



11-2011

HaworthNews (11/2011)

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WMU ScholarWorks Citation

Western Michigan University, "HaworthNews (11/2011)" (2011). *Haworth College of Business News and Magazine*. Paper 31.
http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/business_news/31

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Trees are the treasures at Timberly

For over 67 years, Timberly Tree Farm, just a few miles from Sturgis, Mich., has been the site where many area residents shop for their live trees for the holidays.

David Locey is no exception, and he has many fond memories of taking his family to the farm since his children were born.

The scent of fresh pine from the wreaths and roping fills the shop along with all kinds of holiday trimmings and décor from garland and ornaments to holiday figurines. Guests can come in from the cold to enjoy hot cider, and children can visit with Santa during special times throughout the holiday season.

Today, Locey, a 1980 accountancy graduate of the Haworth College of Business, and his wife, Cherie, are the owners of the 100-acre farm. Perhaps his love for farming, yard work, gardening and the great outdoors is what inspired him to move across the street from his Grey Lake home and purchase the farm in 1994 when the owner retired.

With a passion to learn all he could about tree farming, Locey tackled the learning curve of working the farm. “I had mentors and nearby friends and farmers who were able to help guide me through the first couple of years,” says Locey, adding that the previous owner was more than willing to offer and share his knowledge and expertise.

Making numerous improvements and changes to the farm and business throughout the years, the Loceys take pride in all they have accomplished. At one time the farm was a working dairy farm, so they found themselves tearing out the milking stations and a wall to make way for what is the gift shop today. Another point of pride is the red pine plank floorboards in the shop. The planks were recently cut and planed from the 60-year-old trees that originally stood on the east side of the barn.

Timberly Tree Farm is one of the largest locally owned tree farms in the area, out-surviving several competitor farms that are no longer in business. “Between the main farm and three off-site farms, we have over 50,000 trees,” says Locey, who expects to

sell about 2,500 this season through retail; and he has already sold over 1,500 trees to Alpena, Mich., and Orlando, Fla., on the wholesale side of his business.

We start cutting in early- to mid-November and receive the most requests for firs ... Fraser Firs, Douglas Firs, Concolor Firs and Balsam Firs,” says Locey, adding that the previous owner had sold mostly White pines and Scotch pines.”

Locey especially enjoys talking with the guests and their families who visit the farm this time of year to pick out their trees, wreaths and garland needs along with holiday ornaments and treasures from the gift shop. He also participates in community projects including a wreath fundraiser for Sturgis High School students and service projects for the local Boy Scout troops.

The maintenance involved in a tree farm does not just mean extra hours through the holidays. “There is a lot of shearing and shaping taking place to keep the cone shape of the trees,” says Locey. “Although the work is now hired out, it took a team of three to four people a lot of long hours over three weeks in the heat of June to shape up 24,000 trees.” Other challenges include spraying to protect the trees against infestation.

Today, in addition to local customers, the farm also receives calls and orders for shipping throughout the country. The Web site for Timberly Tree Farm is: www.timberlytreefarm.com .

David F. Locey — Just a small town boy

Locey grew up on a farm in the small, rural town of Sugar Grove, Penn., and has always loved the great outdoors. He was in high school when he moved to Sturgis as a result of his father’s work at a telephone company when the company was in the process of switching over to a dial system.

After high school, Locey worked as a meat cutter before holding accounting, auditing and consulting positions. He soon realized that if he wanted to be successful in accounting, he would need to earn a degree and pass the certified public accountant exam.

A self-described “senior citizen student” in that he was married with four children, who were in middle school, Locey enrolled in classes, first at Glen Oaks Community College and then completed his degree at WMU. He was a fast-track student who has lots of memories of attending classes in North Hall on East Campus. He finished in under three years, graduating in 1980, and immediately worked to obtain his CPA.

It was not long before he made the plunge to go out on his own and says it has been a great career. Today, he still heads up David F. Locey, CPA, in Sturgis. The firm does personal and business tax return preparation, tax resolution work, record keeping for businesses, tax planning and profit planning. He has a staff of six full-time employees including some who have worked with him for over 15 years.

In true community spirit, Locey has always believed in giving back to the community that has supported him throughout the years. He has served on the board of trustees at Glen Oaks Community College, and he currently serves on the Sturgis Hospital Board and is a member of the Sturgis Kiwanis Club.

Further information about David F. Locey, CPA can be found on [Facebook](#).

Top stories of 2011

2011 has been a great year to be a Bronco! Follow the links below on Haworth Headline news releases of this past year to stay tuned on news and activities of the College.

March 2011

Industry executives highlight WMU Food Marketing Conference — A record crowd of over 500 people including students, faculty, alumni, guests and leaders in the food industry attended the 46th annual Food Marketing Conference, titled “Leading in a Time of Consumer and Economic Change” in March.

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/03/063.shtml>

April 2011

Two big wins for WMU! Student team wins national ITERA competition; TIM program receives Best Program Award in the nation!

<http://hcobwmu.blogspot.com/search?q=TIM+receives+best+program+award>

Two of 10 national Richter Scholarships go to WMU students

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/04/072.html>

May 2011

WMU team places fourth in national marketing competition

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/05/047.html>

June 2011

North America-Asia relations is focus of WMU conference

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/06/020.html>

Michigan SBTDC recognizes Davis as outstanding director in Michigan!

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/06/062.html>

WMU's Integrated Supply Management program ranks 12th among nation's top programs

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/06/064.html>

July 2011

WMU Sales and Business Marketing program ranks in top 50

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/07/021.html>

WMU's Haworth College of Business names associate deans

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/07/018.html>

WMU's HR management program is one of top 15 percent among AACSB schools certified by SHRM

<http://hcobwmu.blogspot.com/2011/07/wmus-hr-management-program-is.html>

August 2011

Haworth College of Business welcomes new MBA outreach and recruitment directors

<http://hcobwmu.blogspot.com/search?q=two+new+outreach+directors>

October 2011

ICHITA Conference to focus on relationships, explore new health care IT offerings at international conference at WMU

<http://hcobwmu.blogspot.com/search?q=conference+to+focus+on+relationships>

Haworth College of Business to honor alumni and friends

<http://www.wmich.edu/business/wordpress/2011/09/college-welcomes-prestigious-group-for-awards-ceremony/>

WMU student is recipient of national accounting scholarship

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/10/077.html>

Students deliver top performance at national sales competition

<http://www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/2011/11/086.html>

Scott Mutchler, MBA '07 – From Managing the Classroom to Managing Business Intelligence and Application Development

Scott Mutchler, MBA '07, took his career from high school math teacher, to systems administrator, to the manager of the business intelligence and application development team for the marketplace division of Gordon Food Service with the help of the MBA he earned at the Haworth College of Business. He started at GFS 16 years ago and has been climbing the ladder ever since, working in his current position for over two years.

He always planned on working towards an advanced degree; After starting a family and getting comfortable with his job at GFS, Mutchler began pursuing his MBA in 2003. A significant benefit he took from the program was receiving training in all areas of business which allowed him to understand different departments of a company, converse with people in those departments and truly understand their needs. He notes, “That is a big deal in software development . . . making sure that what we deliver is on target with the needs of our internal or external customers.”

The program has also taught him the difference between “business speak” and “tech speak” and when to switch back and forth, an important skill in any technical field.

In addition, he appreciated the fact that Haworth College of Business MBA faculty members truly understand their students, who are mainly working professionals. The program’s flexibility in scheduling gave him the opportunity to achieve his dream while maintaining his busy work schedule. And, open-minded classroom discussions allowed Mutchler to learn not only from his professors but also from classmates with impressive and insightful work experiences as well.

Mutchler credits the Haworth College of Business for teaching essential skills and practices needed in the workplace, and for helping him grow professionally and personally.

“I took something of value from each professor and class,” says Mutchler. “One of my guiding principles now is to pass that along, to invest in people and help them grow as they are ready. Pay it forward, you might say.”

He finds joy and meaning in being a mentor and seeing growth in his team, making his work at Gordon Food Service very rewarding.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT WMU'S MBA PROGRAM.](#)

[GORDON FOOD SERVICE](#)

Conference focuses on relationships and health information technology as key to quality health care

Over 200 health care professionals, consumers, educators, researchers, IT professionals and students gathered for the first International Conference on Health Information Technology Advancement (ICHITA-2011) at the Fetzer Center in October.

“The event drew together the right mix of people to tackle some of the emerging issues in health care.” says CHITA Director Dr. Bernard Han. “We explored multifaceted solutions for the consumer, health care provider and information technology professional in the health care space that can be augmented by health information technology.”

“While this is the first international conference, the warm turnout with HIT professionals from six states and three countries reaffirms our belief that health care deserves more attention from both the academics and the community,” says Han. “In fact, we have received many valuable comments and suggestions from the participants. Dr. Sharie Falan, associate director of WMU-CHITA, and I will carefully go through the conference survey results. Most likely, the two immediate tasks we expect to focus on are the implementation of a proposed academic major, Health Informatics and Information Management, and the acquisition of research grants that will promote innovative use of HIT for better health care practice and the training and retooling of displaced workforce.”

Co-hosted by the WMU Center for Health Information Technology Advancement and the Relationship-Centered Care Network of Southwest Michigan, the event shared information about critical issues and opportunities in health care. The conference focused on resolving health issues through relationship-centered care and the infusion of health information technologies.

The day-long conference featured internationally known scholars and practitioners, including Dr. Nancy Ridenour, dean and professor, University of New Mexico College of Nursing; Dr. Joseph Tan, Wayne C. Fox chair in eBusiness innovation, professor of eHealth informatics, Degroote School of Business, McMaster University; and Pamela Hash, director, clinical education and professional development, Bon Secours Health System, Inc.

Archer to share insights during distinguished speaker event

KALAMAZOO—Former Detroit Mayor Dennis W. Archer, BS '65, who is at the intersection of law, business, education and public policy, will be featured in the next Distinguished Speaker Series talk sponsored by Western Michigan University's Haworth College of Business.

Archer, chairman and CEO of Dennis W. Archer PLLC in Detroit and chair of the WMU Board of Trustees, will speak on "Education and Leadership + Respect for Ethics and Diversity = A Successful Global Competitor" at 5 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 17, in Schneider Hall. A question-and-answer period and reception will follow. Those planning to attend should register by Friday, Nov. 11.

Archer is a 1965 alumnus of WMU and chairman emeritus of Dickinson Wright PLLC, a Detroit-based law firm with more than 270 attorneys, and sits on the corporate boards of Johnson Controls Inc., Compuware Corp. and Masco Corp. He served as a Michigan Supreme Court justice from 1985 to 1990 and in his final year on the bench, was named the most respected judge in Michigan by Michigan Lawyers Weekly.

In addition, Archer served as mayor of Detroit from 1994 to 2001, earning national and international respect for his success in changing the city's image and direction, and was a resident fellow at the Institute of Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2010.

His background also includes terms as president of the American Bar Association, president of the State Bar of Michigan, president of the National League of Cities, and chair of the Board of Directors of the Detroit Regional Chamber. During his early career, Archer worked as a trial lawyer and a partner in several Detroit law firms and was an associate professor at the Detroit College of Law and adjunct professor at Wayne State University Law School.

To register for Dennis Archer's talk or obtain more information, contact WMU's Shawna Cassada at shawna.cassada@wmich.edu or (269) 387-6059.

Previous Distinguished Speaker Series presentations are available for viewing on the [Haworth College of Business website](#).

Cisco Networking Academy offers “must have” computer networking certification

Students are now gaining valuable computer networking fundamentals, theory and concepts to better prepare them for entry-level and advanced positions in computer networking through [WMU's Cisco Networking Academy](#).

Established last fall, the academy, emphasizes practical application of knowledge and the development of career skills to help students prepare for the growing number of computer networking positions across a range of industries.

The program, which has over 15 students enrolled, provides the Cisco Certified Network Associate curriculum and in the future the program will include curriculums for the Cisco Certified Design Associate and the CCNA Security. The academy is hosted by the Department of Business Information Systems in the Haworth College of Business.

“WMU's Cisco Networking Academy classes rank among the hardest, most time consuming and yet are the best classes I've taken at Western, which is why I've taken four of them!” says Nikolette Huang Rivera, a senior majoring in electronic business design who is taking the CCNA curriculum. She offers the following advice for those interested in the program, “Be prepared to study a lot and learn a ton of information, because graduating with a Cisco certification will open up a lot of opportunities and is worth all of the hard work.”

Over the past year, five students completed the first set of classes in the CCNA curriculum and are enrolled in the final coursework. One of the students from the group has graduated, passed the exam and received his CCNA certification.

Ten students are in the process of completing the first set of classes.

Following the coursework, students will undergo an intensive boot camp to review the entire curriculum in preparation for the CCNA exam.

“By including the CCNA curriculum into our computer networking classes, our students learn computer networking concepts and then practice these concepts by using both real Cisco networking devices and Cisco simulation software,” says Dr. Pairin Katerattanakul, associate professor of business information systems who is directing the academy. “These hands-on experiences will greatly benefit and help our students pass the CCNA exam and earn certification. CCNA certification is a well-recognized certification in the computer networking industry worldwide.”

Chen receives Fulbright to assess opportunities for a new business analysis specialty at university in Taiwan

A business information systems professor will be traveling to a university in Chia-yi, Taiwan, for three weeks in January 2012 as part of a recent Fulbright Specialist grant to assess curriculum opportunities for the host institution to stay ahead of the competition in higher education. This project is part of Chen’s semester-long sabbatical research and service activities

Dr. Kuanchin Chen, associate professor of business information systems, has been awarded the Fulbright Specialist status and a Fulbright grant to guide the business administration faculty at National Chung Cheng University in Taiwan in developing a specialty in business analysis through lectures, research and instruction.

“The university currently offers a powerful Information Management program and its IM faculty research is ranked third among more than 180 universities and colleges in Taiwan,” says Chen. “The business analysis focus is expected to add great value to the university, which already offers bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degree programs in information management.

“There are three key components to the project,” says Chen. “After reviewing and assessing the regional/national competition, strategic directions, infrastructure and

resources to ensure the concept is a good fit, I will work with faculty at the university to develop faculty expertise in business analysis through training and sharing of research experience. This lays some basic ground work for developing the specialty in the faculty and curriculum based on the most recent international standard developed by the International Institute of Business Analysis. The third component will center on collaboration as we develop opportunities to connect faculty and students at CCU with faculty and students at Western.”

Chen hopes to build relationships with the faculty at CCU so that they may partner on research projects or instructional collaborations on joint projects such as forming a virtual team through the use of technology.

“This is a great way to incorporate an international component into the curriculum at both institutions,” says Chen. “One of the biggest challenges will be the time zones.”

Chen expects the relationship between the two universities will bridge programs such as student exchange visits, visiting scholars and other opportunities for students.

In 2007, Chen spent the summer as a joint-assignment research professor at National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan under a government grant to work with the faculty on research. The grant was awarded to five reputable universities to foster cross pollination of research experience with international universities. He also received a government grant from the National Science Council (similar to the National Science Foundation in the U.S.) in 2009 to give research talks at several universities.

Chen earned his master’s degree from the University of Colorado in 1994 and his doctoral degree from Cleveland State University in 1999. Before joining the WMU faculty, he taught at Dakota State University and Cleveland State and worked as a software engineer. He has been at WMU since 2001. In December, he will be leading the International Chinese Information Systems Association as president.

Bushels of Business

When you walk into Gull Meadow Farms market in Richland, Mich, you smell the scent of freshly baked donuts combined with the aromas of sweet and spicy apple varieties, picked just feet away from the entrance of the farm market. This business is a little slice of heaven in Southwest Michigan for the eight weeks it is open every fall (and for a little slice of deliciousness try their homemade apple pies).

Managing the farm is Haworth College of Business alumnus, Justin Wendzel, who graduated in 2005 with a sales and business marketing degree. Wendzel’s parents own

the farm; and though he did not originally plan to come “back home” to make his permanent career within the family business, he and his parents quickly realized that his people skills and business background were just what the rapidly growing organization needed.

Gull Meadow Farms started as a roadside picnic stand where then hobby farmer, Dave Wendzel, could sell his produce to the public. “My dad started the business while working full-time at General Motors. He has a degree in horticulture from Michigan State University, and he has always farmed. Eventually, we added a pavilion for weather protection. And then in the 1990s, Pumpkin Lane in Augusta came up for sale when the owners retired; my family decided to buy the business and inherited Pumpkin Lane’s customers who came to pick their pumpkins every year. That, along with the closing of another local orchard with a loyal following, caused our business to boom right around the early 2000s, increasing our customer base by 400 per cent in just five years,” says Wendzel.

Annually, Gull Meadow Farms welcomes over 50,000 visitors during the eight weeks they are open each autumn!

And Wendzel’s sales background has come in handy in an unexpected way, “I find that my sales education is very helpful in managing our staff. We have over 100 seasonal employees and about half are new each year. Knowing people’s personalities, their approach to problem solving and their motivations is very helpful in managing our organization in an effective way,” he says.

Staffing is the number one challenge in running his business Wendzel notes, “When you bring on a number of new employees each season and have to educate them quickly about the organization, it is a challenge.” Additionally, Wendzel says that it is challenging with a seasonal business to determine what are the best investments, “Do you invest in an extra wagon for rides even though you might only need it four or five times per season or do you put your investment elsewhere? Balancing for your best return on investment can be difficult, especially when you are trying something new.”

Besides bushels of apples, the farm offers “wagonloads” of family-friendly activities, including hayrides, mini zip lines, jumping pillows, mini train rides, apple cannons, and this year even boasted a Bronco corn maze! “Our goal is to have people smile and keep coming back. We are planning to add even more activities in the coming years in which the whole family – all ages – can participate,” Wendzel says.

As we near Thanksgiving, Wendzel says that he is thankful for a very long list of things, “I have an awesome wife who is almost a single mom for two months while the farm is at its peak busy season, and she is amazingly supportive. We have loyal

customers who come here year after year and provide wonderful word-of-mouth advertising. I get to work with family, and we all get along! I have a degree from WMU that provides as much bang for your buck in sales and business marketing as you are ever going to get. And, at the age that I am, I am able to be an integral part of a business where I can see the positive impact of my work, and that is something that I have wanted forever. I feel very fortunate.”

Vital Facts

Season: September through the Wednesday before Thanksgiving

Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Must Trys: If you haven’t tried the donuts, apple butter or award-winning cider, you are missing out!

Look For: Next year, pig races are being added to the list of family-friendly activities that all ages can enjoy.

How has the recession impacted your business? “I would never say the recession is good, but I will say that many people are looking for local day trips closer to home, and we are seeing a lot of “local tourists.” For us, once people come to the farm, they keep coming back, so we hope to gain those people as regular customers in the future when the economy recovers.”

Read more at [MyWMU, Home Grown Success](#)

Read more at [MyWMU, Don’t Miss This](#)

Read more at [Official Website of Gull Meadow Farms](#)

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