**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Cleary University students qualify for international DECA competition**

(HOWELL, MI) Cleary University DECA students recently competed in a statewide Career Development Conference, and seven Cleary students qualified to compete in the International Career Development Conference that will be held in Orlando, Florida in April. They will compete against 1.000 DECA students from around the world, demonstrating their career knowledge and skills.

The seven Cleary students who qualified for the international conference are:

* Michael Lloyd: first place: individual case study
* Chelsea Hendra and Libby Cook: first place: team case study
* Julianna Caro: second place: individual case study
* Cristina de Miguel: top six qualifier: individual case study
* Cristina de Miguel and Juliana Caro: top six qualifier: team case study
* Sophia Coelho and Dana Weitenberner: top six qualifier: team case study

“The number of competitors at this state conference was the highest in years,” announces Kelly Genei, associate professor at Cleary who also oversees the DECA program. Cleary competed against more than 170 students from schools across Michigan including Kettering University, Northwood University, Delta College, Davenport University, Michigan State University, Michigan Tech, Central Michigan and many prominent schools. “Even with this strong competition, seven of our 12 DECA students qualified for the international competition. This is an outstanding outcome!” Genei points out.

Last year, at its first ever international DECA Career Development Conference awards competition, Cleary brought home three grand awards. Libby Cook, Chelsea Hendra and

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Michael Lloyd captured these honors. “The Cleary Mind initiative truly gave our students the leading edge in this competition,” Genei finds. “Our entire group of DECA members are exceptional students. DECA not only requires advanced knowledge of the field in which students are participating, but it also provides an opportunity to strengthen The Cleary Mind attributes of critical and creative thinking, leadership, persuasive communication and problem solving.”

DECA prepares college and high school emerging leaders and entrepreneurs throughout the world for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. Its collegiate competitive events program allows students to test their experience, skills and knowledge while representing their university. They compete for top international honors in one of 25 different categories. Business and industrial leaders serve as judges for the competition.

Cleary University offers a $4,000 DECA scholarship to a new undergraduate student who enrolls full-time at Cleary. The student must meet the following criteria: GPA of 2.5, participates in a high school DECA program, submits a letter of recommendation from a student advisor, will participate in DECA for four years at Cleary, and must be a full-time student at Cleary and maintain a 2.5 GPA. In addition to the $4,000 ($1,000 a year) scholarship, Cleary also offers a $10,000 scholarship ($2,500 a year) annually to one student who has met the same criteria as the $4,000 scholarship and has held a DECA state officer position or has advanced to a national or international competition.

Cleary also offers a DECA student at the university an opportunity to receive a $20,000 scholarship ($5,000 a year) by meeting all of the above listed criteria for the $4,000 scholarship and the $10,000 scholarship and has held a national officer position or placed first at a national or international DECA competition.

To learn more about DECA at Cleary and scholarship opportunities, visit cleary.edu.

**About Cleary University**

Founded in 1883, Cleary University is a four-year, world-class accredited university, offering undergraduate and graduate degrees from a unique Business Arts curriculum, driven by a

faculty of thought leaders with deep, practical experience in their industries. Providing on-campus and online education models, Cleary provides a robust athletic program and a rich

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residence life with nearly 200 students living on the quiet, rolling 50-acre campus. Cleary graduates tend to land jobs faster than their peers and with higher earning salaries at the start of their careers.

Cleary University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission, a proud member of the HLC Standard Pathway, and an approved institution by the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. A nonprofit university, Cleary’s campus is located at 3750 Cleary Drive, Howell, MI 48843, (800) 686-1883 with an education center within the Durfee Innovation Society at 2470 Collingwood St., Detroit, MI 48206.

**Cleary University**:

* Ranked #5 in the nation for best online business degree (University HQ)
* Ranked #3 in Michigan for best average starting salary two years post-graduation (US Department of Education)
* Ranked #5 in the entire country for its student debt ratio to starting salaries (*Wall Street Journal*)
* Named “Best for Vets College in 2022” by *Military Times*
* Earned Gold Level Veteran-Friendly status from The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) for continued excellence in serving military-connected students in Michigan

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