



CFALA Honors Ned Downes, CFA, FRM As April Volunteer of the Month



Students interested in the investment business can learn a lot from books, case studies and classes. Nathaniel “Ned” Downes, our volunteer of the month for April, helps introduce them to the real world.

As Coordinator for the CFA Institute Research Challenge hosted by the CFA Society of Los Angeles, Downes organized the competition between leading Southern California colleges. Students analyze a local publicly-traded company and prepare a written research report ranking it a buy, sell or hold. They also make an oral presentation of their findings, answering questions from a panel of investment professionals. Local winners go on to regional and global competitions.

“I really enjoy working with students,” said Downes. “A competition like this can open a window into another world for them. To succeed, they have to decide how best to apply what they've learned in the classroom – which is often a lot harder than they expected. In the end, though, the experience can be profound.”

Downes, who has also worked with the standard setting group of the CFA Institute, joined CFALA in 2007 when he received his charter. He previously served as a mentor in the research challenge.

“As a volunteer, I've met some wonderful people, and that alone would be enough to keep me involved,” he said. “More than that, though, is the opportunity to have an impact, especially in educational roles.”

Downes is an investment associate at UBS Financial Services, where his team is one of the largest discretionary asset managers at the firm. He has worked in a variety of investment and technology related roles.