January 2020 Newsletter

JANUARY 2020 NEWSLETTER

Center for Principled Leadership and Business Strategy established with $6.5 million gift

Led by two business faculty members who specialize in management, the innovative new center is founded on the premise that purpose and profit can be powerfully linked through actions and strategies of leaders.

Read about the center.

Q&A with the dean

Dr. Satish Deshpande, dean of the Haworth College of Business, answers questions about the college's accomplishments in 2019, as well as what Business Broncos have to look forward to in the New Year.

Read the Q&A.
Life-changing business experiences abroad

Two Haworth College of Business students, 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. 
[Read about the Gilman Scholars.]

TechNext students take over the West Coast

Broadening students’ cultural horizons is a goal of the Department of Management's TechNext program, which hosted trips to San Diego and San Francisco in fall 2019.
[Read about the trips.]

Students showcase business acumen through simulation

Dr. Bret Wagner, associate professor marketing, spent the last six years developing a virtual business simulation—ScrimmageSIM—to give students more opportunities for hands-on learning.
[Read about the program.]
30 Under 30 takes top prize in CASE V competition

The Haworth College of Business claimed the top prize for its 30 Under 30 program from the Council for Advancement in Support of Education District V competition in December. The publication received a gold award for Best New Alumni Program. Read about the award.

Lean Six Sigma certification offered

The Center for Integrated Supply Management offers a full range of Lean Six Sigma training that uses an applied business focus. Training sessions will be offered in March, June and August of 2020. Learn more about the certification.
KALAMAZOO, Mich.—Western Michigan University has launched a center to advance the principle of mutual benefit in business. Led by two business faculty members who specialize in management, the innovative new center is founded on the premise that purpose and profit can be powerfully linked through the actions and strategies of leaders.

The **Center for Principled Leadership and Business Strategy** will provide deeply immersive learning experiences at the undergraduate and graduate levels that blur the line between education and professional business experience.

These learning experiences, and related programming by the center, strongly integrate WMU and the West Michigan business community through large-scale consulting projects, executive mentorship for students, an investment fund to support small business acquisition by MBA students and "learning spaces of the future" to facilitate solving business problems through collaboration and technology.

The new endeavor, operated through the **Haworth College of Business**, has attracted $6.5 million 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."

**Johnston** says he is excited about the center’s innovation and the broad impact it can create. "The center has touch points that will cause talented, aspiring students to choose WMU. It provides differentiating experiences and lifts up our West Michigan business community. This will be a game changer, and I hope others lean in to engage," he says.

Dr. Doug Lepisto, assistant professor of management, is co-director of the center with Dr. Derrick McIver, associate professor of management.

"Businesses are successful when they have deeply rooted values," adds Dick Haworth, chairman emeritus of Haworth. "Students today want to marry purpose with profit, and this center will offer Western Michigan students the opportunity to contemplate how they, as tomorrow’s leaders, can do that. I am thrilled to support Derrick and Doug’s vision for this new institution."

**Dr. Doug Lepisto**, assistant professor of management, is co-director of the center with **Dr. Derrick McIver**, associate professor of management.

"We believe the path to purpose and profit is found in creating genuine value for others," Lepisto says. "We believe this principle, we teach this principle, and we practice this principle. To make this a reality in business requires leadership and a strategic approach to maximize benefit across stakeholders. Our center strives to create a 'big win' where students, the University, the business community and alumni are all simultaneously elevated through our work."

"To stay relevant, all of us need to embrace learning and new ideas so that we can create an America where nobody gets left behind," the **Menard family**, owners of Menards, a Midwestern chain of home improvement stores, said in a statement.

“We hope our support of Western Michigan University’s Center for Principled Leadership and Business Strategy will enhance the educational experiences of students, preparing them for future success and offering them an opportunity to think about how they can add value to their communities after graduation.”
EXPERIENCES THE CENTER WILL OFFER

- Interdisciplinary outreach through the new leadership and business strategy co-major and minor.
- Innovative, immersive, technologically enhanced action-learning that offers students relevant career experiences from day one.
- 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.
- A retreat in which students and alumni share a transformational experience focused on principles, performance, profit and purpose.

FEATURING COLLABORATION WITH THE BUSINESSES THROUGH:

- Large-scale, consulting projects where leadership and business strategy students, alongside faculty, solve problems for executives on increasing profit and purpose.
- 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, which explore creating genuine value for others.
- Research on topics such as leadership, strategy, meaningful work and leading with purpose, relevant to both academic leaders and industry.

"Traditional notions of shareholder-only business models are becoming obsolete," McIver says. "And traditional notions of higher education are becoming obsolete. We aspire to set a new standard for business education and are innovating to impact as many people as possible as deeply as possible. The most important thing we can pass on is enabling others to pursue their purpose and passion in ways that help improve others’ lives."

“We are excited about Western Michigan University’s vision for a center that offers
students the opportunity to explore their own talents and principles and also the role of business in society,” said Charles Koch Foundation Vice President of Philanthropy Charlie Ruger.

“We believe that everyone has extraordinary potential, and educational programs that help people develop and apply their unique abilities can drive progress. Western Michigan’s new center invites students to start thinking about their purpose and potential impact now, and we’re proud to support that vision.

The center activities are already well underway with new initiatives being launched rapidly. To learn more about the Center for Principled Leadership and Business Strategy, visit wmich.edu/leadershipcenter.

Q&A with the dean

Dr. Satish Deshpande, dean of the Haworth College of Business, reflects on the year and looks forward to 2020.

What do you think the college’s biggest success was in 2019?

I’m excited about the extent to which business leaders and alumni are engaging with the college and its various programs. We have a huge network of outstanding alumni and a thriving business community surrounding us, and we are seeing them coming in and getting engaged. And thanks to the generous support of donors, we have many exciting initiatives to help our students receive a cutting-edge education that will set them apart from their peers as they enter the workforce.
Our students have also done a great job in various national competitions. The number of teams from multiple programs that have placed in the top spots nationally shows the quality of our institution and the result of a world-class education.

What were/are the biggest challenges?

Generation Z is coming out of high school, and they are very different than previous generations. They are technologically savvy, so we need to find ways to teach them in order to keep them engaged. They’re pragmatic and committed to their causes, and lead with intention. I am impressed with how determined they are. Many of them want to start their own business because they want to be independent. So, the biggest opportunity for us is to adapt to the new generation and the changing workplace. They are ready to make an impact, and we can help with that. We need to make sure that our students are prepared to enter a quickly evolving work environment.

What are you most looking forward to in 2020?

I’m looking forward to responding to the challenges out there by stretching our innovation and creativity in delivering a business education. I don’t mean only in terms of online and hybrid classes, but in a deeper sense, by pairing instructional methods that students respond to with skills that employers are seeking. We are moving forward with learning spaces of the future, changing the actual physical environment. The college is ready to revolutionize the way that business is taught with more hands-on practical experience that will readily translate to the workplace.

What is your favorite memory from the Haworth College of Business in 2019?

I have numerous favorite memories from 2019, but they all involve students coming back from competitions and conferences with a new and exciting confidence. It is a testament to the practical business education we provide our students.

Looking ahead, what changes would you like to see in higher education?

Higher education must provide students with the skills they need to succeed. It should be responsive to the demands of the marketplace by not only addressing the market’s needs today but what the needs will be in five years. When a student enters college, they’re there for four years, so we must think to the future and train them for things that work on that timeline. Higher education needs to be agile and transformational, adopting a new business model to respond to changes quickly.
Life-changing business experiences abroad

Two Haworth College of Business students 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.” Having returned to the United States, they share the highlights, challenges and most moving moments from their travels.

Catherine Lemus

Hometown: Plainwell, Michigan
Class standing: Senior
Campus involvement: American Marketing Association, Lee Honors College student, Alpha Lambda Delta, A Moment of Magic volunteer

**Where did you study and what have you learned?**
I studied in Oslo, Norway, at the BI Norwegian Business School. I took classes pertaining to Norwegian culture, international business, marketing strategy, and logistics and marketing channels. I spent a lot of my free time learning about Norway's business model and mentality around having "flat" organizations. In other words, Norwegians value being equal and have a strong welfare state, which influences how men and women are able to participate in the workplace.

**Why did you choose this location and program?**
I chose this place because I was able to live in a capital city yet be constantly surrounded by nature. Norway has fjords, mountains and northern lights that I have experienced on multiple occasions. Even Oslo has countless hikes which I take advantage of since I love nature! I also came here to learn more about Norway's approach to social welfare and how that influences business practices.

**What was the most exciting experience you had while studying abroad?**
I loved going to the city of Tromsø for a weekend trip. I went with eight other close friends on exchange, and we enjoyed viewing the northern lights as well as seeing the sunset at 2 p.m.! I could barely believe we were in the Arctic Circle, but I made some adventurous memories while there.

**What was the most challenging experience?**
Connecting with Norwegians. Culturally, they are known to keep to themselves and since my classes were taught in English, there were mostly other exchange students alongside me rather than locals. Regardless, I was able to make Norwegian friends with some effort.

**How have your experiences in the Haworth College of Business and abroad helped you develop your business skills?**
Countless individuals in the college helped me to find a study abroad program that worked well with my major and allowed me to become immersed in a new culture. I also received a study abroad scholarship from the college, which helped to offset the high cost of living in Oslo. Additionally, I learned how to work with people from all walks of life! In my international business course, I listened to presentations from students in all areas of the world and also had to present ideas from the U.S. Being a spokesperson for our country made me think critically about the way we live and helped me appreciate how different cultures choose to innovate and grow.
Where did you study and what have you learned?
I took general business classes for my business law degree in Cape Town, South Africa.

Why did you choose this location and program?
I chose Cape Town because it’s a step closer to learning about the possible birthplace of humankind, and also about myself. I was completely independent while abroad and relied on what my parents taught me growing up: how to be a decent person and how to interact with others while staying open-minded. I knew going halfway across the world would teach me more about myself than staying in one location ever could.

What was the most exciting experience you had while studying abroad?
Learning about the people and culture of Cape Town! Networking with people abroad helped me develop my business skills. I learned that connections, opportunities, skills and victories come from learning how to communicate with others. I applied material from my
business classes to my courses in Cape Town, and learned that their business system is based on managing both relationships and finances. Once I mastered that, everything fell into place.

**What was the most challenging experience?**
The most challenging experience was school. Cape Town's educational system is completely different from the U.S. From registering for classes to taking final exams, I struggled a lot. However, the friends and connections I met on campus made all the difference in my attitude and ability to thrive academically.

**Why do you think it's important for business students to have a global experience?**
Business abroad is dynamic and interlocks with the business system right here in the U.S. You expand yourself, and your way of thinking when abroad. You learn so much beyond the everyday business experiences in your own country. The relationships you build globally will carry you a long way.

**GILMAN SCHOLARSHIP**

The [Gilman Program](https://www.state.gov/educate/cultural/exchange/fulbright/gilman/) offers scholarships for U.S. citizen undergraduate students to pursue academic studies or credit-bearing, career-oriented internships abroad. The U.S. Department of State awards the Gilman Scholarship as part of a larger government effort to expand the number of Americans studying and interning abroad, helping them gain skills critical to national security and prosperity.

Lemus and Peterson join fellow Western Michigan University students Zoe Jackson and Angel Schramm as fall 2019 Gilman scholars. At a selection success rate of 50 percent, Gilman awards to WMU students are well above the national average acceptance rate of 29 percent.
TechNext students take over the West Coast

BROADENING HORIZONS

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 2019. Students are selected to be a part of TechNext from programs across the University based on high academic achievement and interest in entrepreneurship and technology applications. Each year, the TechNext team embarks on travel experiences designed to immerse students into a new culture and professional environment.

“TechNext is an experiential learning opportunity for innovative students who are looking to gain an education outside of the typical classroom setting,” says Maisie Blaukamp, a TechNext student coordinator. “Each semester prior to a trip, we reach out to alumni in the region to plan visits to companies and a WMU alumni networking event. The goal of TechNext is to ‘open apertures and change trajectories.’ This means that TechNext seeks to open students to opportunities they never thought were possible, and even change the course of their lives. During TechNext trips, we learn a tremendous amount covering many different topics, which opens our minds to endless possibilities of what we can do and who we can be.”

This life-changing experience provides opportunities to students that enable them to expand their cultural horizons, professional networks and ambitions.

“The TechNext trip is important because it allows students to broaden their mindset. You can only learn so much in class; it’s when you’re able to go out and actually apply what
you’re learning to the world around you that you’re able to learn the most,” says Maddy Zednick, a TechNext student coordinator.

WEST COAST TAKEOVER

Fall 2019 marks the first semester that TechNext has been able to make two trips to the West Coast. The team traveled to San Diego in mid-October and to San Francisco in early November. Students were able to meet with 24 companies, ranging from household names like Netflix to new startups like Fiddler. Additionally, the students were able to meet and make lasting connections with more than 50 alumni.

While the team puts in a lot of work to make these trips happen, they certainly have some help from impactful educators and alumni.

“The efforts put forth by Western’s administration to make these trips possible is incomparable,” Zednick says. “We have traveled with Haworth College of Business Dean Satish Deshpande, Vice President for University Advancement Kristen DeVries, Department of Management Chair and Professor Bob Landeros, Management Instructor Barcley Johnson and other influential administrators from WMU. Being able to learn from and travel with these leaders is not always an opportunity at other universities.”

COMPANY CONNECTIONS

A few of TechNext’s company visits included Miles, Corient Capital Partners and Shipt. Miles is an app that offers rewards based on any mile traveled, across every mode of transportation. The students enjoyed learning how the data from this app is aggregated and then used to help incentivize commuters to pursue more sustainable forms of travel.

At Corient Capital Partners, a wealth management firm, students learned how a company that manages billions of dollars prioritizes trust and ethics every day. Managing partner of the company, WMU alumnus Chris Copps, B.B.A.’82, was also able to give students investment advice as they start off their careers.
Students also met with members of the marketing team at Shipt, a company that connects community members to local grocery stores by doing the shopping for them. The marketing team spoke about their creative process and how some of the ideas for Shipt commercials are conceived. The opportunity for students to learn from companies like these and see their inner workings provides an eye-opening experience.

“The companies and alumni we visit are so generous in letting the students come and learn,” says Johnson, who is also the TechNext faculty advisor. “We provide them an avenue to share their expertise with the next generation. The satisfaction from that, and the energy the students inject into their work environments is what keeps companies opening their doors.”

The results of being involved in TechNext have been very positive for its members. Many students have obtained employment opportunities out west for incredible companies. But that is not the only goal of the TechNext team. “The employment opportunities are always amazing for students, but I think the team has value beyond that,” Blaukamp reflects. “Being a part of this program instills a confidence and hunger to learn. These lessons will make us successful wherever we land.”

Students showcase their business acumen through simulated practice

BUSINESS SIMULATOR

““I want to transform the way we teach business.” These bold and aspirational words come from the innovative Dr. Bret Wagner, associate professor of marketing at the Haworth College of Business. Ever since he was a student in graduate school, Wagner has struggled with accepting how business is traditionally taught.
“I think business education is challenging because we can’t always do business in the classroom. It’s not like chemistry or dance, where you get to practice the subject every day,” he says. “That is why I have spent the past six years developing my business simulation—to give business students more opportunities for hands-on learning.”

Wagner designed a simulation, titled ScrimmageSIM, which gives students real-world experience in a virtual business setting. He says the program is an effective tool because it does not give students the impression that there is a “right answer” to a business problem, as textbooks do. Rather, the program engages students in the simulated business problem and shows how business concepts and theory provide insight into these complex situations.

The simulator does this by providing different business scenarios tailored to the business concept being taught. For example, one set of business simulation scenarios involves a brewing company. The first scenario has the students make production decisions, trying to match production to customer demand. Once completed, students are given a scenario where they face the same production decisions, but then have the opportunity to change the product’s price as well. “This approach gives students a fresh start with each scenario, giving them a chance to learn from the previous scenario while adding a new wrinkle to the business,” Wagner says.

ScrimmageSIM is used in number of classes at WMU and at other universities, and its potential continues to grow. “I am in the process of writing a textbook for introduction to business classes that will accompany the software,” Wagner says. “The textbook will be available on Kindle so it will be inexpensive and easily accessible.”

Wagner will be testing the simulation and textbook in a section of Western’s business enterprise course in the spring and hopes it becomes the common method used to teach the class. This will give pre-business students a chance to experience a more real-world learning environment early in their education. Wagner explains, “One of the reasons we encourage internships for students is because we know it gives students more context to understand business and gain more from their education. It is my hope to continue to develop the simulation to increase its capabilities, and develop new scenarios that will allow the simulation to support an ever-wider range of business courses.”
Lean Six Sigma Certification

Western Michigan University’s Center for Integrated Supply Management offers a full range of Lean Six Sigma training that uses an applied business focus. The face-to-face sessions are functionally specific to align with career paths and areas of responsibility.

Courses are taught in a facilitated breakout format by expert instructors who engage participants by drawing upon their combined 50+ years of corporate experience in a variety of industries. During each session, the instructors introduce concepts and skills, which will then be developed and applied in a series of individual and team exercises. Participants will gain knowledge of continuous improvement methodology and Lean Six Sigma techniques used for continuous improvement and project management.

Each training session has been carefully designed and streamlined to make the most of participants’ time while ensuring they receive all the required knowledge.

AVAILABLE TRAINING

Click on the belt names below to review detailed information about each certification. If you have questions about which belt may be right for you, please contact Dr. Zac Williams, director of the Center for Integrated Supply Management and associate professor of marketing. Email Zac Williams

- **WHITE BELT**: Designed to give senior and top-level leaders a working knowledge of Lean Six Sigma as a platform for building a culture of continuous improvement.
- **YELLOW BELT**: Ideal for practitioners who want to gain a fundamental understanding of the tools used to drive continuous improvement into their everyday work.
- **GREEN BELT**: Ideal for those engaged in the technical aspects of the business, such as engineering and manufacturing. Designed for managers and
supervisors involved in the creation and management of systems supporting continuous improvement through experimentation and advanced data analysis methodologies.

- **ORANGE BELT**: Gives sales and marketing professionals hands-on application of the methodologies needed to deliver a purchase experience that delivers customer consumption advocacy and product-service buying behaviors.

- **BLACK BELT** (coming soon): Designed for mid to top-level managers who oversee and connect systems that drive continuous improvement. As site or functional team leaders, they enable organizational team members to drive the movement of change.

### COURSE BENEFITS

- Understand the history and philosophy of continuous improvement using Lean Six Sigma methodology and tools.
- Gain knowledge of the system structure, tools and techniques of Lean Six Sigma project management.
- Connect with "kindred spirit" professionals through face-to-face classroom activities.
- Explore relevant case study examples.
- Earn certification based on class participation and coursework.
- Enhance your career potential.

### MEET THE INSTRUCTORS

**Martin P. Smith, Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt Sensei**

Having attained the level of Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt Sensei, Martin Smith is an expert in analysis and experimentation in complex, chaotic environments. He has helped corporations implement continuous improvement methodology in every area of the business from accounting to warehouse processes in an effort to increase value, drive
revenue higher and maximize return on investment. These endeavors have resulted in billions of dollars in revenue generation, cost avoidance and savings.

He has a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology. He has published three books on Lean Six Sigma for marketing and sales professionals. He was the recipient of the ISBM Academic Practitioners award at Northwestern University's Kellogg Business School and an Innovation award from Darden for work related to Bayesian and Markov Modeling in marketing and sales venues. He innovated and leads Orange Belt training for sales and marketing professionals annually during the exhibitors show in Las Vegas.

Currently Smith works at General Motors in the Operational Excellence department focusing mainly on the sales and marketing functions. His present revenue/savings tally at GM is $1.6B tracked over a three-year period.

Tom Kelly, Black Belt and instructor of management

Tom Kelly is an instructor of management at Western Michigan University. He has more than 30 years of supply chain and supplier quality experience in various leadership positions with Dexter Company, Amcor, Conn-Selmer, Whirlpool and Parker Hannifin. He won two “excellence in quality” awards while at Whirlpool. During his time in the private sector he developed numerous supplier quality measurement and assessment systems and established supply chain processes that allowed for ISO certification.

His teaching focus at Western includes Lean Six Sigma, supply chain and how the two subjects interact in a business environment. Kelly is a certified Black Belt, as well as trained auditor. He holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Notre Dame and an MBA from Western Michigan University. Additionally, he has been an adjunct business instructor at Davenport University.
BRING TRAINING TO YOUR COMPANY

WMU’s Center for Integrated Supply Management offers customized, onsite sessions. Want to train a cross-functional group? No problem. Interested in a session that combines company employees and suppliers? No problem. WMU has the resources and expertise to take any educational need and customize a solution to move a company’s workforce to the next level of excellence. Contact Dr. Zac Williams today to discuss the right option for your team.

GET STARTED TODAY