



Competition reflections, advice from last year's winner

With next year's F&I Innovator of the Year contest just around the corner, we reached out to last year's winner, Team Quantum Integration, to see what they've been up to, and what advice they have for the 2016 contestants. Team Quantum Integration's winning project includes a mobile app that monitors the status of a vehicle and alerts the owner when their vehicle is stolen or being towed. It also notifies the selling dealer when maintenance is due as a means of providing a heightened level of customer service, increasing the opportunity for customer retention. EFG plans to launch the product in 4Q16.

Following is some insight from Richie Dorso, a senior at Northwood University and Team Quantum Integration member:

EFG: How did participating in the program grow your automotive experience?

Richie: While I always felt that I was up-to-date on my automotive knowledge, the competition taught me new information about the F&I side of the business that I did not know.

EFG: In what ways has your involvement in the program influenced your future education or career path?

Richie: This competition added more fuel to my drive! I have a strong passion and drive for the auto business and this competition reinforced my decision.

EFG: What advice would you give to teams participating in the 2016 competition?

Richie: There are going to be a lot of ideas that cannot be used or are already out in the market. You will encounter this! Think of real world problems and see how you can solve them to make people's lives easier. The submission can also be a service, and not just a tangible item sold in F&I. And remember – even if you don't win the experience is priceless and is a great competition to be involved with!

EFG: What did you do with the award winnings?

Richie: My award winnings went to pay for daily living expenses, investments in stocks and a much needed vacation to Florida!

EFG: What are your career plans upon graduation?

Richie: I hope to be working at the corporate level for an automotive company, and would like to manage auto shows. I also have an interest in the financial aspect of the automotive business, including earnings reporting, guidance and industry trends. Being a part of the F&I competition has also sparked an interest in product development.

EFG: It's been one year since your team was named as the winner of EFG and Northwood's Innovator of the Year Award. Has Team Quantum Integration stayed in touch?



Richie: A few of our members, Colin and Tom, graduated from Northwood in June, and we have not had a chance to connect since they have moved on.

Members of Team Quantum Integration included Collin Ulvund from Boyne, MI, Jon Vollmuth from Lake Barrington, IL, and Richie Durso from Annville, PA. The team was mentored by Caleb Hargreaves, Finance Manager at Hanlees Auto Group in Davis, CA.

Follow @EFG_NWInnovator on Twitter to stay-up-to date with this year's competition, and see weekly diaries of the teams on our You Tube Channel here <http://bit.ly/In0v8Vids>.