,000 for their HBCU. The four-student team demonstrated its academic prowess by quickly and accurately answering questions about history, science, literature, religion, the arts and popular culture. Oakwood University was one of 48 Historically Black College and University (HBCU) teams that qualified for the NCT by competing in a series of regional competitions on campus throughout the academic year.

A packed studio audience filled with HBCU students, school presidents, alumni, volunteers, fans and Honda associates watched as Oakwood University clinched the title over runner-up Bowie State University. This is the third time Oakwood University has won the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge.

Coached by Dr. Rennae Elliott, the winning team included Caleb Briggs, Olivia Campbell, Joshua Nwaoha and team captain, Sesly Huerfano.

“I’ve seen firsthand how the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge changes students’ lives by building their confidence, and giving them a place to belong on campus,” said Dr. Rennae Elliott. “We have a whole network of people back home and across campus who have supported us throughout the tournament; it truly has been a team effort.”

Runner-up Bowie State University earned a \$30,000 grant, while the third and fourth place finishers – Florida A&M University and Tuskegee University – earned \$20,000 each.

“Honda congratulates Oakwood University on their exciting achievement in the National Championship Tournament, and we applaud all of the students who participated in this year’s Honda Campus All-Star Challenge program,” said Steve Morikawa, Vice President, Corporate Relations and Social Responsibility, American Honda Motor Co., Inc. “HCASC is made possible each year through the efforts of the many volunteers and we extend our thanks and appreciation to all of the volunteers who helped make this annual tournament a success.”

In addition to honoring the top four teams, Honda recognized outstanding individuals who have made an impact during this year’s Honda Campus All-Star Challenge. Robert Batten, 11-year HCASC coach and Dean of Bowie State University, was named Coach of the Year. Danian Medearis of North Carolina Central University was selected by fellow HCASC players to receive this year’s Ernest C. Jones Sportsperson Award. Named for one of HCASC’s early volunteers who mentored students in the program, the award recognizes a student who epitomizes team spirit, camaraderie, good sportsmanship and academic focus.

Honda established the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge in 1989 as a way to highlight and recognize the academic talents of HBCU students. More than \$8.5 million in grants from Honda have provided support for books and tuition, scholarships, enhancement of student programs and other investments to improve campus facilities. This year’s journey to the championship began in the fall, with 89 HBCUs competing for a spot in the finals. Nearly 100 volunteers, including Honda associates, helped produce the 2017 National Championship Tournament, hosting the students, conducting registration and serving as game officials.

For photos, videos and more information about the 2017 HCASC competition, including a full list of the 48 teams that qualified, visit HCASC.com. Connect with HCASC on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) and follow the conversation using #HCASC.

About Honda and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)

Honda has supported and celebrated America's HBCUs for more than 25 years. Since 1989, Honda Campus All-Star Challenge (HCASC), one of Honda's largest and longest running philanthropic initiatives in the United States, has impacted the lives of over 125,000 academic superstars from across the country. Since 2003, Honda Battle of the Bands (HBOB) has provided eight top HBCU marching bands with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to deliver a dynamic performance on a national stage. Both HCASC and HBOB enable schools to earn grants and positive attention for their respective institutions. Through programs like HCASC and HBOB, Honda is not only supporting students academically, but helping position them for career success. Honda has awarded \$10 million to support music and educational programs at America's HBCUs.

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