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October 2018 Newsletter

Haworth College of Business

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Haworth College of Business, "October 2018 Newsletter" (2018). *Haworth College of Business News*. 97.
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/business_news/97

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October 2018 Newsletter

OCTOBER 2018 NEWSLETTER



Celebrating Homecoming

The college recently celebrated Homecoming with the alumni and friends award ceremony, pancake breakfast and activity tent. Check out photos from the events and tag yourself or share the photos!

[View the photo album.](#)



Building success

After moving to the United States and completing three internships while studying integrated supply management, Benjamin Etshim, B.B.A.'18, found success in his job at Marathon Petroleum.

[Read Etshim's story.](#)



Creating mentorship opportunities

Two WMU human resource management alumnae decided to bridge the gap between the student and professional experience and created a mentorship program designed to help students interested in HR find their place in the industry.

[Read more about the mentorship program.](#)



Student receives prestigious scholarship

Meriah Putnam, integrated supply management student at Western Michigan University, has been awarded the prestigious Transportation Club of Detroit scholarship for 2018. This marks the sixth consecutive year that a WMU student has won this award.

[Read more about Putnam and the scholarship.](#)



Robert S. Kaiser Sales, Negotiation and Leadership Lab opens to students

The newly renovated lab is open to students and will be celebrated with a grand opening ceremony an open house on Friday, Nov. 2.

[Read more about the lab and Kaiser.](#)



Starting Gate celebrates fifth anniversary

Starting Gate, Western Michigan University's student business accelerator, offers valuable resources to students as they develop their startups. This year the accelerator celebrated its fifth year of operation.

[Read more about Starting Gate.](#)

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How Benjamin Etshim built his success



Benjamin Etshim, B.B.A. '18, was offered a job at Marathon Petroleum as a global procurement asset management contracts representative before graduation. Five years prior, he had moved to the United States from the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a plan to pursue an education. To Etshim, his success is the result of dedication, determination and faith. His path was not an easy one, but he is proud of where he is today.

HARD WORK, PERSISTENCE AND DISCIPLINE

Before moving to the United States, Etshim studied law and political science in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. With none of his credits transferring, he came to the United States with a clean slate. In order to pay for his education, he had to work multiple jobs. While attending Kalamazoo Valley Community College full-time, he worked several jobs to support himself.

THE HAWORTH COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

After graduating with an associate's degree in business administration, he transferred to Western Michigan University. During his time in the Haworth College of Business, Etshim had three internships. His first internship was with Eaton Corporation as a sales inventory operations planning intern in summer 2016. He secured his second internship as a global procurement intern with Marathon Petroleum after meeting a recruiter at the Western Michigan University ISM Career Night. This internship led to his current position with Marathon Petroleum. Etshim also had an internship with Depatie Fluid Power, a family owned business in the Kalamazoo area.

Etshim chose the Haworth College of Business because of the reputation of the programs, specifically the ISM program, and the dedication of the faculty and staff. He found that they were “incredibly supportive and ready to move mountains to help their students succeed, which is not something you see every day.”

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

His college experience not only helped him gain the knowledge needed in the professional world, but also helped prepare him to embrace all aspects of life. Etshim says, “The biggest lesson I have learned in business is that not everything will be perfect. Mistakes are inevitable. It is important to own them and learn from them.” Another significant lesson he learned is that the path to success is made by building bridges, not walls. Solid relationships with a diverse group of people are essential in order to grow.

A focus on connections



Cekola and Galarneau at a Kalamazoo Human Resource Management Association meeting.

For students, there is power in making connections. Making a connection can help them find their dream job or internship, move up in a company or even decide if they've found their perfect major.

For two Haworth College of Business alumnae, the focus was on connections when they decided to start a mentoring organization in spring of 2018.

Lindsay Cekola, B.B.A.'13, and Kaity Galarneau, B.B.A.'14, are both human resource professionals working in the Kalamazoo area. As members of the Kalamazoo Human Resource Management Association and Haworth College of Business graduates, they wanted to offer an opportunity for WMU students to connect with HR professionals, providing an opportunity beneficial for all involved.

As Cekola and Galarneau developed the mentoring program, they paired up an HR professional in the KHRMA organization with a student interested in participating, giving students the chance to discuss their plans for the future, explore different areas of human resources and learn about how their mentor shaped his or her own career.

Students in the mentoring program also have the opportunity to attend KHRMA events at no cost, giving them even more networking opportunities and access to professional connections that will come in handy when they begin their job search.

"Our hope is that the students will gain knowledge and connections during this experience that will allow them to be more successful as they begin their careers," says Cekola. We also want students to have a better understanding of which area of human resources really interests them."

The response has been positive. After the first year of facilitating the program, they've reviewed feedback of both the students and the mentors to see what can be changed to make the program even more successful. Their goal is to keep growing the program and to assist WMU students in making choices on where they best fit in the HR field.

Part of their desire to give back comes from their own experiences as human resource management majors at the Haworth College of Business. Both cite positive relationships with professors and utilizing resources within the college as part of their experience and urge current students to make these connections both in and out of the college.

"There are so many opportunities to learn and grow at the Haworth College of Business," says Galarneau. "Taking advantage of all of the opportunities provided by your professors and by

resources within the college such as the career center will help you be the best professional you can be.”

Cekola agrees, “If you have the desire to be successful, WMU has the resources to help you with your goals; you just need to utilize them.”

Interested in finding your mentor and being a part of the Kalamazoo Human Resource Management Association?

Learn more about the program and how you can get involved by connecting Cekola at lindsaycekola@yahoo.com, or Galarneau at kaitlin.galarneau@consumerscu.org.

ISM student wins \$6,000 scholarship

CONTACT: RACHEL TRAVERS
SEPTEMBER 17, 2018 | WMU NEWS



Putnam

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—**Meriah Putnam**, integrated supply management student at Western Michigan University, has been awarded the prestigious Transportation Club of Detroit scholarship for 2018. This annual award is given to top-performing students in the fields of transportation, traffic management and supply chain. This marks the sixth consecutive year that a WMU student has won this award.

The \$6,000 scholarship recognizes Putnam's scholastic achievements and exemplary character. She will formally receive her award at the Transportation Club of Detroit's 35th annual scholarship awards celebration dinner in October where a total of \$25,000 will be awarded to some of Michigan's top logistics and supply management students.

"She is exceptionally hardworking and has had two very successful internships with Whirlpool and General Motors," says **Dr. Bret Wagner**, associate professor of management. "She is an outstanding student and very much deserving of this honor."

Her dedication to go above and beyond to achieve success in her field has set her apart, adds **Dr. Sime Curkovic**, professor of management.

"Putnam's maturity and generosity commands respect. People gravitate toward her because she puts others ahead of herself and brings out the best in her peers," he says. "She has proven herself to be a hardworking and dedicated student. I know that she will go on to have a thriving career."

MERIAH PUTNAM

Putnam chose integrated supply management because she wanted to be a part of something bigger than herself. She recognized that supply chain touches all aspects of business and is integral for success.

As a first-generation college student who is paying for college on her own, Putnam relies on loans and scholarships to receive her education.

"I knew that if I got the Transportation Club of Detroit scholarship, I would be able to study abroad in the Netherlands, and a huge financial burden would be lifted from my shoulders," she says. "When I found out I won, I was in shock. I am just so grateful that the scholarship committee saw something special in me. The scholarship truly means the world to me."

Putnam's hard work has paid off in other aspects of her life. She anticipates graduating spring 2019 and has already accepted a full-time position with General Motors.

"Without WMU, I would not be where I am today," she says. "My professors and mentors at WMU have helped lead to my success by believing in me and pushing me to be my absolute best."

ABOUT THE ISM PROGRAM

WMU's integrated supply management program has been recognized nationally by several organizations for its leadership in preparing students for careers in supply chain management. The program has recently been ranked No. 8 by Gartner's list of Top U.S. Supply Chain Undergraduate Programs. The integrated supply management curriculum emphasizes supply chain logistics, information technology, continuous improvement and engineering and requires students to acquire actual business experience through internships and classroom projects.

[Learn more about WMU's integrated supply management program.](#)

For more information, contact **Stacey Markin**, Haworth College of Business, at stacey.markin@wmich.edu or (269) 387-6936.

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Robert S. Kaiser Sales, Negotiation and Leadership Lab opens to students

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OCTOBER 8, 2018 | WMU NEWS



Robert Kaiser

KALAMAZOO, Mich.—A major gift by alumnus Robert Kaiser, owner and CEO of Gallagher-Kaiser Corporation, has transformed the sales lab at Western Michigan University's Haworth College of Business. The renovated and expanded facility has been named the **Robert S. Kaiser Sales, Negotiation and Leadership Lab**.

At the lab, students participate in authentic selling scenarios in a realistic environment where they are recorded and can review their sales role-plays.

"Through multiple interactions and role-plays in the Robert S. Kaiser Sales, Negotiation and Leadership Lab, students develop a level of confidence that cannot come from classroom interactions alone," says Dr. Kelley O'Reilly, associate professor of marketing. "Because students have the ability to watch and evaluate their own recordings, they are able to refine and improve naturally. The facility opens the door to new and innovative ways for sharing best practice examples with students and provides recruiters with a sneak peek at our amazing student talent."

And that student talent has commanded the attention of recruiters for many years. This year, the sales and business marketing program boasts a 100 percent engagement rate, which means that all students are employed, in graduate school or serving in the military within three months of graduation.

GRAND OPENING CEREMONY AND OPEN HOUSE



The Haworth College of Business will host a grand opening ceremony and open house at **11 a.m., Friday, Nov. 2**, allowing campus and community members to tour the facility and learn more about it.

"We are extremely grateful to Mr. Kaiser for his investment in the sales and business marketing program," says Dr. Satish Deshpande, dean of the Haworth College of Business. "This space takes student learning to the next level. In addition, it will also open up opportunities for us to host student sales competitions, student and employer events, and corporate sales trainings for companies. Bob Kaiser has made this project possible, and our students will benefit from his generosity for years to come."

KAISER

Robert Kaiser is the owner and CEO of Gallagher-Kaiser Corporation, the world's premiere automotive paint shop supplier. The company maintains multiple manufacturing facilities in Detroit, with a corporate headquarters in Troy.

After graduating from WMU with a degree in industrial marketing in 1978, Kaiser went on to work in the family business. In 1984, he began competitive offshore powerboat racing and became a national and world champion. After 14 years on the world circuit, he retired from the sport and was inducted into the hall of fame.

Under Kaiser's leadership, Gallagher-Kaiser has become a world leader in engineering, procurement and construction. The company further expanded its capabilities when Kaiser purchased Universal Piping Industries in 2010. Today, Gallagher-Kaiser builds General Motors' most technologically advanced paint shops around the world. The company has won five General Motors Supplier of the Year Awards.

In addition to his success in expanding his companies, Kaiser's business interests have extended beyond the automotive industry. With extensive real estate holdings of top properties throughout North America, Kaiser has proven to be a dynamic force in the world of business.

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Related story

[Business college receives naming gift for sales, negotiation and leadership lab](#) | March 13, 2018

Starting Gate celebrates fifth anniversary



Starting Gate participants with President Montgomery and director of operations, Lara Hobson.

Starting Gate, Western Michigan University's student business accelerator, offers valuable resources to students as they develop their startups. This year the accelerator celebrated its fifth year of operation.

The accelerator is open to all WMU students through a competitive application process where students must demonstrate a promising idea for a product or service, which can be launched within a short period of time. Starting Gate provides a fast-track to business launch. Companies participate in a six-month long program that concludes with Demo Day, a presentation for potential investors.

The impact of the accelerator is illustrated in many different ways.

First, here are **the stats**.

- 68 companies launched
- 10 patents filed
- 400+ total events for entrepreneurs
- \$380,000 in grants and \$45,000 in seed money awarded

Next, here are **the words** of some Starting Gate alumni who have benefited from the program.

"Starting Gate is a valuable asset for early entrepreneurs. It helped me build my idea into a reality, learn from experienced entrepreneurs and mentors, and evaluate and target the right customers."

- Aatif Ghouri, founder of [Wizleaf](#)

"Starting Gate helped me think outside the box, step out of my comfort zone, and meet influential and inspirational people in the community. While I still have a lot of learning to do, the program was a great start to my entrepreneurial journey. I am confident that I will use the information I learned through Starting Gate for years to come."

- Josie Marshall, new home consultant for AVB, founder of For the Funds of It

"I live in Los Angeles now and am working on building a commercial film production company. I'm gradually booking more and more meetings. I'm super grateful for Starting Gate and the confidence it gave me to go about starting a business. It shifted my mindset to knowing it's possible to start a business, and it helped me think like an entrepreneur."

- Charles Clark, producer and director, [Clean Slate Movie, LLC](#)

“Congratulations on five years! This program was the single most valuable thing I did in business school, and I am so proud to have been a part of it. Thank you for all the work you put into this for your students.”

- Matthew Ciejka, founder of Top Cat Collective

“Even though I've graduated from the Starting Gate program, I love the funding and networking opportunities that are continually provided.”

-Desi Taylor, founder of [Cluventure Travel](#)

Finally, there is **the knowledge** that the accelerator is building the entrepreneurial community in Kalamazoo and wherever Starting Gate alumni land after graduation.

“The entrepreneurial community in Kalamazoo has shown tremendous support to our program as the startups continue to grow and expand outside of our region. The skills our students are learning as young entrepreneurs are taken with them into their jobs after graduation as well as when they are fully ready to launch their businesses.”

Lara Hobson, director of operations, Starting Gate

For more information on Starting Gate contact [Lara Hobson](#) or [visit the website](#).