

Business

Leading
the way

Dear Alumni and Friends,



This year was truly unprecedented across the world and at your alma mater. The COVID-19 pandemic and its implications for the health and wellness of our global citizens, as well as its long-term impact on the economy are still being determined.

In spring semester, we moved to distance education, as faculty delivered course content and staff provided many services remotely. Despite heading into uncharted territory, the University community came together with a remarkable commitment to learning and creative problem-solving—and nothing has made me prouder in my more than 20 years at WMU. As you can see from the content of this magazine, we had an incredible year. I hope reading this publication will make you proud of your college and hopeful for the future.

- In this edition of Business, we focus on the unique experiences that shape a Haworth College of Business education, including:
- The cover story about our new leadership and business strategy program and its related center, which teaches students that purpose and profits are intrinsically linked.
 - Student Eddie Warr’s story on being a transfer student, father and finance professional who has benefited from scholarship and internship opportunities.
 - An alumni perspectives section that chronicles the outstanding work our graduates are doing, and what drives them to excel in public policy, entrepreneurship and sales arenas.
 - Donor Michael Howell’s reflection on how one faculty member changed his life, and how he is changing the lives of accountancy students through his philanthropy.
 - Student features that explore what’s trending and experiences that range from a program at Harvard University, success at case competitions, life-changing study abroad opportunities, scholarship awards and more.
 - A piece detailing how we prepare students for a virtual world, which has become more important than ever.
 - A celebration of our alumni and friends who have received awards for their leadership and service accomplishments.
 - Faculty research pieces exploring food consumption and COVID-19 and the resiliency of women entrepreneurs as well as stories celebrating a recent Fulbright recipient and a department chair making a difference in diversity and inclusion efforts.

Whether in-person or virtual, the Haworth College of Business offers a world-class education, with early connections to industry and community, which help our students lead the way no matter what the circumstances.

I invite you to read and enjoy.

Sincerely,

Satish P. Deshpande

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On the cover
Bronconess is a wine brand launched by students, under faculty supervision, through the Haworth College of Business.



Business Buzz

\$495,272

WMU Giving Day

Donors to the Haworth College of Business elevated its ability to meet the needs of students in a variety of ways during WMU’s 2019 Giving Day. The college broke records for donors and dollars with more than 290 donors giving \$495,272 to support initiatives such as scholarships, student travel to competitions and conferences, experiential learning, and more. The generosity of 2,190 donors garnered \$1,555,417 for impactful programs across all areas of the University.



Post-graduation success

Digital marketing and eCommerce, entrepreneurship, food and consumer package goods marketing, and sales and business marketing all have post-graduation success rates of 100%, which means graduates are employed or continuing their education within three months of graduation. The college boasts an overall rate of 94% post-graduate success for all majors.



Students present research at international conference

Students Brandon Buxton and Blake Tindol presented their research at the Conference on Health IT and Analytics in Washington, D.C. The annual research summit gathers prominent scholars from more than 40 research institutions, as well as leading policymakers and practitioners from around the world. Buxton and Tindol presented research they collaborated on with Dr. Utkarsh Shrivastava, assistant professor of business information systems.



Taking the tangle out of power strips

A student startup offering a mess-free alternative to traditional power strips won first place at WMU’s eighth annual K.C. O’Shaughnessy Competition and Showcase. A team comprised of industrial and entrepreneurial engineering students Bridgitt Cornish, Trevor Dendel, Emily Mouat and Brooklyn Smith claimed the top spot after making a pitch for their company No Mess Power Strip.



Conference room updated

The conference room on the main level of Schneider Hall was updated in fall 2019 with a generous gift from the Haworth family and Haworth Inc. The room now boasts new furniture that is entirely mobile, so that the room can be transformed into a number of different configurations, giving the college a flexible, multi-purpose space for student and community events. Perhaps most exciting of all, the room is equipped with Bluescape, a secure visual collaborative platform that unifies content and conversations in a shared space and can be accessed from any device or location.



TechNext

Broadening students’ cultural horizons is a goal of the Haworth College of Business’s TechNext program, which hosted trips to San Francisco and San Diego in fall semester. Students are selected to participate from programs across the University based on high academic achievement and interest in entrepreneurship and technology applications. This year, students were able to visit 24 companies and make connections with more than 50 alumni.

What's **trending?**

Haworth College of Business students speak about what's on their minds. As you will see, experiential learning through internships, externships, mentorships and study abroad are central to how they are preparing for their professions. Diversity and inclusion, social responsibility, technology, communication, globalization and advocacy are major themes in what these six students anticipate the future holds.

"Communication is at the center of all business opportunities, operations and decisions; good communication will take you far in your career."

- ALEXIS FLICEK

"I have gained new perspectives in international business practices from study abroad, as well as a greater understanding of my place in the world as a global citizen."

- SAMANTHA McGRATH

"Whatever you want to accomplish or achieve, relationships play a vital role. Having the ability to connect with people from many different walks of life will help you achieve your goals much faster."

- SPENCER ROBERTSON

"Many financial firms are prioritizing diversity and inclusion by collaborating through different activities and being open to the factors that create a diverse workforce."

- VICTOR PEREZ

"My internship was a stepping stone toward my future career, and instrumental in landing a job at BP before graduating. I learned a lot about corporate structure, work-life balance and teamwork."

- JAKE HERSON

"One of my most impactful experiences has been my internship with the human resources department at MGM Grand Casino and Hotel. It has given me the skill set, knowledge and confidence to market myself as a business professional."

- RAVEN LACKEY

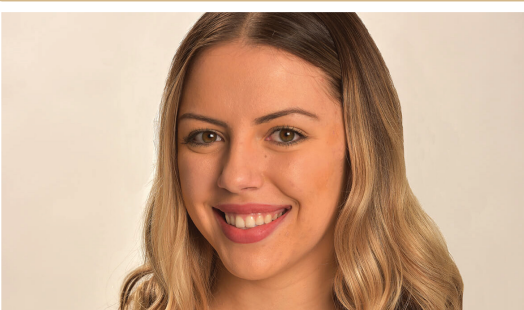




VICTOR PEREZ
Senior

PROGRAM:
FINANCE

“There are many lessons I will take into the workforce from my experience as a Greenleaf Trust Scholar, my Business Ethics and Sustainability course in India, and the Student Professional Readiness Series. The classroom has prepared me very well for life after college, and these outside experiences have helped develop leadership traits I will carry into my career. One of the biggest trends I have noticed in wealth management is the demand for socially responsible investment funds—SRIs. Clients want to see companies that embrace environmental sustainability and assist local communities. Investors are looking at these socially responsible companies for ways to give back to those in need and aid efforts for improving the environment. However, one caveat is that just because a company is socially responsible, it doesn’t mean it will provide a positive return on one’s portfolio. There should be due diligence involved in selecting SRIs.”



ALEXIS FLICEK
Senior

PROGRAM:
**INTEGRATED SUPPLY
MANAGEMENT**

“The biggest thing impacting supply chain right now is technology. Every day, there are new technologies being created to help get things done better, faster and cheaper. Keep an eye out especially for the increased use of artificial intelligence and blockchain technologies. These technologies will help to increase visibility in the supply chain, keep track of inventory, increase on-time delivery and speed up the processing of data. The computer information systems classes at the Haworth College of Business do an outstanding job of teaching the basic understanding of data, how database management systems work and how to manipulate data.”



RAVEN LACKEY
Senior

PROGRAM:
**HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT**

“Being a Haworth College of Business student has given me the courage and persistence to be an advocate for myself and others. Diversity and inclusion, gender equality, an aging workforce and advances in technology will impact the HR profession in the coming years. The college has prepared me by exposing me to events, information and other tools that will allow me to be a leader and advocate for individuals as they encounter these issues. I also have the confidence to be an advocate for myself, and ensure I am being treated fairly in and out of the workforce.”



JAKE HERSON
Senior

PROGRAM:
**COMPUTER INFORMATION
SYSTEMS**

“This past summer I was able to secure an internship with Comerica Bank at their IT campus in Auburn Hills. The subjects that came up during my interview were directly related to material I learned in class, and not just the computer information systems courses, but in other business courses too. I was also able to experience the IT Forum, which brought in representatives from companies and universities to speak on the future of IT. This was a great experience for me, uniquely provided by the Haworth College of Business. Dr. Han, Dr. Hazarika and Dr. Chen have all had a great impact on my learning. Dr. Chen taught me about a field of major interest, data mining. I found the hands-on way he taught really engaging. Technology can change so quickly; it can be hard to keep up, but my professors have taught me how to stay on top of it.”



SAMANTHA McGRATH
Senior

PROGRAMS:
**FOOD AND CONSUMER PACKAGE
GOODS MARKETING, LEADERSHIP
AND BUSINESS STRATEGY**

“My personal interactions with students, professors and mentors have provided the most rewarding learning opportunities. Dr. Zondag has always been passionate about my achievements, advancing my success by opening many doors as a dedicated mentor. With his guidance, I was able to represent WMU in the National Grocers Association case competitions in Las Vegas and San Diego, the Fresh Careers mentorship program in New Orleans and the Food Marketing Conference in Grand Rapids. In addition, studying abroad in India, Guatemala, Portugal, Germany and Thailand built an international and multicultural skill set. I was also able to complete multiple internships and externships, which helped me obtain my dream job with E. & J. Gallo Winery.”



SPENCER ROBERTSON
Senior

PROGRAMS:
ACCOUNTANCY, FINANCE

“The Student Professional Readiness Series has been instrumental in my college experience. Being able to figure out the skills employers are looking for during my first semester allowed me to gain valuable internship experience at public accounting firms. I plan to pursue my Certified Public Accountant certification, so my internships have played a huge role in my future career. Being in the accounting and finance profession, technology is definitely something that will affect the future. During my internships, I have seen how much technology is influencing and enhancing experiences in order to better serve clients. I feel we should all look at technology as a helping hand. It will cut down on redundant tasks and allow us to better serve clients and the greater society.”

A future in finance

In the month of October, Eddie Warr wasn't sleeping very much. He had just started a new full-time position as a wealth management assistant at Greenleaf Trust, while taking 15 credits toward his finance degree at Western Michigan University and raising his 4-year-old daughter, Cecilia. Top that with an earlier bout of appendicitis, emergency surgery and a few unexpected life changes, and it's safe to say that Warr has mastered the art of perseverance.

"Free time" is not a phrase he is familiar with since enrolling at the Haworth College of Business—but Warr is not one to complain. On the contrary, he is quick to express gratitude for all he has been able to accomplish.

"I feel like I wasted some years, and I don't have any more time to take the long way around," Warr says. "I want to get where I want to be. I know there are going to be stumbles and falls, but if I can be proactive about the things I want to learn, it will come back tenfold."

At 27, Warr has come a long way since beginning his educational journey. Growing up in foster homes and group homes throughout northern Indiana, he says he struggled with recognizing his own self-worth while also trying to care for his younger sister. As an adolescent and teenager, the only way he knew how to vent his frustrations was by acting out at school and the environments he was living in.

"I took the easy road, and it ended in trouble," Warr says. "But then I began to look at the crowds I was hanging around, and something told me I was better than that. I wanted to make a change, and my motivation was my daughter—knowing that I didn't want her to go through any of the negative experiences I had from not having parents."

Coming to that realization was a turning point for Warr. He not only wanted to provide a good life for his daughter, he aspired to work in the financial industry and wanted to help others from similar backgrounds become financially stable. His ambitions led him to Grand Rapids Community College, where he earned an associate degree in accountancy before exploring four-year business schools.





“As I researched Western, I realized that the programs, especially in business, are top-notch,” Warr says. “When I found out the Haworth College of Business has its own career center, as well as other resources to help students, I knew this was a special place.”

As a transfer student, Warr wanted to take advantage of every opportunity he could find at WMU. But, he didn’t always know which steps to take to apply for a scholarship or internship. “No one around me had gone to college, so I was doing something new,” Warr says. “It can be intimidating completing a FAFSA and other things when you don’t have support.”

He quickly found an ally in Bob Stewart, career development specialist at the Zhang Career Center. Warr says Stewart gave him the encouragement he needed to interview for a competitive Greenleaf Trust Scholarship. The award is for students from underrepresented ethnic backgrounds who wish to pursue degrees in finance or financial planning at WMU.

“For the longest time I felt like a failure. I had been turned down from so many opportunities, it was just drilled in my head to not even try,” Warr says. “It was Bob who said, ‘Eddie, look at everything you’ve done.’ He gave me the wind in my sails by empowering me and saying, ‘What’s the harm in trying?’”

That encouragement was the push Warr needed to interview for not only the scholarship, but an internship with Greenleaf Trust, which he landed as well. The deeply engaging experience allowed Warr to rotate through four divisions at the company: personal trust wealth management, operations, research and retirement planning.



2019 Greenleaf Trust Scholarship recipients



“The internship was such a boost to my confidence; it has been so empowering,” Warr says. “I went into finance because I wanted financial literacy for myself and others. I never doubted if I had the smarts to do it; I knew I had the drive. But I’m just beginning to understand in depth what really goes into growing funds and making your money work for you.”

Greenleaf Trust, which celebrated 20 years of awarding its scholarship to WMU students in 2019, also offers a graduate associate program for scholars. Those students go through a rigorous interview

process and some, like Warr, get offers for full-time positions with the company.

“When I graduate, I will become a wealth management associate,” Warr says. “I love that I’m in a place with individuals who specialize in many different areas. I can walk into the building and there are people who practice law, CPAs and others who have spent their whole lives studying a certain sector of equities, and that is a fountain of knowledge. That is what makes me happy to go to work. I want to help people reach their goals, and I’m building the fundamentals to do that.”

Life will likely not slow down for Warr any time soon. He looks forward to pursuing long-term career goals at Greenleaf Trust, including becoming a business development officer and serving as a mentor to future interns. Until then, he has his sights set on graduation in fall 2020.

“I want my daughter to see me with my degree in hand, and that’s what I value more than anything,” Warr says. “She’s going to have her stumbles and falls in life. I’m still going to hold her in my lap and say, ‘Get up and go do it,’ because life is hard and how you handle it is the only thing that matters.”

“The internship was such a boost to my confidence; it has been so empowering.” - EDDIE WARR

From Capitol Hill to capital investment

MOLLY MILLERWISE MEINERS, B.B.A.'01

Crashing on the floor of her sister's apartment as she completed two internships in Washington, D.C.—that was the beginning of Molly Millerwise Meiners' career. Her goal: to work on Capitol Hill. Soon after graduation, she became press assistant and then deputy press secretary for the House Republican Conference and later served as the press secretary for the Ways and Means Committee.

Those experiences ignited a passion for public policy in Meiners, who hungered for the next opportunity to use her skills crafting messages to educate the American public about critical issues.

She then became a spokesperson for the U.S. Department of the Treasury, followed by director of public affairs. When she entered that role, the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence was about to launch as a response to post-9/11 threats, and Meiners played a crucial role in communicating about those efforts, among others.

"There were a lot of firsts in that position," says Meiners. "Shutting down terrorist networks by tracing dirty money or applying financial pressure were new areas for me and increasingly important tactics for national security. Our policy initiatives combatted terrorist organizations and had an impact on everything from preventing nuclear

"All the data supports that women who can earn their own income reinvest it in their communities and families, and that drives economic growth and freedom." - MOLLY MILLERWISE MEINERS

proliferation in Iran and North Korea, to stopping human rights abuses, to shutting down narcotics traffickers' financial webs."

Meiners eventually became the principal deputy assistant secretary for public affairs at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, helping to drive day-to-day press strategy. After two years in that role, she became chief communications officer at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, which will soon evolve into the new U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC). The new agency will be a modernized entity that brings together the capabilities of OPIC and USAID's Development Credit Authority, introducing new and innovative financial products to better bring private capital to the developing world.

"It's exciting to be able to amplify the tools available to us," says Meiners. "Through modernization and collaboration, we are able to invest in international projects that are beneficial to many countries and their

citizens while respecting each nation's sovereignty. We partner in creating jobs and investing capital in needed infrastructure—projects that mutually benefit all involved."

One compelling example of the agency's work are its projects that bring clean water to villages—and the economic impact that those projects have on families. "It is common for someone in a developing nation, often a woman in the household, to have to walk several hours to get water for the family's daily use," says Meiners. "With ready access to clean water, women are able to work outside the home. The economic impact that these projects have when multiplied is significant."

When asked to identify a critical challenge facing our world today, given her vantage point, Meiners replies quickly, "The economic empowerment of women. All the data supports that women who can earn their own income reinvest it in their communities and families, and that drives economic growth and freedom."

Stepping up **for Detroit**

FREDERICK PAUL II, B.B.A.'15

Necessity is the mother of invention. Frederick Paul II knows this all too well. His senior year at WMU found him needing cash to meet his financial commitments.

As he was cleaning his apartment, inspiration struck the sneaker enthusiast. “I had been an avid collector of Jordan sneakers since sixth grade and amassed a large collection. When I saw dozens of sneakers spread across my bedroom floor, I suddenly had an idea. I selected two pairs of my old sneakers to sell on eBay. I successfully sold both pairs in days and 25 additional pairs in the following months.” Paul’s success led him to formalize a venture, Fahrenheit 313, formerly The Heat Factory, which has now become Detroit’s hottest sneaker exchange.

Fahrenheit 313 began online, and in fall 2019, Paul opened a brick-and-mortar store on Detroit’s Avenue of Fashion. The store is a hub where sneakerheads can buy, sell and trade the hottest kicks through Fahrenheit 313’s Sneaker Swap, giving collectors access to the shoes of their dreams at affordable prices.

What started as a way for sneaker connoisseurs to unapologetically declare their love for their favorite brands soon became much more. As the business has grown, Paul’s eye has been on how he can make a difference in Detroit by providing a living wage for Detroit residents and meaningful service in the city.

“I had been an avid collector of Jordan sneakers since sixth grade and amassed a large collection. When I saw dozens of sneakers spread across my bedroom floor, I suddenly had an idea.” — FREDERICK PAUL II

“Fahrenheit 313 is planning on creating several part- and full-time positions that will offer employees opportunities to build sales and marketing skills. In addition, we have a volunteer corps that participates in charitable campaigns. Making Detroit a better place is at the heart of the company.”

One of the ways that Paul and his team give back is through their City Champs Series, where participants can enter a football, basketball or baseball tournament that benefits students. The annual proceeds provide backpacks full of supplies to students in the Detroit Public Schools as well as textbook scholarships to students attending college. And Paul has plans to challenge other businesses on the Avenue of Fashion to think creatively about how they can collaborate on philanthropic initiatives going forward.

One of the experiences that Paul has found most challenging and necessary as a business owner is talking about setbacks and disappointments. “Openly talking about my business failures and mishaps was difficult for me,” he says. Participating in Retail Boot Camp in summer of 2018 helped Paul gain many

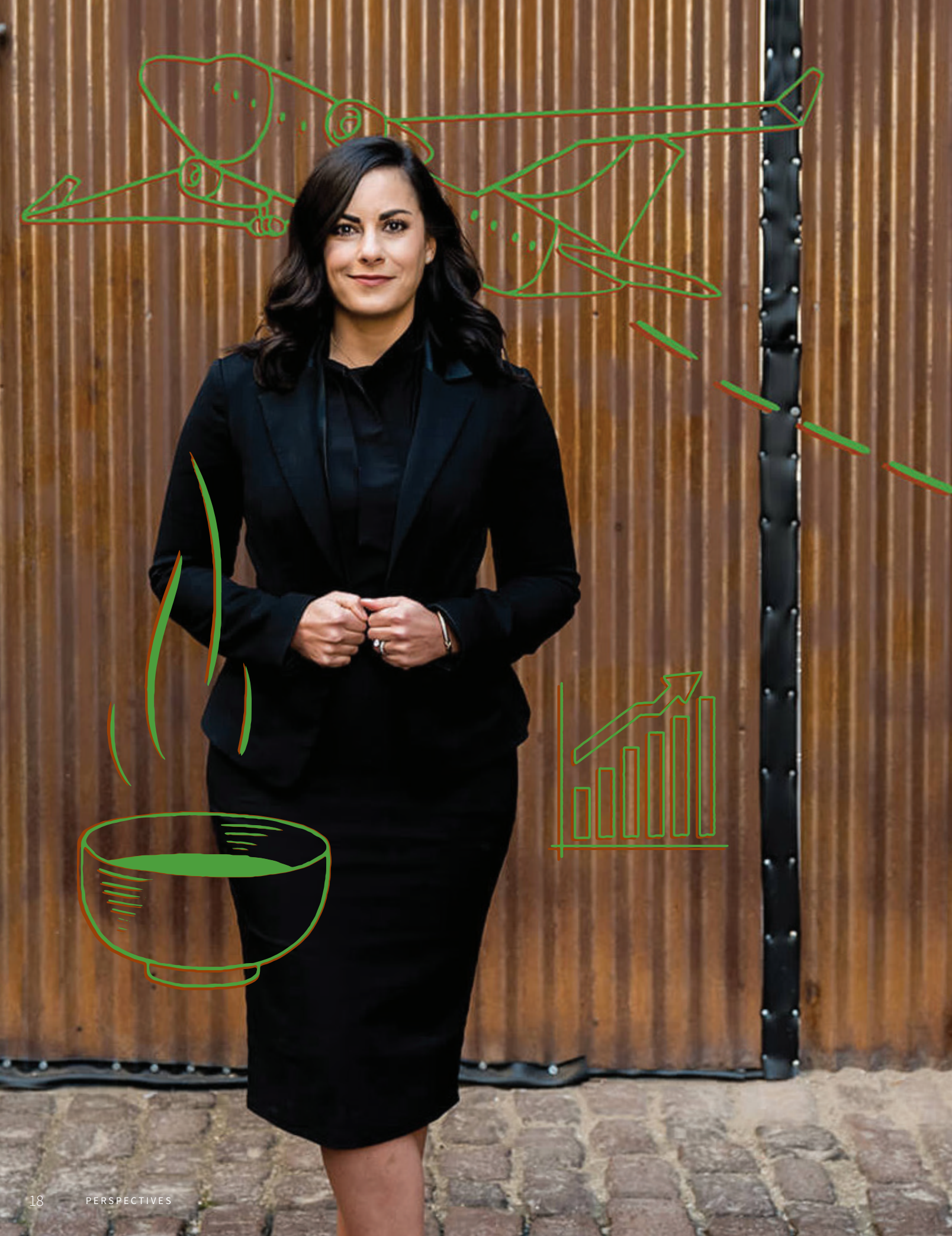
skills, including the ability to honestly assess and communicate where he could improve.

The culmination of the Retail Boot Camp was a pitch competition where the winning business would receive \$5,000.

Paul won—largely due to his newfound ability to be self-reflective, which has helped his business grow.

Though Paul’s retail sales have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, he has been able to maintain his business through small business loans and grants, as well as online sales and curbside pickup.





Leveraging opportunities

PAULINA COSTA ZYSKOWSKI, B.B.A.'11

“The best opportunities are the ones that we create for ourselves.” That’s the mantra that has guided Paulina Costa Zyskowski in her professional life. The senior account manager at Kalsec Inc.—the leading global producer of natural spice and herb flavor extracts, colors, antioxidants and advanced hop products for the food and beverage industry—is consistently ranked in the top 10% globally for performance, responsible for 12% of the company’s domestic business and 7% of the global portfolio.

Driven by her fervent passion for continued intellectual growth, Costa Zyskowski has expanded her leadership capacity throughout her career. The youngest employee to be hired into the commercial team at Kalsec, Costa Zyskowski has worked strategically with leadership to position herself for roles that benefit both the company and her professional development.

“By having a holistic understanding of the corporate strategy, and its shifts and nuances, I have found niches where my strengths are maximized and valued,” she says. “Through constant communication, I have been able take on special projects that have provided me opportunities to become a well-rounded, resilient and effective professional. Continually striving to challenge myself

“By having a holistic understanding of the corporate strategy, and its shifts and nuances, I have found niches where my strengths are maximized and valued.”

- PAULINA COSTA ZYSKOWSKI

has allowed me to take an innovative approach to building my own map to success.”

And that map to success is a world map in Costa Zyskowski’s case. Asked to support the company’s international team in onboarding three newly hired business development managers in Cambridge, she worked to guide the team members through a leadership and strategy transition.

Her goal for the assignment: tackling known morale, efficiency and effectiveness concerns that were hindering the culture within the European salesforce. Making no assumptions, Costa Zyskowski chose to live a week in the life of the business managers, going through the daily tasks and testing the support systems that were already in place. Issues with supporting roles, double entry efforts, ineffective systems and time management constraints were readily apparent. By experiencing these challenges firsthand, Costa Zyskowski was able to empathize with the needs of the European sales team.

Several of the ideas Costa Zyskowski formulated during that international assignment became part of a larger strategy to support Kalsec’s international growth.

“The most rewarding part of that experience was being able to make a positive impact on my colleagues’ professional success,” she says. “Knowing that I was able to empower our team members as they started a new chapter was one of the most satisfying experiences I’ve had in my career. I left humbled, knowing that I had received even more than I was able to give. My aspirations to continue my professional growth in management stem largely from this experience.”

Costa Zyskowski was able to embrace her skills in employee development by hiring the first team member that directly reports to her in 2019. She has assisted that new employee in surpassing her goals by 125% in the first year.

Now, as Costa Zyskowski creates opportunities for herself, she is able to do so for others as well.

Leading **the way**



Imagine courses with no textbooks and no exams, where real-life business issues are part of everyday learning. Haworth College of Business management faculty members Dr. Doug Lepisto and Dr. Derrick McIver are building just that with the new leadership and business strategy program—a highly experiential curriculum that prepares students to be leaders, strategic thinkers—and above all—problem solvers.

“The leadership and business strategy program strives to provide the best experiential learning for business students in the country,” says McIver. “Traditional notions of shareholder-only business models are becoming obsolete. And traditional notions of higher education are becoming obsolete. We aspire to set a new standard for business education and to impact as many people as possible, as deeply as possible.”

This new model for business education builds students’ resilience and confidence while differentiating the business education offered at WMU. “I have never been more confident,” says senior Megan Miller. “I used to be terrified of public speaking, but now I am presenting to CEOs and know I can excel in any presentation. I am learning to make confident decisions independently; leadership and business strategy pushes you to own your decisions and go!”

Underpinning the leadership and business strategy program is the concept of mutual benefit. “Education for mutual benefit means that all stakeholders are uplifted by anything that we pursue,” says Lepisto. That sense of a larger purpose breeds confidence in students and builds trust with community partners.

“Leadership and business strategy has given me the opportunity to be more than just what grades say,” remarks senior Kordell Smith. “It has encouraged me to try different approaches when working on business concepts. My critical thinking and analysis skills have grown tremendously. Students can create and

“Through this transformational program, I have been able to push myself beyond my perceived limitations.”

- SYLVAN BENTON

grow in this major; you have equity as a team member.”

What sorts of experiences make up this innovative curriculum?

- Large-scale consulting projects where leadership and business strategy students, alongside faculty, solve problems for executives on increasing profit and purpose.
- A course for graduate students on small business acquisition that also provides select students with capital investment from alumni to acquire and operate West Michigan companies.
- Mentor relationships with CEOs and other executives for students.
- Learning experiences focused on principles and performance, giving students career experiences from day one.

“I came to Western to find an environment to change and grow into the best version of myself,” says senior Sylvan Benton. “Through this transformational program, I have been able to push myself beyond my perceived limitations.”

Shedding limitations and setting intentional goals is something MBA alumna Anne Betts, a recent student in the business acquisition course, is targeting. “My goal is to eventually be where some of the college’s alumni have ended up—as an owner of multiple companies, able to invest in the next generation of entrepreneurs. My courses have been life-changing, and I am just getting started.”

The story continues on pages 22-27.

Leading **the way**



BOTTLING THE BRONCO SPIRIT

How do you create a purpose-driven brand that speaks to consumers and generates sales? This is the question that students in Western Michigan University's leadership and business strategy courses answered over 12 months, as they determined whether launching a cause-driven, micro-local wine in Michigan was feasible.

More than 130 students looked at every aspect of introducing the wine, researching consumer profiles and the geographic footprint for distribution, as well as what would differentiate the product. The point of differentiation was a question they worked on throughout the duration of the project. Students coined a new term, **Bronconess**, which captures the essence of how Broncos sustain their efforts when others might stop, and pursue ideas with courage and enthusiasm in the face of challenges. It came to define their efforts, and the wine itself.

Immersive consulting projects are the lynchpin of the new leadership and business strategy program.



The labels on the wine are adapted from sketches that artist Revere La Noue used in his planning for The Epic Broncos, a mural created for WMU in 2011. Here, La Noue speaks to guests at a four-course wine dinner at The Wine Loft in downtown Kalamazoo.

"Originally, launching a wine brand out of the college didn't seem real; it sounded gimmicky," says senior Jason Olinger. "My thinking quickly changed from 'this is just for a grade' to 'real lives will be impacted if this goes through.' I couldn't tell you how many people we called to get pricing on importing, shipping and handling, storing and distributing. Ten other groups of students were doing the same thing, if not more. Maybe it's

the atmosphere that our professors created or the overall project dynamic, but I have never seen so many students come together and care about a project like this."

The wine comes from Tremonte Vineyard in Chile, and there are three vintages available:

- Bronconess Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2014
- Bronconess Red Wine Blend 2015
- Bronconess Reserve White Blend 2015

The Bronconess wine brand is operated through the Haworth College of Business, with profits from the wine sales funding scholarships. To date, sales have generated more than \$25,000 in scholarships.

Visit bronconess.com to learn more about the initiative.

Leading **the way**

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE MEETS WMU INTELLIGENCE

BlueGranite, a data and analytics consulting firm based in Kalamazoo, recently partnered with the leadership and business strategy program on growth opportunities for their firm in artificial intelligence. Fifteen student teams conducted extensive primary and secondary research to deliver recommendations to the company's leadership team. Their research focused on the risks and opportunities for AI in each potential industry, given BlueGranite's business focus and partnerships.

Student teams compete as they work toward an ultimate deliverable—business solutions or recommendations for a company. In the end, the top team, identified by their classmates and Lepisto and McIver, presents its findings.

“Our goal was to gain an outside perspective on our strategic direction for AI,” says Matthew Mace, B.B.A.’98, founder and CEO of BlueGranite. “The students asked tough questions about how we might position ourselves in the AI space, together with our partner Microsoft. The emphasis student teams placed on industry-based solutions shaped a new five-year strategy for our company, including focus on adding industry experts to our team who will work side-by-side with our data platform, business intelligence, and AI specialists.”

For senior Rob Salter, the most interesting thing about this experience was it did not feel like a class. “Each day our team met, team leaders set an agenda, distributed workload, conducted evaluations and managed

everything in between. I was pleased at how supportive teams were of each other. We prided ourselves collectively on providing our client with the best recommendation possible.”

Salter recalls spending 25 hours over a weekend on the project and “being hungry to do more.”

Interestingly, Salter and other students realized that the skills they were applying—critical thinking and high-level synthesis and analysis—are just the things that technology struggles to perfect.

“I believe this is the future of higher education,” notes Salter. “Recruiters want students with business experience, and students want more value from their education. This provides a win for everyone.”

“I believe this is the future of higher education. Recruiters want students with business experience, and students want more value from their education. This provides a win for everyone.” - ROB SALTER



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



Leading the way

Progressive AE designed this concept for new learning spaces in the Haworth College of Business.

CENTER FOR PRINCIPLED LEADERSHIP AND BUSINESS STRATEGY

Many of the changes in our world come from business or are connected to business in some way, so making sure that businesses are benefiting all stakeholders is vital.

This starts with students. The Center for Principled Leadership and Business Strategy teaches students that purpose and profit can be powerfully linked through the actions and strategies of leaders. “A business’s significant economic impact is transformational when paired with wide, positive community impact,” says Lepisto. “That is why this center fills a critical need—it teaches this concept.”

The center serves as a hub for the high-impact learning experiences described in the previous pages.

In addition, the center will partner with businesses through:

- Consulting collaborations.
- Conferences focused on leading profitable businesses that are able to make a greater contribution to customers, employees, suppliers, community members and society.
- Executive education sessions on leadership and strategy.
- Research on topics such as leadership, strategy, meaningful work and leading with purpose, relevant to both academic leaders and industry.

As co-directors of the center, Lepisto and McIver seek to educate students about creating genuine value for others through business.

The center will also oversee initial redesign and continuous updating of “learning spaces of the future” in the Haworth College of Business, which will help students and West Michigan businesses collaboratively solve business problems.

“The college fosters an environment where faculty and students bring great ideas to fruition,” says Dr. Satish Deshpande, dean. “This center is a great example of the creative, strategic experimentation that is at the core of how we deliver on our promise to give our students a relevant education and provide the business expertise our community needs.”

\$6.5 MILLION INVESTMENT

The Center for Principled Leadership and Business Strategy has attracted more than \$6.5 million in donations from noted entrepreneurs and philanthropists who support the center’s mission.

The Haworth family, Greenleaf Trust Chairman William D. Johnston, the Menard family and the Charles Koch Foundation have provided the generous seed investment to establish the center and help fund its related academic activities.

“We are truly grateful to these donors for partnering with us to develop the next generation of business leaders,”

says WMU President Edward Montgomery. “Their philanthropy enables Western Michigan University to help students and business leaders harness their passions and beliefs to change the way we think about profit and purpose through new and

exciting education, research and outreach activities.”

The center held an event in late fall where donors, community partners, students and University officials celebrated its launch.





Making a difference

Alumnus establishes scholarship in honor of mentor

The Haworth College of Business family is comprised of extraordinary alumni—ones whose lives were impacted by something positive that took place at Western Michigan University. For Michael Howell, B.B.A. '73, that something just happened to be a bit of encouragement from Dr. Gale Newell, retired professor of accountancy.

It was Newell's mentorship that led Howell to pursue a degree in accountancy, which changed the trajectory of his life. Now a serial entrepreneur and CEO of Harmony Dental Partners—a company that owns and operates family dental practices in Arizona—Howell credits Newell for positioning him on the path to success. But, as is typical of most success stories, that path wasn't exactly a straight one.

An accomplished French horn player, Howell started college as a music major at Northern Michigan University. In 1967, his plans were put on hold when he was drafted during the height of the Vietnam War. He served four years with the U.S. Army in Southeast Asia, Europe and Japan before returning to the states.

Michael Howell

“Discussing future plans and opportunities with students outside the classroom is one of the most important, rewarding and enjoyable aspects of being a professor. Michael is an example of an excellent student who went on to great success in his career.”

— DR. GALE NEWELL

“I wanted to play college football and was recruited by several universities before choosing Western,” Howell says. Sadly, his football playing days were cut short by a career-ending injury. Nevertheless, he continued his education, deciding on a degree in business.

Howell excelled in his introductory business courses and had originally planned to pursue marketing as a major. “I had never thought of myself as an accountant because I wasn't very good at math, but I did very well in my first accounting class,” he says. “I had this young professor named Gale Newell, and I really liked him because he used real-life examples. Accounting is very abstract, and Dr. Newell had a knack for explaining the concepts very clearly.”

Newell's teaching made accounting “click” for Howell, but his words would go far beyond instruction in the discipline. “He said to me one day, ‘Michael, you have a gift,’” Howell says. “No one in my life had ever told me that.” Newell then proceeded to ask Howell if he had ever considered a degree in accountancy.

“I wanted to be an entrepreneur all my life, and Dr. Newell helped me see how critical accounting and finance are to business,” Howell says. “Not only did he tell me I was gifted at something, he drew out a path for me to achieve my vision.” Howell went on to build a national automotive company and was part of a team that developed the first laser in the history of dentistry.

Today, Howell dedicates much of his life to assisting the underserved. He founded a national mobile dental company, ReachOut Healthcare America, with the mission of providing dental care to the U.S. armed forces, as well as children and seniors in need. This legacy program provides dental care in over 9,000 locations in the U.S. In addition to running his dental company, Howell is on the board of directors for Catholic Charities Community Services of Phoenix, which aids more than 20,000 individuals from vulnerable populations each year. He also volunteers through a variety of national programs.

Howell's commitment to service, in addition to the influence Newell had on his life, led him to establish the Michael P. Howell and Dr. Gale Newell Accounting Scholars Fund at WMU. The endowed fund, awarding \$100,000 over five years, supports both undergraduate and graduate students, as well as tutoring in accountancy. It is intended to help students who have faced socioeconomic challenges earn degrees and enter careers in the field.

“One thing Dr. Newell taught me is how pivotal it is for students to have a mentor or advocate,” Howell says. “My hope is that this scholarship will help a larger percentage of hard-working students from a variety of backgrounds graduate with degrees in accountancy from WMU.”



Gale Newell

2020 MICHAEL P. HOWELL AND DR. GALE NEWELL ACCOUNTING SCHOLARS

Felicia Ayalew

Brandt Claire

Jerry Crowe

Brooke Gibson

Shayna Henderson

Alexis Hess

JaJuan Kemp

Monica Par

Benjanae Smith

In the Spotlight



Holly Harmon: HR impact in action

Holly Harmon has had one goal since transferring to the Haworth College of Business: to positively impact as many people and communities as possible. As a human resource management major, she believes that starts with helping businesses invest in their most critical resources—their employees.

Harmon’s transformational experience while at WMU has included:

- Participating in the Harvard Business School Summer Venture in Management Program.
- Being selected for the Forbes Under 30 Scholars program.

- Serving as vice president of professional development for the Society for Excellence in Human Resources, WMU’s chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management.
- Earning second place, as part of a team, in the state HR Games hosted by the Michigan Society for Human Resource Management.

Harmon has been accepted into Cornell University’s Master of Industrial and Labor Relations program for fall of 2020, receiving a Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies Award, a scholarship for top applicants to the program.



Digital marketers develop winning strategy

Lexi Payne, Parker Hurley and Liz Volante placed first in a digital marketing case competition and also claimed a category award for Best Research. The event featured more than 50 teams from colleges nationwide and was hosted by Purdue University Northwest. Students created a digital marketing campaign for Harbour Trust Investment Management Company that would result in \$1 million of new revenue for the company.



Accountancy student earns competitive \$10,000 scholarship

Alyssa Larner received a \$10,000 scholarship from the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board. The merit-based scholarship encourages accounting students to pursue careers in audit. Larner was selected for the scholarship based on her aptitude in accounting and auditing, and for demonstrating high ethical standards.



Food marketing students claim first place

Kyle Wade, Ali Bultynck, Samantha McGrath and Alden Wichman soared to first place against teams from 13 other universities at the 2020 National Grocers Association Student Case Competition. The business case for the competition focused on developing ways for independent grocers to make it easy for shoppers to maximize the benefits of the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program.



WMU most victorious university in marketing and sales competition's history

Sarah Obermeyer and Ryan Demas competed in the State Farm Marketing and Sales Competition at the University of Central Missouri, with Obermeyer taking top honors in the customer service role-play category. This victory brings WMU's student winnings to over \$40,000 in the past eight years of competition, making it the most successful university in the national competition's history.



Life-changing business experiences abroad

Catherine Lemus and Nijeria Peterson were selected for highly competitive Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships, worth \$2,000 each, to study overseas during the fall 2019 semester.

Catherine Lemus, a marketing major with a minor in biological sciences, spent the fall semester studying at the BI Norwegian Business School. Nijeria Peterson, a business law major with a minor in global business, studied in South Africa at the University of Cape Town. Both Lemus and Peterson describe their experiences abroad as "life changing" and "truly transformative."



Business student named Wuerffel Trophy recipient

Accountancy graduate student Jon Wassink was named a recipient of the Wuerffel Trophy, known as college football's premier award for community service. The award is presented annually to the Football Bowl Subdivision player who best combines exemplary community service with athletic and academic achievement. Named after 1996 Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Danny Wuerffel from the University of Florida, the Wuerffel Trophy has honored over 1,200 nominees since its inception in 2005.



Preparing students for a virtual world

Advanced technology is changing the face of business on a daily basis, and having a trained, adaptive workforce can make a real difference in how companies operate.

Preparing students with the experience to innovate in a technology-driven business world is a priority for the Department of Business Information Systems. Here, faculty members identify three tech trends that are transforming business, and how students will be ready to embrace those innovations head on.

Artificial intelligence

Businesses are increasingly using various forms of artificial intelligence to address company needs. Processing large amounts of data in real-time and using chatbots for customer service are just two examples. Utilizing AI for business strategy will soon become a necessary skill for new employees entering the workforce.

“Interacting with and understanding AI is critical to being competitive in the job market. Students need to know how to use it for informed decision making.” - DR. MIKE TARN

“Artificial intelligence is influencing business in every possible way,” says Dr. Mike Tarn, chair of business information systems. “Interacting with and understanding AI is critical to being competitive in the job market. Students need to know how to use it for informed decision making.”

Experiential learning helps students prepare to work with innovations in which AI might play a role, such as automation or personalization. “We focus on hands-on projects in data warehousing, company analyses, enterprise resource planning systems and more,” Tarn says.

Cloud computing

Through its vast delivery of computing services—including data storage, networking, software, analytics and intelligence—“the cloud” is making business operations faster and more innovative.

“Cloud technology is extremely agile, accessible and beneficial,” Tarn says. “A reliable cloud platform allows business to be conducted in a shared, flexible and cost effective way because it provides services rather than products.”

As recent events have shown us, business is becoming more mobile and being able to navigate various cloud platforms will be even more crucial for students.

“Working with external companies is very common in our curriculum,” Tarn says. “These experiences teach students the significance of technology in enhancing information sharing, collaboration and communication in both intra- and interorganizational settings.”

Cybersecurity

Of course, the caveat to companies becoming smarter, faster and more accessible is the risk it poses for information security. “Cybersecurity is the most important trend affecting business from a socio-technical standpoint,” says Dr. Alan Rea, professor of business information systems. “We have so many new technologies in place, yet we are not quite sure how to integrate them while still maintaining data, personnel and operational security,” he says.

“The majority of our security courses include hands-on cybersecurity labs in sandbox virtual environments, which are tools used by developers and researchers to test new software within a controlled setting. This enables students to see how attackers compromise systems in a safe virtual space, so they can learn how to better protect them.”

The digital age is here to stay

Preparing students for the virtual world means giving them the same experiences they will encounter in their careers.

“It is impossible to deliver skill-based technology content without experiential learning,” Tarn says. “The digital age is here to stay. While students must learn the concepts necessary for their majors, technology will continue to be a constant part of their future careers. We are preparing them for a virtual world where organizations, employees and devices are all connected, and information is available whenever and wherever needed.”





Celebrating Alumni and Friends

WMU Distinguished Alumni Award



ALESSANDRO P. DINELLO, B.B.A.'75
President and CEO
Flagstar Bank

College Awards



Haworth College of Business Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award

DR. PATRICIA J. DAUGHERTY, B.B.A.'80, MBA'81
Professor, Ivy Chair in Business
Iowa State University



Haworth College of Business Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award

JAY A. FISHMAN, B.B.A.'66, MBA'68
President and Founder
Jay A. Fishman, Ltd.



Haworth College of Business Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award

MICHAEL P. HOWELL, B.B.A.'73
Founder and CEO
Harmony Dental Partners



Haworth College of Business Emerging Leader Alumni Award

DAVID P. FLICKINGER, B.B.A.'09, MBA'12
CX Strategy Leader
PNC Bank



Haworth College of Business Emerging Leader Alumni Award

ELIZABETH L. GARTNER, B.B.A.'10
Program Manager,
Employee Experiences
Microsoft

Department and Program Awards



Department of Accountancy Outstanding Alumni Award

BRADLEY A. HIRSCH, B.B.A.'01
Principal
KPMG Valuation Services



Department of Business Information Systems Outstanding Alumni Award

BRENNAN P. BAYBECK, B.B.A.'92
Vice President, Security Risk Management,
Global Customer Support Services
Oracle Corporation



Department of Finance and Commercial Law Outstanding Alumni Award

GRETCHEN L. HOLLOWAY, B.B.A.'96
Senior Vice President and
Chief Financial Officer
ITC Holdings Corp.



Department of Management Outstanding Alumni Award

SHAQUANDA S. GORDON, B.B.A.'01
Vice President, North American
Human Resources
Gordon Food Service



Department of Marketing Hall of Fame

MARSHALL J. CAMPBELL, B.B.A.'72
President and CEO
Citizens First Savings Bank and
CF Bancorp (retired)



Food and Consumer Package Goods Marketing Outstanding Alumni Award

DOUG M. CYGAN, B.B.A.'86
President
Jewel-Osco



Food and Consumer Package Goods Marketing Adrian Trimpe Distinguished Service Award

LARRY PIERCE
Executive Vice President, Strategic Initiatives
SpartanNash



WMU ROTC Wall of Fame Award

COL ALAN D. MEYER, B.A.'89
U.S. Army Reserve (retired)
Associate Professor of History
Auburn University

Faculty Impact

WMU researchers study food consumption behavior during COVID-19 pandemic



Two Western Michigan University marketing researchers are at the forefront of understanding how a pandemic like the novel coronavirus affects food consumption behavior.

Dr. Ann Veeck, professor and acting chair in the Department of Marketing, and **Dr. Hu Xie**, assistant professor of marketing, conducted a survey in China from Feb. 15 to Feb. 23, as the COVID-19 virus was rapidly spreading in several regions. With government guidance that people should leave their homes as little as possible, Veeck and Xie, who was the lead researcher

on the project, examined food shopping, preparation and consumption behavior, and the coping mechanisms people use during a widespread, deadly epidemic.

Initial findings

- People increased online ordering and delivery of food, with some respondents reporting that they ordered food online for the first time.
- Preferred sources for online delivery of food included a combination of local, national and international providers. Some respondents reported that the largest online retailers had shortages of important products. Some local entrepreneurs filled those gaps.
- People who continued leaving their homes to buy food and household products often increased time between trips and bought large orders of food at one time.
- 58.6% of households reported stocking up on food and beverages. Frequently noted choices were rice, flour, instant noodles, frozen dumplings and bottled water.

- Many people reported increasing the healthiness of their diet to increase immunity. Interestingly, people who perceived that they had control over their health claimed to be increasing their consumption of healthy foods, while people who felt health is largely due to luck reported increasing the consumption of junk food, snacks and alcohol.

Implications

- The types of goods that are in demand are largely predictable—pasta, canned and frozen foods, cleaning products and paper goods. Manufacturers should have plans in place to increase production and supply of these goods in emergencies.
- Retailers should rearrange their stores to allow people to quickly select the goods that are most in demand and then pay and leave quickly to decrease human contact.
- Retailers, both local and international, should be prepared to create and communicate the availability of flexible delivery systems that can accommodate dynamic local situations.

“With pandemics like this one, there are severe health, economic and social consequences,” says Veeck. “Many experts believe that similar pandemics are inevitable in the future. Long-term, the results from the study have the potential to assist public policy officials and health authorities, as well as manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers in anticipating how consumers will react in epidemics.”

“We hope our ongoing research will aid decision makers in understanding and addressing critical needs.”

For many, food is not only necessary for survival but also a source of comfort. Xie looks forward to exploring that dimension in future research. “This study may shed light on the psychological motivations for food consumption during an epidemic and what coping strategies best allow consumers to adapt to new conditions in a crisis.



Dr. Laurel Ofstein’s research shows how women entrepreneurs use grit and resilience to achieve profitable growth

More women are starting businesses than ever before. Between 2007 and 2018, the number of women-owned businesses grew by 58%—nearly five times the national average—yet, just 2.2% of all venture capital in the U.S. goes to companies founded solely by women.

Beyond access to funding, there is no shortage of challenges women entrepreneurs face. But Dr. Laurel Ofstein, associate professor of management, has found that—regardless of

“This is not just a story about barriers. The women in this study persevered and adapted in spite of the challenges they encountered.” - DR. LAUREL OFSTEIN

obstacles—female founders use grit, resilience and leadership to achieve profitable growth.

Ofstein contributed to a study led by Dr. Lakshmi Balachandra of Babson College that revealed three key themes around the hurdles women face in growing their businesses: market misperceptions, network exclusion and managing expansion with underfunding.

“We found that there are gender-based impediments for women entrepreneurs in growing their businesses, even after significant success (defined in this study as \$5 million in annual revenue) has been achieved,” Ofstein says. She adds that commitment to long term growth is critical, even when that strains existing resources.

The authors concluded the study by offering a number of actionable strategies, such as developing strong workplace cultures, buying from and funding women-owned businesses and creating new, more inclusive networks, which can lead to long-term success for women entrepreneurs.

Dr. KC Chen earns second prestigious Fulbright award

For an impressive second time, Dr. Kuanchin (KC) Chen, professor of business information systems, co-director of the Center for Business Analytics and John W. Snyder faculty fellow, has earned a highly competitive Fulbright Specialist Award from the U.S. Department of State. The honor recognizes Chen’s achievements both nationally and internationally.

With his award, Chen will complete a project at Warsaw University of Life Sciences in Poland that aims to exchange research experiences and establish partnerships.

“I am very humbled to join my fellow awardees, some of whom are also recipients of the Nobel Prize, Pulitzer Prize and other prestigious honors,” Chen says. “This project will allow me to share my research, teaching and curriculum design experience in analytics and project management, which will help build expertise at the host institution.”

Considered the world’s premier international educational exchange program, Fulbright is devoted to increasing mutual understanding between the United States and other countries.



Chen has championed the development of one of the nation’s 28 undergraduate business analytics programs at the Haworth College of Business. He has also received more than 10 research and teaching awards from multiple organizations in his discipline, scholarly journals, WMU and several other institutions. Chen’s work has been widely cited by authors from more than 60 disciplines, including business, engineering and science.



A safe space for all students

In an effort to build supportive communities focused on professional and personal success, Dr. Ola Smith, chair of the Department of Accountancy, helped students reestablish the WMU National Association of Black Accountants chapter. Smith herself has been involved with NABA since she was an accounting student. A chapter had been active on WMU's campus in the past.

That journey is critical.

"The opportunity gap is real," says Bailey. "I am personally committed to advocating for diversity and inclusion in the accounting field. Studies have shown that the percentage of African Americans in the accounting field has steadily declined. Having an active NABA chapter is an effective way to help bridge the gap within our profession."

Senior Spencer Robertson, president of the renewed NABA chapter, had a vision for the organization as one that would challenge students in the best possible ways. "We are currently in the growth stage," says Robertson. "Getting the chapter back up and running has come with its fair share of challenges; however, the rewards are worth it."

The original WMU NABA chapter was started in 1987 by Kevin Carter, B.B.A.'89 and the late Michael Westbrook.

This fall, 19 members attended NABA's Regional Conference, participating in professional development sessions, mock interviews, a career expo and interviews for internships and full-time opportunities. Many students walked away with full-time job offers.

"The NABA regional conference was one of the best experiences I have had through the Haworth College of Business," says senior Andrew Miller. "Every person was approachable. There was no sense of competition or elitism. The concept of diversity was truly embraced. I never felt out of place."

Junior and NABA Secretary Kayce-Ann White notes, "The connections I have made at NABA meetings through different social events increased my self-esteem and confidence level."

And that increased sense of confidence translates to positive student outcomes.



Accomplished. Agile. Authentic.

The Haworth College of Business is proud to present its 2020 edition of The 30, a digital publication that recognizes emerging business leaders—both students and alumni—who are providing thought leadership and innovative perspectives in the business world.

Visit the publication at: wmich.edu/businessnews/the30/

Robertson, Bailey, White and Miller

"For me, NABA is critical to promoting accountancy and finance to a new generation of African American students and to retaining talented students in our discipline," says Smith.

By offering experiential learning opportunities, academic support, and a safe space for all students, the organization is having an important impact in the college.

"NABA creates a family. We are there for each other throughout the entire professional journey," says senior and NABA treasurer Christopher Bailey.



Be inspired

The Haworth College of Business recently installed a new display in the lower level of Schneider Hall. The Hall of Achievement and Inspiration recognizes alumni, faculty and staff award recipients. Interspersed between the recognition plaques are a selection of guiding principles that award recipients wanted to share with current students.