

Local Auctioneer Wins National Competition and Puts Talents to Use Helping AZ School

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It's not everyday one meets a national award winning auctioneer. Then again, it's not everyday one meets an auctioneer at all.

Bobby Ehlert, a local auctioneer and founder of the company [Call to Auction](#), competed against 138 other contestants and took home first place at the [World Automobile Auctioneers Championship](#) April 17 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The annual competition hosts the nation's best up-and-coming automobile auctioneers from around the nation, many of which participate in other facets of auctioning as well.

During what Ehlert described as the "Miss America Pageant for auctioneers," a panel of 15 auto industry professionals or past competition winners judge the contestants on everything from their demeanor to their auctioning chant, clarity and rhythm.

"This so far is the biggest (award) that I have won," Ehlert said. "The list of past champions (include) some rock star auctioneers that I have looked up to for many years and now to be included in that is truly an honor."

Words do not do justice to the excitement in Ehlert's voice as he showcased his auctioning chant via phone call. With the quick-paced but crisp annunciation of each syllable, there was no arguing when he said, "auctioneering truly is an art form."

Improving and perfecting that art form is Ehlert's main strategy to being a top-notch auctioneer.

"If you think you're good enough now, you're not going to be good enough tomorrow," he said, "which is why I keep up and push myself to investigate new emerging trends."

Even after attending auctioneering school, Ehlert said he studies auctioning techniques used by others across the nation. Keeping well informed helps him to be a better fundraiser here in the Valley, particularly with his company Call to Auction.

What started as an easy way to pay rent in college became a passion after his fundraising talents helped a private elementary school raise enough money to build a gymnasium.

After seeing the positive impact auctioneers could make in the world, he said he knew it was what he wanted to do with his life.

Though he maintains a day job as an automobile auctioneer, he opened Call to Auction as a mission to help schools and nonprofits raise money.

The company specializes in fundraising events like golf tournaments and galas.

"By applying our energies and our focus and our knowledge to these different nonprofits, we can help them raise more money to help more people," Ehlert said.

Not only does his national championship speak to his credibility, but he also holds a "benefit auctioning specialist" designation at the end of his title, similar to a Ph.D. in other career fields, given to him by the [National Auctioneers Association](#).

Ehlert said his training to earn the title taught him leading industry techniques that have ensured his success, and his extensive education and award-winning history are what will help Arizona nonprofits and schools thrive.

"I'm going to be able to bring this championship to more organizations and let them see what a professional auctioneer can bring to (their) events," he said. "I'm able to read people by their body language and say the right things at the right time. We're going to raise money."

