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Haworth College of Business News

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11-2019

## November 2019 Newsletter

Haworth College of Business

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# November 2019 Newsletter

## NOVEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

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### **Opening doors in finance**

Celebrating 20 years, the Greenleaf Trust Scholarship has supported an outstanding 71 scholars from the Haworth College of Business by awarding \$1.3 million in funds and hosting 23 rotational internships.

[Read about the scholarship.](#)



### **Business Broncos serve and celebrate veterans**

With help from a mentor and her peers, accountancy student Allison Roelant organized a service project that benefited dozens of veterans at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center. Additionally, more than 300 business students participated in the college's annual service project cleaning headstones at Fort Custer National Cemetery in Augusta.

[Read about the project.](#)



### **Alumnus serves his country, community and fellow veterans**

RJ Naugle, B.B.A.'03, is founder of RallyPoint/6, a Seattle-based, nonprofit resource center that helps veterans transition back to civilian life.

[Read Naugle's story.](#)



### **Scenting success**

The power of fragrance is the premise behind a new business, The Aroma Labs, owned by current MBA student, WMU employee and undergraduate alumna Tanya Thompson, B.B.A.'15.

[Read Thompson's story.](#)

WHO ARE YOU  
thankful  
FOR?

### **Thank a college of business mentor**

Is there a professor or staff member in the college who helped make a difference in your experience? Share who you're grateful for in the Haworth College of Business and why, and we'll hand-deliver a special thank-you-gram of appreciation! Submit your thank-you-gram by Nov. 18.

[Send a thank-you-gram.](#)



### **Celebrating alumni**

Alumni and friends of the college were honored for their outstanding leadership and service accomplishments during Homecoming week, which concluded with the annual pancake breakfast.

[View the photo album.](#)

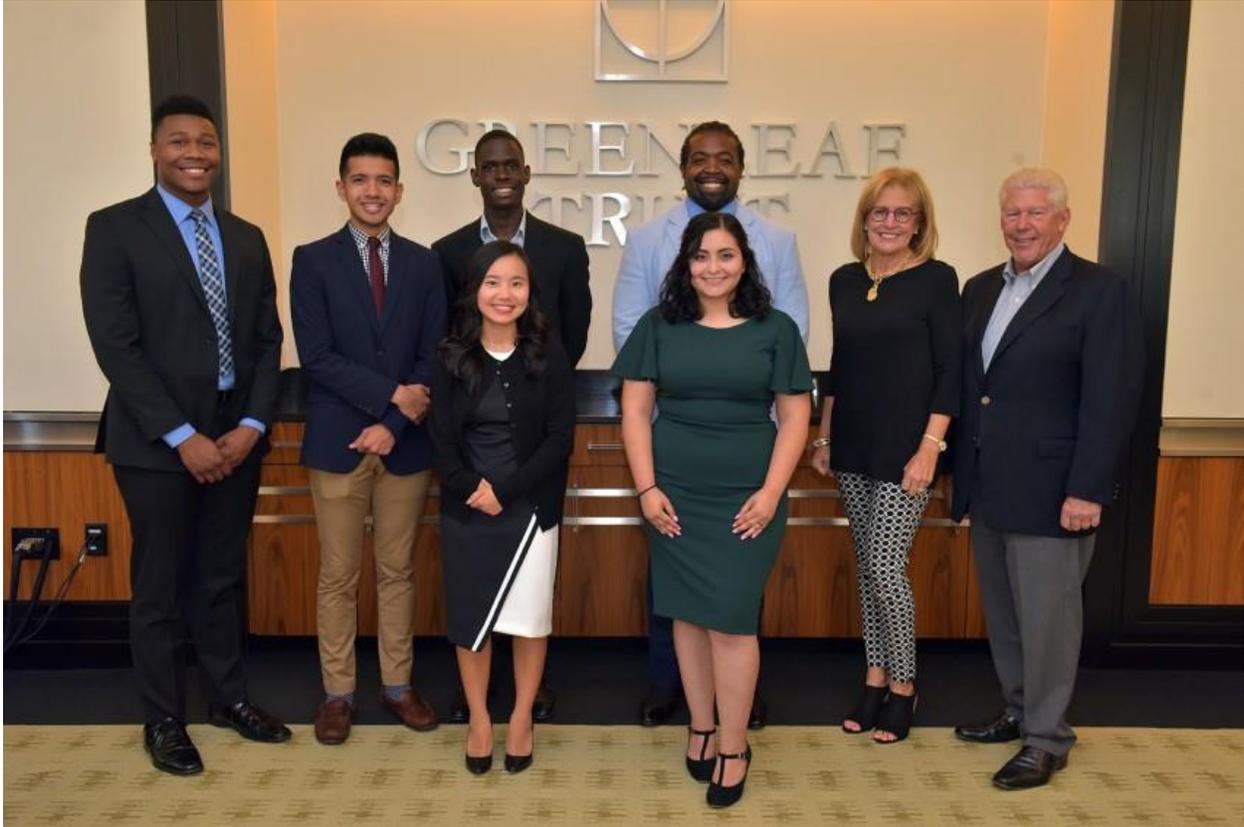


### **Call for class notes**

Share your accomplishments and news with fellow Haworth College of Business alumni! Send us details about promotions, awards, honors, appointments, marriages, births, adoptions and retirements and your class note will be included in the summer edition of the college newsletter.

[Submit a class note.](#)

# Celebrating 20 years of the Greenleaf Trust Scholarship



## DIVERSIFYING FINANCE

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When William D. Johnston, chairman of Greenleaf Trust, started his company more than two decades ago, he had his sights set on building a diverse workforce. He was discouraged, however, to find that a small number of students from underrepresented backgrounds were graduating with degrees in finance. To help bridge that gap, Johnston and his wife, Ronda Stryker, established a scholarship that would help dozens of Western Michigan University students overcome obstacles to pursuing their education in finance.

Now, 20 years later, the Greenleaf Trust Scholarship has supported an outstanding 71 scholars from the Haworth College of Business by awarding \$1.3 million in funds and hosting 23 rotational internships. The scholarship awards business students studying finance or personal financial planning. It is open to all students in both majors but is geared toward students in underrepresented ethnic groups.

“Twenty years ago as we sought talent for our growing wealth management and fiduciary services company, we witnessed firsthand the lack of diverse candidates for employment opportunities,” Johnston says. “This lack of diversity was intolerable to Greenleaf Trust. As a result, we started the Greenleaf Trust scholars and internship program. We are proud of our program and the Greenleaf Trust team that recruits, selects and mentors our scholars. Most of all, we are proud of our scholars’ academic achievements and graduation rates. We remain committed to the Greenleaf Trust scholars program and look forward to many more decades of increasing the number of students from diverse backgrounds in the financial industry.”

Evidence shows that students who have matriculated through the program are employed at premiere financial services companies all over the country. “We have had an opportunity this year to go back to our data and connect with many of the students who received the scholarship over the past 20 years,” says Kim Dudley, senior human resources specialist at Greenleaf Trust. “The majority of them are working in the financial field, which indicates that the scholarship is doing what was intended.”

Dudley adds that the students selected for the scholarship are among the brightest and most driven at Western Michigan University; however, the barriers they face to pursuing an education in finance are often circumstantial. “Many of them are first-generation college students who have no prior exposure to the financial industry,” she says. “They haven’t had a parent or relative working in the field, so it’s not necessarily their go-to when determining a major.”

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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Applying for and receiving the scholarship gives students the opportunity to meet with professionals at Greenleaf Trust, to pursue an internship at the company, and to get an in-depth look at careers in finance.

“The scholarship is renewable for up to four years, so some students come in as juniors and some start as early as their first year,” Dudley says. “The staff members at Greenleaf Trust get to know each one of them; the students attend meetings, connect with mentors and really get a chance to grow as scholars.”

Some students, primarily juniors and seniors, have the opportunity to participate in an internship with the company that rotates through four divisions: personal trust/wealth management, operations, research and retirement planning. Recently, Greenleaf Trust established a graduate associate program that allows students to work with the company after they graduate.

“The scholarship was originally intended as a gift to the financial industry by preparing a diverse group of students for careers in finance,” Dudley says. “Greenleaf Trust was simply too small when it started to hire all of its scholars, but now we are large enough to provide a graduate associate program. Those students go through a rigorous interview process, and some get offers for full-time positions with the company.”

Marisol Quiroz is one such student who has the opportunity to work as a graduate associate with Greenleaf Trust. A senior majoring in accountancy and finance, Quiroz describes the Greenleaf Trust staff as family. “When I first learned that I had received the Greenleaf Trust Scholarship, I couldn’t believe it,” she says. “The first thing I did was call my family in Texas to let them know the good news. Receiving this scholarship has meant a lot more than just financial support. I am an extremely family-oriented person, and being in a migrant family, my parents are not usually in Michigan during the fall and spring semesters. Having this relationship with Greenleaf Trust throughout my undergraduate journey has provided me with a family I can rely on for support.”

Quiroz, who plans to pursue her Master of Science in Accountancy at WMU, is specializing in wealth management as a graduate associate at the company. “I am extremely grateful for the opportunities I have had throughout my life,” she says. “Thankful for my parents, Greenleaf Trust and WMU for helping me grow to be the person I am today.”

Victor Perez, a junior majoring in finance with a minor in accountancy, is a Greenleaf Trust scholar and intern who says the scholarship means much more than its monetary value. “The scholarship is meant to encourage diversity in finance, but it does so much more than that,” he says. “It shows students that there is a phenomenal company in Greenleaf Trust that believes in us and wants us to succeed.”

Perez adds that the scholarship has gone beyond lifting the financial burden of paying for college and has helped him in a variety of ways. “Greenleaf Trust makes sure to grow their scholars not only professionally, but personally as well,” he says. “Being around a group of students who share the same interests and come from similar backgrounds is very comforting and lets me know I am not alone in my pursuit of higher education in the finance industry.”

#### 2019 Greenleaf Trust scholarship recipients

- Chris Bailey
- LaTeqa Mack
- Keenan Moore
- Ebenezer Musookho
- Victor Perez
- Marisol Quiroz
- Gerardo Ramos

- Spencer Robertson
- Julie Schwark
- Eddie Warr

## Business Broncos serve and celebrate veterans



- Every year on November 11, Americans set aside time to honor the some 20 million active and former U.S. service members who have gone to war. Veterans Day is marked with parades, remembrances and gestures of thanks across the country, offering a nation’s gratitude to its armed forces.
- This year, a student from Western Michigan University’s Haworth College of Business wanted to go beyond saying “thanks for your service,” and truly make a difference in veterans’ lives. With help from a mentor and her peers, she was able to turn her idea into a college-wide collaboration that would benefit dozens of veterans on this significant holiday.
- Junior Allison Roelant, an accountancy major and vice president of the [Accounting Club](#), was looking at the club’s meeting schedules for the semester when inspiration struck. “We had planned to hold a monthly meeting on November 11,” she says. “We decided instead to dedicate that week to serving veterans. When I shared this idea with other business student organization leaders, they seemed really excited, and many expressed the hope of joining in on preparation for the event.”

### HELPFUL GUIDANCE

- Roelant’s idea was big. She wanted to figure out how to mobilize a large group of student volunteers to benefit the [Battle Creek VA Medical Center](#), which supports

nearly 300 veterans in Southwest Michigan. Luckily, she knew exactly who to turn to for guidance.

- “Allison approached me to help her strategize how she could make this project work,” says Bob Stewart, career development specialist with the college’s [Zhang Career Center](#). A Navy veteran himself, Stewart has an extensive background working with disabled veterans prior to his employment at WMU. “I was very impressed with her idea and immediately decided to help however I could.”
- Stewart helped Roelant initiate the project by first pointing her in the right direction. “I know how difficult it can be to communicate with large organizations like the VA, and sometimes you just have to know the right people to get the ball rolling,” he says. “We worked together to find key stakeholders to make a project work on the VA side. Then we talked about a strategy to find volunteers.”
- Stewart helped Roelant reach out to the medical center to see how a large group of Business Broncos could offer assistance. Roelant was able to connect with Todd Greenman, chief of volunteer and community services, who invited her to visit the hospital.
- “I went to the VA in September with another student, Dylan Coleman, who is president of the Student Leadership Advisory Board,” Roelant says. “During the veterans’ lunch hour, we were able to hear some of their stories and why they were admitted to the medical center, as well as some of their wants and needs. Todd also provided us with a list of items that could be donated, and we discussed items that veterans may be looking for but don’t often receive.”

## ASSEMBLE WITH CARE

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- The students determined that they could maximize their efforts by collecting donations—toiletries, books, thank you cards, etc.—which they used to assemble care packages for the veterans. They delivered the care packages to the medical center on November 8 and celebrated with residents by hosting a pizza and bowling party in their honor.
- “I really enjoyed spending time with the veterans and creating personal relationships with those who have served our country,” Roelant says. “The party was fun and a great way for the students and veterans to bond.”

- With several student organizations and members of the BUS 1000 class having participated in the project, the students collected enough items for 50 care packages. Stewart says he was proud to see Roelant and her peers take the reins on this project. “As a Navy veteran who has worked with veterans in need in the past, the value I see from service projects like this is twofold. The obvious value is the needed supplies that will help an underrepresented and sometimes forgotten population,” he says. “The intrinsic and cultural value is what the student volunteers will receive. They are giving back to those who have fought for them. Volunteers and donors should feel pride in their efforts to help make these veterans’ lives a bit brighter.”

## ADDITIONAL EVENTS

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- A number of additional events hosted by the college and University are taking place throughout November in recognition of Veterans Day.
- One included the college’s annual community service project at Fort Custer National Cemetery in Augusta. The students spent a day cleaning a portion of the nearly 27,000 headstones at the site on Oct. 26. The project began in 2012 when the college was looking for a service activity in the community that could be repeated annually. Part of the project involves students attending an informational session before the trip to learn more about the history of Fort Custer and the significance of cleaning the headstones.
- “The Fort Custer event was very successful, as 306 business students, the entire Zhang Career Center staff and one faculty member showed up to clean a large area of the 770-acre property in order to prepare the space for Veterans Day,” Stewart says. “The students were extremely engaged in this process, and the experience was very rewarding. This was the most energetic and engaged group of volunteers we have ever had. I am truly thankful and humbled by their service.”

# Alumnus and veteran serves his country, community and fellow veterans

RJ NAUGLE, B.B.A.'03

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September 11, 2001 was a day in America that few will ever forget. Many can even recount their exact location when they heard the devastating news. The same is true for 2003 Haworth College of Business graduate RJ Naugle. “I vividly remember I was in a human resource management class and the now dean of the business college, Dr. Satish Deshpande, was my professor,” Naugle recounts. “He entered class with a somber look on his face and shared with us the news that would change my life and thousands of others.”

Naugle, who comes from a military family, chose a different route out of high school and was one of the first in his family to go to college. Within weeks of hearing about 9/11 Naugle signed up for the delayed entry program into the U.S. Army, which would allow him to finish his degree before entering the service. After finishing college and basic training, advanced individual training and airborne training as an enlisted soldier with 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne), Naugle was stationed at Fort Lewis near Seattle. Here he was able to truly have an impactful experience and supplement the education he received at Western Michigan University.

Naugle says one of the biggest impacts on his life during this time was meeting his wife Anne, who served for 24 years as an Army helicopter pilot. After meeting Anne, he decided to enroll in Officer Candidate School. He says it was a natural fit with the leadership skills

he developed during his time as a management major at WMU. During his time in the military, Naugle served in places like Washington; Kentucky; Washington D.C.; and in the Asian Pacific region during active duty. Throughout these experiences he was able to meet a lot of great people and learn many vital lessons.



“Leadership, integrity and discipline are core values I have learned through the military and have brought with me to everyday business life,” Naugle says. “These relationships became my champions as I transitioned back into civilian life and the private sector.

After transitioning from active duty, Naugle had the unique opportunity to work at Microsoft in the information security and risk management field. This is especially impressive considering he learned his technical skills on the job at Microsoft. His time at WMU prepared him to excel in this challenging learning environment. “Entering college, I came from a nonacademic background. I really did not know how to study; I had to learn how to learn,” Naugle explains. “WMU does not just prepare you to have a good business acumen, it prepares you to be a high-level critical thinker, which can be applied to being a prosperous lifelong learner.”

Naugle says he was truly grateful to have a relatively smooth transition back into civilian life. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for some of his fellow veterans. Naugle and his wife realized this community-wide issue and decided to start RallyPoint/6, a nonprofit, comprehensive resource center for veterans, based in the Seattle region. RP/6 was designed to connect transitioning veterans to their new neighborhoods, community leadership opportunities, entrepreneurship and joining the local workforce in growing the economy.

Currently, there are about 46,000 nonprofit organizations serving veterans and their families nationwide. Part of RP/6’s strategy was to scale and merge with different resource providers in an effort to consolidate into a “one-stop shop” of services. After expanding from one location to over a dozen across the U.S., the Naugles merged RP/6 with the largest military serving organization in world, United Service Organizations, in 2017. Known primarily for their 75+ years of hospitality and entertainment for troops worldwide, the USO serve thousands of transitioning active military, veterans and their families across the

globe. This merger with RP/6 resulted in a program called [Pathfinder](#), which now allows the USO to assist with transition services.

Building on his WMU, U.S. Army and industry education, Naugle and his wife now run their own technology consulting firm, [REV Tech](#), which stands for “Remembering Every Veteran.” The full-service consultancy serves enterprise clients in both the public and private sectors. Naugle continues his commitment to veterans by hiring many former service members and their spouses.

Despite all of his professional success, Naugle still takes the most pride in his family. He says Anne and his stepchildren, Josh and Samantha, are his support system and give him a sense of purpose every morning.

Naugle’s service and commitment to community make him a leader among the Business Bronco alumni network. He urges students who are looking to make an impact to, “Be fearless. The only thing that you can control is your effort. Do not focus on the things you cannot control, but focus on the talents and competencies you have grown over the years. These will be your most valuable tools in making a difference.”

Naugle encourages business students and alumni—veterans and civilians alike—to [connect with him via LinkedIn](#). Service members transitioning out of the military and their families can visit [USO Pathfinder](#) to explore resources.

# Scenting success: MBA student opens The Aroma Labs in Kalamazoo



TANYA THOMPSON, B.B.A.'15

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Scent. It can affect our mood and unlock our deepest emotions.

The power of fragrance is the premise behind a new business, [The Aroma Labs](#), owned by current MBA student, WMU employee and undergraduate alumna Tanya Thompson, B.B.A.'15. The Aroma Labs is located in downtown Kalamazoo and allows clients to create custom perfumes and scented products. Though the business has only been open since summer 2019, it is already hosting private parties and corporate events.

After taking Dr. Derrick McIver's Strategy for Small Business course, which focused on small business acquisition, Thompson looked into purchasing an existing business. When the available options did not have the market that Thompson knew to look for from the course, she decided to apply its concepts to opening her own company.

"I have always enjoyed creating things that bring joy to people, and this concept was an extension of that part of my personality." Thompson found that her 15-year tenure as a mixologist across the U.S. was a great starting point for a career that focuses on the right proportion of high-quality ingredients. She recently studied the art of fragrance mixing with Tedd Neenan in Chicago, Illinois, and has plans to continue her fragrance education through coursework and an upcoming trip to Paris.



Thompson had seen custom perfumes available in large metropolitan areas, but her research and the resources of the [Southwest Michigan Region Small Business Development Center](#) indicated that there was nothing similar in the area and that a market existed for this type of handcrafted, personal experience when it came to perfume and scented products.

Initially, Thompson started her business through a series of pop-up shop events, but quickly noticed limitations she wanted to address.

“I was able to apply what I learned in Dr. McIver’s class about research and analysis, constructing a business plan and finding an investor for this venture,” says Thompson. She also credits her undergraduate degree in sales and business marketing, coursework in food and consumer package goods marketing, and organizational behavior coursework with helping to launch her company. The investor in her business enabled her to sign the lease on her current space. And she still plans to do pop-up events to extend her geographic footprint outside the Kalamazoo area.

In addition to perfumes, The Aroma Labs allows clients to create body scrubs, lotions and other scented items. The business keeps a file of information on scents created, formulas used, and products ordered for seamless re-orders.



“Making your own fragrance puts you at the center of the process,” says Thompson. “We encourage our clients to name each fragrance they create, which honors the creative process.”

The Aroma Labs is committed to developing a philanthropic arm as well. The company is currently working with [Trauma Recovery Associates](#) on items where a portion of proceeds will support the organization's efforts, which span continuing education for mental health professionals, programs for those who have experienced childhood abuse and neglect, and presentations in the community.

The business is scaling up rapidly, and Thompson feels like she has found her calling. "I couldn't have started my company without the skills that the Haworth College of Business helped me develop. I am grateful to faculty and my fellow students. I am excited about all the possibilities that lie ahead. "