

High-Impact Experiences

# Marketing, Sales and Success: One Poole Student’s High- Impact Journey

Poole junior Jayden Ford is excelling in marketing and sales through leadership roles at NC State.

March 28, 2025 | **ldflemi2** | 4-min. read



Jayden Ford

For NC State junior Jayden Ford, high-impact experiences have been more than just opportunities to build her resume — they’ve been platforms for leadership, creativity and transformation. As vice president of communications for the **NC State chapter of the American Marketing Association (AMA)**, and president of NC State’s Sales Club, Ford is not only refining her digital strategy skills but also elevating the chapter’s online presence and engagement to new heights.

In January 2025, Ford stepped into the role of VP of communications for NC State AMA, a top-performing chapter ranked No. 7 out of 350 worldwide. With a focus on driving strong performance across digital channels, Ford has been instrumental in increasing the chapter’s visibility and engagement.

“Since stepping into this role, my goal has been to create content that truly reflects who we are as a chapter and connects with people,” Ford explains. “Whether it’s through member spotlights, event coverage, or building momentum around conferences and competitions, I want our digital presence to be both impactful and engaging.”



Her efforts have already produced measurable results. In just a few months, AMA's social media reach grew by 54.9% to 6,400, content interactions doubled to 1,700, and the chapter surpassed 1,000 total followers with 236 new additions. Ford's strategy also led to a 62.3% increase in link clicks, with plans to push that number even higher in coming months.

Ford's commitment to enhancing AMA's digital presence extends beyond day-to-day content creation. In April, she will travel with her team to the AMA International Collegiate Conference in New Orleans, an opportunity to network with top marketing students, industry professionals and global leaders in the field.



Helping out in BUS495 – Global Business Case Analysis, left to right, Pieter Verhallen, Abhinav Thakur, Jayden Ford, Emma Collins.

Beyond her role with AMA, Ford has also made a name for herself in sales competitions and student leadership. She co-founded and serves as president of NC State's Sales Club, a space for students to develop their sales skills through workshops, guest speakers and competitions.

As part of leading the Sales Club, Ford has tested her skills in high-stakes sales competitions. She competed in the Pirate Sales Challenge at East Carolina University in February 2025 and was a semifinalist at the Hendrick Automotive Sales Competition at the University of North Carolina Wilmington in Fall 2024.

These competitions mimic real-world B2B sales scenarios, requiring competitors to research clients, crafting compelling sales pitches and perform under pressure. Ford thrives in this competitive environment, drawing from her background as a former Division I athlete. "I've always been drawn to competitive environments where there's a clear goal to work toward," she explains. "Sales competitions reflect that mindset where there's a clear objective, limited time and the challenge of showing up ready to deliver."

Her leadership roles across Poole College have been a crash course in management for Ford. "The biggest lesson I've learned is how to lead a team, especially when your team includes friends," she says. "It's more complicated than I expected, but I've learned the importance of communication, boundaries and follow-through."

Her experience in both leadership and competition have also reshaped the way she approaches business. "Sales is about performance, not just potential. You get out of it what you put into it, and it's an art you can keep improving," Ford shares. The confidence





she has gained will carry over into her future studies and career, where she plans to pursue a master’s degree and continue refining her leadership expertise.

“You’ll have wins, you’ll mess up, and you’ll learn fast. Do your best – it’s all you can do.”

One of the most impactful connections Ford has made along her journey is with **Dr. Pieter Verhallen, assistant teaching professor of marketing**. Their initial conversation about graduate school evolved into a mentorship that’s shaped Ford’s path. Verhallen invited her to compete in the Hendrick Sales Competition and later brought her into a global business case course, expanding her understanding of sales strategy and competition.

“Dr. Verhallen’s support has meant more than I can put into words,” Ford says. “What’s made the biggest difference, though, are the smaller things like unscripted check-ins, kind words after a presentation, or a quick message saying ‘congratulations’ or ‘you’re doing amazing things.’ ” Ford says. “Those gestures have had a bigger impact than he probably realizes.”



Ford with BUS496 student Connor Allen at the East Carolina University sales competition.

“Jayden Ford is a superstar; a person not only with raw talent, but, more importantly, someone who has a continuous improvement mindset through reflection and analysis, as well as a strong desire for collective impact on our community,” shares professor Verhallen. “She steps up to the plate to make a difference, and inspires many of her peers along the way. She perfectly reflects NC State in being, and powering, the #extraordinary.”

Ford’s journey through high-impact experiences at NC State has solidified her passion for business strategy and leadership. Looking ahead, she hopes to expand opportunities through the Sales Club by attending national conferences where members can connect with industry leaders, develop professionally and explore future careers across the business world.

Her advice to other students considering leadership roles or competitions?





“Lean into it, even if you don’t feel totally ready. Most of the growth comes from figuring things out as you go. You’ll have wins, you’ll mess up, and you’ll learn fast. Do your best – it’s all you can do.”

Through determination, leadership, and a drive for excellence, Ford is making a lasting impact at NC State, proving that thinking and doing is the key to success in the world of innovation and impact.

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