

The magazine of
the Gordon Ford
College of Business

THE FORD REPORT

Business from the Hill

WKU[®]

This issue of *The Ford Report: Business from The Hill* is about **student engagement**. Our college is very fortunate to have wonderful, diligent, and job-focused students. They inspire me and our world-class faculty and staff every day!

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

GFCB Ambassadors

Front row (L to R): Adviser Bethany Smith, Jenna Cherry, Kristen Lyons, Sayrah Jones, Jessica Barragan.

Back row (L to R): Zane Ramey, Bradley Ledford, Tom Seibold, Drew Tingle, Elijah Essa, Dean Jeff Katz.

Designing and operating a “student-engaged” college of business is a matter of significant pride for us. Our overarching goal is to be the best applied college of business in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and beyond. However, that is not an easy or inexpensive goal. We thoughtfully structure our college and hire the right faculty and staff to be certain our students are embraced, engaged, advised, educated, mentored, and well-prepared for life-long success.

The most important element of being an applied college is connecting classroom learning with the “practice” community. The engagement of faculty and students with the workplace ensures that learning in our classrooms is relevant and differentiates our students as “job-ready” to face modern leadership challenges. Our unique model of academic degree majors accompanied by multiple Centers of Excellence is the basis for our college being recognized as an innovator in business education. Over the past several years our college has added high-value programs, including an award-winning job-readiness initiative and a new undergraduate certificate program, to “brand” our students as job-ready with the most desirable “soft” skills, such as leadership and communication skills, that differentiate our students in the workplace.

The stories featured in this issue of *The Ford Report* unabashedly celebrate the engagement of our students with their campus community

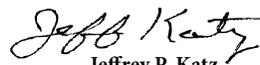
and the business community at large. You will read stories about the fascinating internships our students experience, heartwarming scholarship programs, and events that prepare our students for lifelong success.

During their time on The Hill, our students lead their peers in numerous organizations, serve their communities through philanthropic activities, and connect with the professional world through internships and experiential learning opportunities. As an applied college of business, our focus is to help students engage with the community outside the walls of Grise Hall.

After reading about our “engaged” students, I hope you will be encouraged to meet them, mentor them, inspire them with your story of success...and hire them! We welcome your connection to our college.

Please feel free to e-mail me at jeffrey.katz@wku.edu, call me at 270.745.6311 or simply stop by my office at 445 Grise Hall to share your story of success and become engaged with our college. It is truly an honor serving as your dean and always a pleasure hearing from you!

Warm Hilltopper regards,



Jeffrey P. Katz
Dean and Professor

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1906 College Heights Blvd. #11056
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1056
www.wku.edu/business

Editor

Stacey Gish, Communication
Coordinator, GFCB

Designers

WKU Public Affairs

Art Director

Tom Meacham

Dean of the Gordon Ford College of Business

Dr. Jeffrey P. Katz

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@WKUGordonFord

DRIVING AN INTERNSHIP INTO A CAREER:

Two students share their experiences with internships

By Stacey Gish



The man arrived in the office with a list of questions that he and his wife prepared regarding insurance benefits. They were confused on some of the areas and sought assistance from the Human Resources Department. The HR Representative patiently walked through the information, answered questions, and sought advice from others in the office. Satisfied with the answers, the man rose from his seat and reported back to work on the assembly line.

The HR Representative is not just a random employee, however. He is a college student studying human resources management at WKU serving as an intern with the General Motors Corvette Plant. Even after hundreds of pages of reading, hours of classroom discussion and lecture, and several papers and projects over the course of his college career, he probably just received the best education of his life—assisting a real employee with a real issue.

Academic internships have long served as a liaison between a student's theoretical knowledge and practical experience. While internship opportunities can strengthen ties between the university and the business community and provide advice and resources to cash-strapped academic programs, ultimately they hold a vital role in a student's educational experience by allowing them to see what life is really like in the work world.

“... he probably just received the best education of his life—assisting a real employee with a real issue.”

“I can apply what I learned in the classroom to what I'm doing here on a daily basis,” said Kody Johann, an intern with General Motors Corvette plant in Bowling Green. “I also can take what I'm learning here and bring it back into the classroom.”

Mari Martin, another Corvette plant intern, agrees.

“My CIS classes have definitely helped me using Excel. I have to run a lot of reports and they all use Excel. Business communication class also helped me write professional emails and how to keep them concise while still getting my point across,” she said.

Johann and Martin are two of a dozen WKU students serving as interns at the plant. Students are involved in human resources, computer information systems, communication, and engineering.

Obtaining an internship before graduation was important to both management majors.

“Students should try to intern somewhere before they graduate for many reasons,” Martin said. “The most important reason to do this is to get a glimpse into their potential future career. Are they actually going to like the field they are going into?”

Johann, a senior from Evansville, Ind., agrees.

“I thought it was important to learn as much as I could before I graduated,” he said. In fact, this internship is his second during his college career.

Martin and Johann are fortunate that the professionals at the Corvette plant allow them to experience all aspects of the office.

“I wasn't just a paper pusher,” Martin said. “I had real responsibilities that mattered to the manufacturing plant. I always felt like what I did at work had a purpose.”

Johann said that even as interns, they have been entrusted to answer questions and provide advice to employees. They are trained, they read company materials, and they observe the professionals to learn how to do it correctly.

“I have learned a lot about how a company deals with a union workforce,” he said. “Helping resolve grievances, conducting interviews, and studying how the discipline system works are just a few things I've been able to learn this year.”



FINDING A CAREER Through an Internship

By Stacey Gish

Jessica Canada would start the day at the Peoria, Ill., offices of Caterpillar, Inc. shaking her head in amazement at the task list on her desk. With items such as “Call the dealership in Germany,” “Review the labor contract for Belgium,” and “Check on the arbitration meeting in Denmark,” Canada found herself in the middle of the company’s renewed emphasis on global labor relations and human rights.

“They should not be letting an intern do this,” she would often think as she contacted one international official after another.

But indeed, she was doing this.

Canada served this past summer as Corporate Human Resources Intern at Caterpillar, Inc., a leading manufacturer of construction equipment with facilities in more than 50 countries. She was assigned to assist the manager of global labor relations and human rights develop effective communication strategies between the corporate office and international affiliates, anticipate global trends that could potentially impact the supply chain, and help identify labor experts at each location in anticipation of rewriting the company’s central labor agreement.

“It was incredible,” the Williamsburg senior said of her experience. “I had way more of a positive experience than I anticipated.”

When she was assigned to the global role, it was a last-minute change of plans that she wasn’t certain she would appreciate.

“It sounded a bit boring,” she said. “But once I got into it, I found the issues very interesting.”

Canada’s supervisor not only was the first to serve in the global labor relations role, but she had only been in the position for a year. The two women were forging new ground nearly every day.

“It was a trial by fire,” she admitted. “There was a lot of information gathering, a lot of research. I read A LOT! I don’t think they intended to give me as much responsibility as they did but I know we were making a difference each day – asking questions, charting the activities around the globe, anticipating potential issues.”

Canada said she was grateful for the opportunity to work for such a respected organization and to be given so much autonomy.

“I feel like I’m contributing,” she said. “I know they are using my information and research.”

In fact, Canada made such a difference this summer that the company retained her as an intern over the fall semester. She works 20-25 hours per week building the knowledge base, developing a reporting tool, creating a global chart detailing union philosophies, and helping her supervisor prioritize issues.

“I’m excited to see what’s going to happen,” she said. “We’re going to have a good handle on this.”

Additionally, her experiences have encouraged her to seek a post-graduate Fulbright opportunity in European labor law after her May graduation.

“I didn’t know much before about this as a career path,” Canada said. “It was challenging at times but I have discovered something that I love.”





Berenice Martinez

Diversity
Scholarship
Winner 2015

By Stacey Gish

When Berenice Martinez first arrived in the United States from Oaxaca, Mexico, she couldn't understand her elementary school teacher. She was afraid and lonely but even at that tender age, Berenice was determined to learn a new language, resolved to make new friends, and excited to experience an entirely new Kentucky-based culture.

Today, Berenice is on the cusp of earning her marketing degree and starting yet another chapter in her already exciting life. Earning the Gordon Ford Diversity Scholarship is just one more step in realizing the dreams of a mother, who years ago brought Berenice and her two siblings to a foreign land for the opportunity for a more fulfilling life.

"I am super excited to earn this scholarship," she said. "I didn't think I would get it so I almost didn't even apply. It was a different type of scholarship, though. A scholarship that depended more on my experiences and my personal story."

Berenice found WKU as a middle school cheerleader during a summer camp.

"It immediately felt like home to me," she recalls. "It was so cool to be on a college campus."

"I never thought it would be possible for me to learn a second language, get my citizenship, and soon earn a college degree. But because of the determination, motivation, and initiative I had, I know I can accomplish my goals because the sky is the limit."

Home is also how she feels when talking about the Gordon Ford College of Business.

"Everyone in the GFCB is very welcoming. My teachers know me and support me. My classmates challenge me," she said.

Staying active during her college years was important to Berenice. She initiated into the Alpha Gamma Delta social sorority and Delta Sigma Pi business fraternity, taking leadership roles in both of those organizations. She found internships right away, as well.

Her first internship began about two years ago with the Center for Career and Professional Development as their marketing and social media intern. The second internship she started this past summer with the WKU Athletics Department. She has enjoyed this position so much that she is now considering graduate school to study sports marketing.

"I was really excited to be selected for this internship," she said. "I am having so much fun!"

Becoming a United States citizen was another goal important to Berenice.

"It is such a great honor," she said.

With her May graduation looming, Berenice is understandably excited but nervous about the changes coming. But she's been getting great advice from her GFCB professors.

"Take a deep breath. Take one day at a time. Things will fall into place," she said. "I never thought it would be possible for me to learn a second language, get my citizenship, and soon earn a college degree. But because of the determination, motivation, and initiative I had, I know I can accomplish my goals because the sky is the limit."

Capps-Wurster Scholarship Recipients 2015-16



The Capps-Wurster Scholarship is made possible through a gift from WKU graduate Mr. Zuheir Sofia, who wished to honor longtime WKU educators and mentors Dr. Randy Capps and Mr. Robert Wurster. Mr. Sofia came to WKU from Syria and graduated from WKU with degrees in economics and business administration in 1969. Mr. Sofia was inducted into the WKU Hall of Distinguished Alumni in 1998 and was awarded the first Honorary Doctor in Business Leadership in December 2013.

“Zuheir Sofia is an incredible example of the power of education in a person’s life and is a tremendous role model for our students, faculty, and staff,” said Dean Jeff Katz. “We are pleased to be able to assist international students through his generous gifts.”

Mr. Sofia met with this year’s recipients during a lunch at the Augenstein Alumni Center.



Flavio Chavarri



Claire Conlon

Flavio Chavarri

Sophomore Management Major
Hometown: Arequipa, Peru

After completing his degree, Flavio would like to work in a mining company in Peru and earn a Master's degree in Engineering Technology Management.

What does earning this scholarship mean to you?

The Capps-Wurster Scholarship means that all the effort that my parents have made to allow me to be here is truly valued, and that international students have great opportunities to succeed here at WKU.

What message did you give Mr. Sofia regarding his gift?

People like Mr. Sofia give students faith. Nothing we do, however outstanding, can be achieved alone and just certain people will leave a big mark in this way. This scholarship means a lot to international students: More desire to fight for our dreams, and be driven by my faith knowing that everything will be fine. My family and I cannot be more grateful for this award. Thanks a lot, Mr. Sofia.

Claire Conlon

Graduate Student in Applied Economics
(Undergraduate: Business Economics)
Hometown: Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

Claire would love to have the opportunity to work in the United States, ideally utilizing both her analytical and interpersonal skills. She enjoys working with data and giving presentations on that data.

What does earning this scholarship mean to you?

Earning the Capps-Wurster Scholarship is very special for me, as it allowed me to continue my studies at WKU. I am a former student athlete, which enabled me to come to the USA in the first place, because of an athletic scholarship. I feel very privileged to have the chance to complete my Master's degree because of this scholarship.

What message did you give Mr. Sofia regarding his gift?

Having lunch with Mr. Sofia left an impact upon me because of how personable, kind, and interested he was in me and what I was doing. Like myself, he was an international student at WKU, so he understands what it means to be foreign and he understands the support that international students need to succeed. I am so grateful to him for the Capps-Wurster Scholarship, and I hope that, one day, I will be in a similar position in terms of making donations and creating international student scholarships. Mr. Sofia is the definition of what it means to create your own success.

DINNER VIEW

By Stacey Gish

Accounting professor Dr. Harold Little and Meredith Robinson from the Chamber of Commerce served as the mentors at the Accounting table.



Dinnerview 2015

The newly-renovated Downing Student Union served as the perfect venue for the Gordon Ford College of Business' first Dinnerview, an evening for students, business professionals, and faculty members to engage in conversation, make new connections, and learn about professional behaviors and skill sets in the business world.

Each table represented one business discipline featuring one business professional, one faculty member, and six students. Throughout the evening, as servers brought

each course, Professional Development Specialist Adrienne Browning offered the topics of conversation. For example, one topic focused on tips for a successful business internship.

"The interaction was great!" said marketing major Michael Huff. "He [Randy Donaldson from HCA Healthcare] was responsive to all of our questions. He satisfied the curiosity we all had."

Ms. Browning and the PEAK Committee plan to offer a second Dinnerview during the spring semester.



Dr. Kirk Atkinson and Randy Johnson interact at the Information Systems table.



Marie Angeles and Katie Beard shared information at the Finance table.



Mary Jane Gardner and Brooke Sage hear from the professional sitting at the Marketing table.



Human Resource Management majors Tannan Roof and Jessica Canada receive advice from Deb Wendorff from On Demand Solutions.

PEAK

Professional Education and Knowledge

Giving students the professional education and knowledge they need for career success is the goal of the PEAK Program. In its third year, PEAK is an award-winning program that has established several core events that students look forward to participating each semester. This fall, PEAK sponsored the Perfect Your Interview Program, Career Hike, and Career Climb.

Perfect Your Interview

Business professionals converge on Grise Hall for an afternoon to conduct 30-minute mock interviews with students. They provide advice and assistance on improving their interviewing skills. One professional was Ms. Charlotte Martin of Northwestern Mutual.

“I didn’t do so well,” said international business major Oleg Nesterov. “But Ms. Martin helped me remember to sit up straight and provide direct answers. I will need more practice, but I feel confident to do another interview now.”

Career Hike

The Career Hike allows students to spend one day at a local organization learning about the various business functions that occur there. This semester, 11 students and four faculty members visited Logan Aluminum and heard how every business function helps the plant operate – from accounting to purchasing – and then toured the world-class manufacturing facility.

“The tour of the plant was interesting because of how large it was and how well-organized everything was,” said human resources major Darby Kelly. “It gave me a different perspective on how a manufacturing facility operates.

“I enjoyed learning about Logan’s team-oriented structure,” said management major Justin Hawkins. “I found it interesting that the manager leading our tour knew everyone from one end of the plant to the other. It’s obvious they take their organizational culture seriously.”



Faith Rowlett and Justin Hawkins were two of 14 students who spent Fall Break at Logan Aluminum.

Career Climb

Professional success doesn't begin when a student wears the cap and gown and receives a diploma. Preparing for professional success is a process that begins when a student first walks into Grise Hall. Career Climb is the first step in that process for many students. Career Climb is a day filled with personal development workshops such as Developing a LinkedIn Profile, Goal Setting, Looking at Career Options, and student panels. The day culminates in a networking session where students can meet with business professionals and learn how they attained their positions.

For more information about PEAK and how you can participate, please contact Dr. Evelyn Thrasher (evelyn.thrasher@wku.edu).



Charlotte Martin, Director of Recruiting at Northwestern Mutual, talks with economics major Tom Seibold (left) and accounting major Ryan Hendricks (right) during the networking portion of Career Climb.



Brett York composes his LinkedIn profile during a Career Climb workshop.



Matt King explains organizational culture to a group of students during a Career Climb poster session.



Professional Education and Knowledge

Gordon Ford College of Business



*Jason Marshall with Leadership Strategies,
marketing major Jenna Cherry, and Shannon
Oleyar of Eyeconic.TV*

FIRST STUDENT EARNS CERTIFICATE IN **Advanced Professionalism**

By Stacey Gish

Management graduate Leslie Steele is the first recipient of the Certificate in Advanced Professionalism (CAP) from the Gordon Ford College of Business.

The Certificate was designed to enhance students' professional preparedness as they enter the business world. The certificate program requires 12 credit hours in three general categories: Self-Management Skills; Advanced Communication and Leadership; and Applied Career Experiences. Students also complete a set of professional development activities ranging from attending resume writing workshops, mock interview sessions, and completing an internship.

"My career goal is to be an Office Manager of a well-established local company," said Ms. Steele. "I knew I would need to networking, so I



Leslie Steele, CAP recipient

looked into some of the clubs sponsored in the College. I didn't feel like they were a good fit for me. I heard about the PEAK Program, which

is about working toward your professional image. I thought this would be the perfect place to network and meet people in my field on a professional level."

During her time as a GFCB student, Ms. Steele participated in two Career Trek experiences, which she indicates is her favorite activity sponsored by the PEAK Program (Professional Education and Knowledge) and counts toward completing CAP requirements. She traveled on both the Cincinnati and Atlanta Career Trek trips.

"It was an amazing experience because I was able to see companies of different sizes, types, with different core values and missions. I may not have gotten the opportunity to do so otherwise, while learning more about them," Ms. Steele said. "It was an eye opener for me to realize how companies differ, some of which I may feel to be a better fit than others."

The GFCB created the CAP in response to the needs of the business community, according to Dr. Michelle Trawick, Associate Dean for Faculty and Administration.

“Feedback from local employers suggests that our students’ technical business skills meet their needs but that the students’ soft skills in written and oral communication, networking, time management, and general professional awareness need to be developed in order for them to negotiate a successful start to their careers,” she said.

“The Certificate is an important and valuable complement to a student’s business degree and can significantly enhance the academic

experience and career preparation,” said Dr. Evelyn Thrasher, PEAK Program Director. “Completing the Certificate provides the student with the finishing touches to an already excellent degree and it signifies to employers that the student has gone above and beyond to become a well-rounded business professional.”

Ms. Steele now serves as Office Manager at Bluegrass Insulation of Bowling Green, where she is using her education – both technical skills and her professional skills – to assist the company as it merges with a larger national organization.

“I know the educational journey is one of sacrifice, struggle, and many obstacles, but I

“I know the educational journey is one of sacrifice, struggle, and many obstacles, but I couldn’t be prouder of my accomplishment. PEAK and the Certificate in Advanced Professionalism can strengthen the educational journey and help prepare students for the ‘career after graduation.’”

couldn’t be prouder of my accomplishment,” she said. “PEAK and the Certificate in Advanced Professionalism can strengthen the educational journey and help prepare students for the ‘career after graduation.’”





The Future is in **Your Hands**

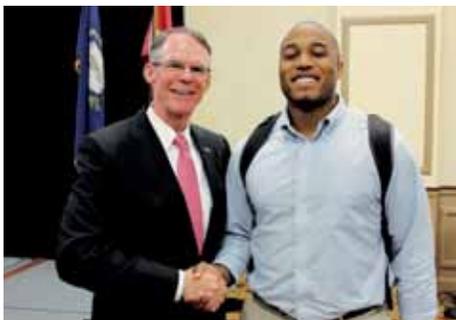
Leadership in a Global Economy: Richard Davis

By Stacey Gish

Richard Davis walked up to the podium in front of a standing room only crowd in the Augenstein Alumni Center and smiled.

“I’m so excited because you think this is going to be so awful,” the bespeckled CEO began. “You are so dreading some bank guy in a suit to come up and talk to you, but I’ll try to surprise you and make this a little more interesting. I want to encourage you today to do something meaningful after you leave here.”

Davis, who is Chairman, President, and CEO of U.S. Bancorp based in Minnesota, was in the area for a meeting with local U.S. Bank employees. He stopped by WKU to provide some insight on “Leadership in a Global Economy.” His insight was indeed more interesting than the students in the crowd anticipated.



Richard Davis and management major Bradley Broady

“You don’t have to see it to believe it; you have to believe it to do it.”

“He was someone I could relate to,” said Bradley Broady, sophomore management major. “I enjoyed his lecture very much.”

His first leadership maxim: “You don’t have to see it to believe it; you have to believe it to do it,” comes from the Roger Bannister story. Bannister was the first athlete to run a mile in less than four minutes on May 6, 1954. A year after that feat, 88 more runners made that same accomplishment. Those 88 were just waiting for

one person to do something no one has done before, Davis said, encouraging the students in the audience to do the same as leaders.

Davis challenged the students in the audience to look positively into the future.

“Your future is bright!” he said. “You have timed your graduation from this university perfectly. I have nothing but optimism.”

Citing a recent poll of 150 CEOs from across the country, Davis told students that companies are looking at a potential employee’s leadership style as a basis for making a decision for employment.

“Leadership is not management. Management is a managing process—getting it perfectly right. Leadership is managing people and making something happen that wasn’t there before.”

However, leaders aren’t born, he reminded students, leaders are lifelong learners who exhibit empathy, know how to communicate, demonstrate integrity, remain engaged within the community, and are strategic.

He challenged the students to think of themselves as leaders now, even before they venture into the work world. Students can be leaders by rising above selfishness, stepping outside their comfort zones, and focusing on values.

When you see a piece of trash at your place of employment, you should pick it up, he said, because where you work is a reflection of your reputation. You want to stop any type of wrong behavior.

“I haven’t talked about skill, I haven’t talked about talent. I haven’t talked about scores. We’re moving to these [values] becoming more important,” he said.

“People have the responsibility to give back. I want you to promise me that before you graduate... that you will not walk across that stage without having volunteered somewhere for something that matters to you.”



BRIEFCASE

UPDATES from the GFCB



Accounting students were able to network with more than 15 firms and businesses during the annual Meet the Firms event.

Accounting

The department welcomes Dr. Melloney Simerly this semester, a newly-minted PhD from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Rebecca Zimberg, a sophomore from Nashville, was one of only 21 students to complete the annual Kentucky Society of CPAs College Leadership Institute in August.

Sayrah Jones, a senior from Bowling Green, participated in Project Run With It at the annual Beta Alpha Psi Meeting in August.

The department sponsored many guest speakers this semester from the following organizations: Ernst & Young, Crowe Horwath, BKD, Mountjoy, Chilton, & Medley, KPMG, Becker, Kentucky State Board of Accountancy, KyCPA, just to name a few. Workshop topics ranged from recruiting, mock interviews, technology skills, team building, and CPA Exam Prep.



Dennis Dycus served as the main presenter during the Department of Accounting's first CPE for CPA Day in October. The Department will sponsor another CPE Day in the late spring. Contact Sheri Henson (sheri.henson@wku.edu) for information.

Economics

The department welcomed two new faculty members this fall. Dr. Sebastian Leguizamon comes to WKU from Vanderbilt, where he served as visiting professor of economics. Dr. Stephen Locke returns to his alma mater after a stint conducting research at UCLA.

Dr. David Zimmer was featured in an October Insider Louisville article discussing the economic impact of the proposed Humana-Aetna merger. His research paper, "Employment Effects of Health Shocks: The Role of Fringe Benefits," was accepted in the *Bulletin of Economic Research*. "Crop Price Co-movements During Extreme Market

Downturns" was accepted in *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*. "Does COBRA Reduce the Probability that Job Separators Return to Work?" was accepted in the *Journal of Economic Policy Reform*. "The Dynamic Relationship Between School Size and Academic Performance: An Investigation of Elementary Schools in Wisconsin" was accepted in *Research in Economics*.

Dr. Claudia Strow published an article, "Teaching the Economics of Ecotourism, Trade, Healthcare, Education, Poverty, and Immigration as a Study Abroad Experience in Costa Rica," that will appear in the *Journal of Economics and Finance Education*.

The BB&T Center for the Study of Capitalism secured a \$14,000 grant from the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation to continue its speaker series and the book club.

Dr. Brian Strow is a regular guest on Kentucky Tonight, KET's public affairs talk show.

Dr. Susane Leguizamon had two papers accepted for publication. "Who Cares About Relative Status? A Quantile Approach to Consumption of Relative House Size" will appear in *Applied Economic Letters* and "Racial Difference in Willingness to Pay for Hospital Access" will appear in *Review of Regional Studies*.

Dr. Sebastian Leguizamon's research, "Revisiting the Tax Consequences of Same-Sex Marriage" received media attention in various local and national publications.

Dr. Stephen Locke will publish in *Land Economics*: "The Cost of Convenience: Estimating the Impact of Communication Antennas on Residential Property Values."

Dr. David Beckworth appears in numerous interviews and in major media outlets. Additionally, his research, "The Regional Effects of Monetary Policy: The Case of the American South" will appear in *Essays in Economic & Business History*. Another article, "The Productivity Gap: Monetary Policy, the Subprime Boom, and the Post-2001 Productivity Surge" will be published in *Journal of Policy Modeling*.

Dr. Cathy Carey presented to the Bowling Green Rotary Club in September on "National Trends and the Local Economy: How Insulated or Vulnerable is Warren County?"

Aaron Morris took a group of nine high school dual credit students to New York City for a Study Away adventure during the summer. Morris taught Econ 150.

Dr. Dan Myers and 16 students traveled to the Netherlands this summer to study economic markets unique to that country.

Drs. Brian and Claudia Strow are preparing to take approximately 14 students to South Africa during the Winter 2016 term. They will teach two different economics courses.

The Center for Applied Economics conducted research on the economic impact of WKU upon the southcentral Kentucky region, determining that the impact is more than \$369.3 million.

The BB&T Center for Capitalism sponsored three speakers this semester: Dr. Richard Grant, the former economist for the South African Department of Mines, spoke on the economic transition from the end of apartheid; Dr. Steve Offutt from Asbury University discussed the political economy of South Africa over the last century; and Dr. Jacob Vigdor from the University of Washington spoke on the economics of immigration.

Finance

The Finance Department welcomed a new faculty member this fall. Dr. Ron Rhoades comes to WKU from Alfred State College in New York. He will lead the Financial Planning Program for the department.

Mr. Andrew Head transitioned from Executive-in-Residence, his position for the past

five years, into an Assistant Professorship. He will still lead the Center for Financial Success.

Dr. Ron Rhoades testified in front of the U.S. Department of Labor in August regarding the department's controversial proposed "Conflicts of Interest" rule in retirement advice. He testified in favor of this proposal and wrote several articles published in financial planning magazines.

Dr. Johnny Chan published six co-authored articles in high-quality journals exploring topics such as family firms, energy policy, corporate governance, publishing behavior, and finance pedagogy. The articles appeared in *The Journal of Corporate Finance*, *Advances in Financial Education*, *Energy Policy*, *North American Journal of Economics and Finance*, and *International Review of Economics and Finance*. In addition, he was a guest researcher giving research seminars at nine different universities throughout China and Taiwan.

Students participating in the TVA Investment Challenge Program attended the regional meeting in November at Belmont University. The students had the opportunity to network with other students, gain advice on how to effectively run their portfolio, and to hear from Chuck Webb, Chief Investment Officer of Weaver C. Barksdale and Associates in

Nashville, who spoke about fixed-income investment strategies.

Haley Burgin, senior finance major from Lawrenceburg, was selected to receive a \$5,000 NextGen Scholarship from TD Ameritrade to continue her studies in financial planning. She was one of 13 students selected for the scholarship and traveled to New York City in July to visit the New York Stock Exchange, where she walked the trading floor and helped ring the closing bell.



Haley Burgin and Tom Nally, TD Ameritrade Institutional President.

Graduate Programs



The PMBA cohort completed the WKU Challenge Course to begin their graduate studies. Here, Drew Reid assists Amelia Kurtz up and over the wall for the final challenge.

Information Systems

The department is currently pursuing the development of the WKU Center for Applied Data Analytics. The mission of this initiative is to advance the science and practice of business analytics by bringing together professionals, community-based constituents, faculty, and students to promote economic development, collaborative research, outreach, and education in the areas of applied analytics. Dr. Kirk Atkinson is interim director.

A newly created Applied Data Analytics Certificate is slated to be available to students for the fall of 2016.

IBM has agreed to provide free Watson Analytics licenses to Business Informatics classrooms. The department brought IBM personnel to campus in October to provide a demonstration of the system.

The department hosted a seminar featuring Mr. David Laird and Mr. Paul Shoemaker, finalizing a partnership to use the American Hospital Directory as a teaching/research tool for the Business Informatics program.

Two student proposals will be featured in the annual Posters at the Capitol event in February, 2016, and were awarded FUSE grants. Corey Travis, management senior, will present his research entitled “Making the Most

of Intelligence: Data Mining for Customer Loyalty.” Zachary Ross, finance junior, will present his research entitled “Too Big to Fail? Or Too Blind to See? Profit Analysis.”

Dr. Leyla Zhuhadar presented a data mining and analytics workshop on “Discovering Pathways to Success in STEM Disciplines” and Cody Kirk, MBA student and 2015 Business Informatics graduate, presented his research, “Who Wants My Product? Affinity-Based Marketing” at the INFORMS Conference in Philadelphia in October.

Dr. Zhuhadar also published two research articles this semester. “A synergistic strategy for combining thesaurus-based and corpus-based approaches in building ontology for multilingual search engines” and “Semantically enriched Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) platform” will both appear in will appear in *Computers in Human Behavior*.

Marketing

Dr. Tim Hawkins was awarded a \$109,000 grant from the Naval Postgraduate School’s Acquisition Research Program to study the effectiveness of supplier performance evaluation (SPE) processes in government.



The Marketing Advisory Council gathered together in October.

Management

The online Business Administration Program is ranked 7th nationally among online programs for 2015 by the SuperScholar Smart Choice Best Online Bachelor's in Business Administration Degree list.

Dr. Dana Cosby and Dr. Masood Jabarnajad join the Management faculty this semester. Dr. Cosby returns to WKU after spending a few months in industry. She will lead the International Business program for the department. Dr. Jabarnajad comes to WKU after finishing his PhD at Auburn University. His background is in engineering and

operations, providing a unique perspective to the management curriculum.

Dr. Whitney Peake has been named an E&A Fellow for 2016-18. Fellows will work interactively over a two-year period to produce materials and artifacts that can be shared university-wide as examples of best practices. She also serves on the South Warren High School Career and Technical Education Department's Advisory Committee. Dr. Peake also served as a judge for the Junior Achievement Shark Tank Competition in December. She also serves the Small

Business Institute as Vice President of Marketing and the *Journal of Small Business Strategy* as an associate editor. She will have two research articles published: "Family business participation in community social responsibility: The moderating effect of gender" will appear in the *Journal of Business Ethics*. "Get what you give? An examination of enlightened self-interest, philanthropic intent, and engagement in philanthropy for small firm owners" will appear in the *Journal of Small Business Strategy*.

Dr. Afzal Rahim, University Distinguished Professor of Management organized the 22nd Annual International Conference on Advances in Management and the 8th International Conference on Social Intelligence that was held in Boston this past July. He also presented two papers: "Generational and Gender Difference in Conflict Management Strategies" and "Rethinking the Structure of Organizational Conflict" at the International Association for Conflict Management in Clearwater, Florida in June. Finally, Dr. Rahim's textbook, "*Management Theory, Research, and Practice*" is now in its second edition.

Dr. Rahim, Dr. Ismail Civelek, and Dr. Helen Liang co-authored two papers that will appear in academic journals based on research



Mr. Pete Mahurin, TVA board member, spoke to students, faculty, and staff about the future of energy policy in the United States.

investigating various factors of department chair leadership. “Department Chairs as Leaders: A Model of Social Intelligence and Creative Performance in a State University” will appear in *Business Creativity & The Creative Economy*. “A Model of Department Chairs’ Social Intelligence and Faculty Members’ Turnover Intention” will appear in *Intelligence*.

Dr. Civelek also published three additional journal articles to appear in *Annals of Management Science*, *International Journal of Manufacturing Technology and Management*,

and the *International Journal of Supply Chain Management*. He also traveled to Philadelphia and Boston to present his research at conference.

Tom Clinton, the President of Mitsubishi-Caterpillar Fork Lift visited Dr. Dana Cosby’s International Human Resource Management class to discuss his career and provide advice to students.

Dr. Dana Cosby participated in the Russian Business Molodost visit to Orlando in October. She presented U.S. Trends in Human Resources to this group of young CEOs and presidents from Moscow.

Salvador Hernandez, a sophomore International Business major was the student recipient of the 15th annual President’s Award for Diversity. He is a member of the WKU Chinese Flagship program, WKU HOLAS (Hilltopper Organization of Latin American Students) and has supervised the coordination of projects that promote and celebrate diversity on campus and in the community.

Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation

Five student teams were awarded \$950 in the second annual Topper Tank Elevator Pitch Competition held in October. Kaley Skaggs won first place for her Bluebird Coffee Bus idea; Davis Church and Trent Erps placed second for their Helm Brothers Apparel business; and Cinema Experience took Chandler Smith and Jamie Harvener to a third place finish.



Pat Yates, owner of Happy Feet, shared his tips and tricks for entrepreneurial success with students.

Honorable mention awards went to Tim LeMastus and Hayley Renneker.

Dr. Whitney Peake's entrepreneurship class consulted with South Warren Middle School students on developing business plans for their own version of "Shark Tank."

The Entrepreneurship Speaker Series featured Samantha McCormick, owner of Taboo Dance & Fitness; Jeremy Jacobs, owner of Eyeconic.TV; and Pat Yates, owner of Happy Feet.

GFCB

Dr. Pat Jordan was one of the first recipients of the University Staff Award for Student Advisement established to honor professional staff who exhibit excellence in supporting the success of and support to WKU's student population. Dr. Jordan serves as the coordinator of the Undergraduate Student Services and Academic Advising.



Mr. Fred Higdon, Dr. Pat Jordan, Dr. Gary Ransdell



WKU Regent John Ridley, student Joseph Martin, and Dean Jeff Katz enjoyed the GFCB Homecoming Breakfast. More than 100 alumni, friends, students, and staff enjoyed food and fellowship before the early-morning football game.

BRIEFCASE Student Organizations

American Marketing Association hosted Adam Nuse, the General Manager/COO of the Bowling Green Hot Rods as a guest speaker this semester. The AMA chapter may work with the Hot Rods in the future to create a marketing plan. They are currently raising funds to send students to the AMA International Collegiate Conference in the spring. Chapter president is Skyler Wilson. Faculty Adviser is Ms. Mary Jane Gardner.

Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Honor Society officers for 2015-16: President Zane Ramey, Vice President Sayrah Jones, Reporter Meredith Thompson, Treasurer Jenna Lehkamp, Service Project Coordinator Caitlin Wilson, Faculty Adviser is Ms. Sheri Henson.

Beta Gamma Sigma International Business Honor Society has qualified for High Honors for the 2014-15 academic year. This honor is given to the collegiate chapters that exemplify academic excellence and a positive role on campus. Faculty Advisers are Dr. Dawn Bolton and Dr. Evelyn Thrasher.

IABC (International Association of Business Communicators) hosted Charlotte Martin of Northwestern Mutual to present on “Effective Interviewing.” They also hosted a Job Search Workshop which allowed students to create

business cards, develop a LinkedIn profile, and discover the job search resources WKU has to offer. Michael Huff is president. Stacey Gish serves as faculty adviser.



The Student Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) group joined the professional group for a networking event at Mellow Mushroom in October.



The Enactus group prepares to discuss their organization with students during the annual Backyard BBQ in September.

Cody Hutchins (International Business, 2014) is one of 12 young graduates chosen to be a part of Alltech's Career Development Program. This program is designed to give year-long specialized training for future leaders in the Alltech organization. Cody worked with the planning team for the Alltech Rebelation Week that was held in May.



Kevin Cardwell (Accounting, 1985) is Controller at Southern Champion Tray in Chattanooga, Tenn. He's been with the company 17 years after a stint in public

accounting. Southern Champion Tray manufactures paperboard packaging products and containers primarily for the food industry. Kevin hosted a group of GFCB students in March for a tour of the factory and discussion about business careers in the manufacturing world.



Russ Fletcher (MBA, 2000) is Group Director, Channel Planning and Development, for the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta, Ga. He joined Coca-Cola in 2000 after serving in various marketing roles for companies such as Fruit of the Loom, Amana Appliances, and Miller Brewing Company. Russ hosted a group of GFCB students in March for a

tour of Coca-Cola Headquarters and offered advice to students on which skills and traits they need to develop as they seek jobs after college.

Amy Ballou (Finance, 1996; MBA 1999) is Senior Manager, Data Insights and Analytics for Coca-Cola Freestyle at the Coca-Cola Company in Atlanta, Ga. Her work currently focuses on data analysis and market research on the new freestyle drink machines. Amy has worked for Coca-Cola since 2009 in various finance and data capacities. She hosted a group of GFCB students in March for a tour of Coca-Cola Headquarters and shared her career path from WKU to the corporate world.

Tim Key (Management, 2011) was recently promoted to Vice President of Operations at Precision Industries, Inc. in Portland, Tenn. In this position, he is responsible for the daily manufacturing operations of the plant. Tim has worked at Precision since 1994 in a variety of roles.



Rachel Meckstroth (Marketing, 2012) is Marketing Coordinator for Prograde, an integrated marketing, print, eCommerce, and fulfillment company

ALUMNI

NEWS

located in Cincinnati. Rachel wears a lot of hats at the company, as she is responsible for social media, the company website, branding initiatives, designing literature, and assisting the sales team. Rachel ran the Cincinnati Flying Pig Marathon earlier this year.



Meredith Johnson

(Management, 2015) serves as CFS Portfolio Analyst at GE Appliances in Louisville. She earned this promotion just a few months into her tenure at

GE and credits the GFCB for providing her with the well-rounded business education necessary to pursue this career move.



Christy Traughber, CPA

(Accounting 2012) is Senior Accounting Manager for Sherrod CPA Office in Springfield, Tenn. In this role, she provides oversight of various

accounting areas such as corporate accounting, payroll, and accounts payable.



Ivan Valero (International Business, 2013) is Buyer/Analyst for JPW Industries based in Nashville. He supports the global procurement team with his bilingual skills.



Blake Ayers (Business Administration, 2011) is an insurance agent with Assured Neace Lukens in Bowling Green, Ky.



Georgena Brackett (MBA, 2010) is the Health Information Management Director at the Medical Center of Bowling Green where she is responsible for coding, transcription,

release of information, the cancer registry, and document imaging.



Steve Sutton

(Management, 1991) is Executive Director at JPMorgan Chase. He provides commercial banking services to middle market clients and

multinational corporations in central and western Kentucky.



Diego Leal Ambriz

(International Business, 2012) is lease administrator with Xerox Financial Services in Texas. He works with sales people across the United

States, helping them finance equipment for their customers.

James Slaton (Finance, 2010) is the owner of FiPointe Consulting based in Bowling Green, Ky. FiPointe provides financial consulting services for banks in the areas of regulatory reporting, board reports, and the call report. He also works with non-banking clients assisting them with bookkeeping and spreadsheets.

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