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Decisions and their implementation are the lifeblood of any business, so in many ways, teaching students the fundamentals of good decision making is one of the most vital things we do.

In this issue of the college magazine, you will see stories that highlight decision making in a variety of contexts. Whether you are reading the cover story about alumna Amy (Bies) Kenny and her leadership at New Holland Brewing and in the Michigan craft beer industry, one of the stories about our faculty, students or staff, or one of the other features on our many accomplished alumni, you will see that decision making and strategic rollout of decisions is often the lynchpin of success.

As you read, you will notice that certain themes emerge—people, communication, research, data, leadership. All are essential components of effective decision making and central to everything we do in business and in the college itself.

Here are just some of the initiatives which help guide Haworth College of Business students and community members in becoming extremely capable decision makers.

- The college opened the Greenleaf Trust Trading Room in fall 2014, offering a state-of-the-art learning environment for investment analysis.
- A new major in entrepreneurship within the college and a University-wide entrepreneurship minor are educating future business owners in the fundamentals and nuances of the entrepreneurial enterprise.
- The new supply chain management center is enhancing our ability to deliver leading-edge instruction and forge deeper connections with industry.
- Starting Gate, a mentor-based student business accelerator, allows students from across WMU to access valuable resources in developing their startup companies.
- Faculty-student consultancies in supply chain and marketing provide students with critical experience and companies with professional-level services.
- Many students participate in case competitions, learning the many factors in the business environment that affect decision making, while developing relationships with their teammates, peers and industry professionals.
- Experiential learning continues to be the cornerstone of our curriculum. Students participate in an array of experiential learning opportunities from feasibility studies to simulations to internships.
- The college offers executive education and workforce development programs, designed to provide companies with the tailored support they need in a variety of areas.
- The college embeds social entrepreneurship and meaningful service learning initiatives into the curriculum.

This is an exciting time at the Haworth College of Business! As we make decisions on the content of the curriculum and new opportunities for the college, we often turn to our alumni and industry partners for input on their needs. I hope this magazine will provide a conversation starter between us. I appreciate your perspective and expertise and invite you to contact my office at any time to discuss how we can innovate and improve our delivery of business education so that a Haworth College of Business degree grows in value every day.

Sincerely,

Kay M. Palan, Ph.D.
Dean, Haworth College of Business
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A Cool Brew

“People always think it would be very cool to work for a brewery, and they are right!” says Amy (Bies) Kenny, B.B.A.’86, chief operating officer and chief financial officer for New Holland Brewing. This cool industry is also a growing one, complete with loyal consumers and a vibrant beer culture. National trends show consistent growth in consumer spending on craft beers year-after-year.

New Holland represents just what the avid beer connoisseur is seeking: a commitment to craft. “For us, craft is about enriching the lives of our customers, consumers, employees, and communities through our products and through the experiences we create,” says Kenny. “Making great craft beer is just one of the ways we accomplish that. Craft brewing is the foundation of our business, but craft, as a concept, is in everything we do. It is who we are.”

How does New Holland embody the philosophy of craft in other areas?

- The New Holland Pub on 8th in Holland, Michigan, is an anchor in the downtown retail district. In addition to serving mainstay and seasonal brands, the pub offers specialty beers and spirits made onsite that can only be found onsite.
- Sidecar, a retail store next to the pub, opened recently and allows customers to sample products and purchase merchandise, including items made by craftspeople utilizing the brewery’s spent bourbon barrels.
- The company announced the opening of a new location in Grand Rapids, Michigan, expanding its impact in West Michigan.
- New Holland is leading the way in Michigan in craft distilling, an exciting opportunity for growth and additional hand-crafted experiences.

Michigan’s Beer Scene

New Holland is definitely in a state with a rich history of beer making and where the industry is on a meteoric rise.

Michigan ranks fifth nationally in the number of breweries, microbreweries and
Critical Decisions

I continue to be impressed by the fraternal nature of the industry. While we are competitors, we also share ideas and can sit and have a beer together.

– Amy (Bies) Kenny

brewpubs, with well over 130. Flash back to 1991 when there were just three.

During the recent economic downturn, microbreweries were adding jobs when many other industries were not. Recent investments in increased production as well as expansions and renovations totaled more than $70 million across the state’s brewing industry.

Sales of Michigan craft beer in the state’s supermarkets are modest in terms of total beer sales but nearly doubled between 2007 and 2011, continuing to rise. And the trend does not seem to be ending anytime soon. The passion for craft beer and the movement to buy local have proven a powerful combination.

As one of the top five breweries in the state in terms of production, New Holland is an important part of the growth of beer making in Michigan. And Kenny notes that although competition among breweries is quite serious, there is camaraderie and support as well. “I continue to be impressed by the fraternal nature of the industry. While we are competitors, we also share ideas and can sit and have a beer together.”

Embracing Artistry in Brewing and Business

Managing the growth of New Holland, making thoughtful decisions that align with the company’s vision, and supporting the people who make the business a success are just some of the many responsibilities that Kenny has in her role as COO and CFO.

Just as there is a craft to brewing, there is also a craft to decision making when leading in an organization.

For Kenny, it all begins with the company vision, which is, “We value people. We value quality. We value teams and teamwork. We value artistry. We value profitability. We value ambition.”

“Our vision defines our values and gives a roadmap for where we want to be in the future,” says Kenny. “Being true to our values defines our success. And as a member of the company’s leadership team, it is a touchstone against which I measure all the decisions we make.”

According to Kenny, goal number one at New Holland is “building an environment of continuous improvement and controls while maintaining the fun company culture that makes it a great place to work.”

A significant continuous improvement for New Holland and Kenny was deciding to upgrade the company’s business systems in 2013. The decision was driven by the need for better data to effectively manage the company.

Until that point, like many small companies, New Holland managed with QuickBooks and a variety of spreadsheets and clipboards throughout the organization.

“Making a move like this is more than implementing software,” says Kenny. “It is a culture change in how you gather and use information. It requires discipline in making sure that everything you do in the process is accurately captured in the system in real time.”

The leadership team chose Orchestrated BEER, an all-in-one brewery management software package built on SAP Business One. When they made the decision to purchase, they found that there was an opening in the implementation schedule only a few months later. “Within six months, we made the decision, assigned a team to work on the project, promoted the culture change internally, trained the finance, sales, and operations staff on new processes and implemented the new system,” says Kenny. “The team still had their regular jobs to do at the same time. Then we had to close the fiscal year on the new system only two months later.”
Kenny notes that this first year following the system upgrade has been a year of learning and improving the company’s processes but well worth the effort and the issues that come with any project of this magnitude. “We have better data that supports good business decision making, and we have a great team that works together to continue to improve our use of the system,” says Kenny. “This intensive project has made us a better company.”

Making the company better and scanning the horizon for challenges, and the possible opportunities embedded in them, is Kenny’s forte.

What are some of the challenges that she identifies for New Holland?

She cites three that are a part of the regular dialog in their company and all have to do with growth—the growth of New Holland and the brewing industry in Michigan.

Challenge No. 1, Size: A large part of Kenny’s role is to make sure that the company provides the resources and environment that foster a continuous improvement culture. As the business grows, New Holland’s goal is to keep the small company feel where people want to be a part of positive change and have a deeply rooted connection to the business. It is a challenge, but one that the company culture helps to address each day.

Challenge No. 2, Saturation: Another challenge is the growth of the craft brewing industry itself. With the dramatic increase in the number of new breweries, competition for shelf space in retail stores and for tap handles in bars and restaurants is at an all-time high. “This could cause some breweries to cut prices, potentially forcing decisions on whether to compromise margins,” says Kenny. “This increase in the number of breweries also puts pressure on our ability to find talented, well-trained team members with industry experience.”

Challenge No. 3, Scale: Kenny also points out that brewing is a capital-intensive industry. “We continue to face the challenge of balancing our growth rate with the constant need for capital expenditures to increase capacity.”

Facing these challenges and making informed and transformational decisions is something that Kenny is passionate about and thoroughly prepared to do, after experience in both the public and corporate accounting fields as well as in several managerial roles with leading West Michigan companies. When she thinks back to her very first days of learning to become a sound business decision maker—her days at the Haworth College of Business—she recalls a supportive environment that gave her the tools to succeed.

“I came to WMU as a transfer student after studying aerospace engineering at another university. The smaller class sizes at the college of business and the encouragement of the professors for open discussion in class were wonderful,” says Kenny. “I entered the business world through my degree in accountancy, which gives you a view of everything that is happening in a company. And, you have to go beyond seeing transactions and move to seeking the story behind the transactions. Every aspect of my business education at WMU, including my business law, communication and management courses, prepared me for my career in business.”

Kenny says that she feels fortunate to work with such a great team of people in an exciting industry. “I have great respect for the people I work with, and I look forward to going to work every day.”

When asked what she thinks people outside the industry would find surprising, she answers, “I think people probably have a vision that working for a brewery involves more daily beer drinking than it actually does.”

The reality is that Kenny’s role interacts with everyone involved in crafting the perfect beer … and the ultimate satisfaction is knowing that others are enjoying the efforts of their craft.
Crafting Solutions for Breweries, Distributors and Stores

When you walk into your local grocery store looking to purchase your favorite craft beer, you assume that it will be on the shelf and that the transaction will be easy. Yet maintaining the right inventory of beer, wine and spirits is a complicated business.

Dr. Marcel Zondag, assistant professor of marketing, and Dr. Bruce Ferrin, associate professor of marketing, are conducting research with Bell's Brewery; Constellation Wines, San Francisco, Bell's distributor in southwest Michigan; and Meijer stores on improving the in-store selection and availability of craft beer, wine and spirits for shoppers.

"Having products available when and where customers want to buy them is the most important performance measure there is. If you lose that opportunity, it is gone forever," says Zondag.

Capturing that opportunity and the craft beverage customer—often a higher basket value shopper to stores—is just the issue that this research addresses.

“We hope to discover whether application of supply chain management theory to supply processes used for craft beer, wine and spirits poses any pragmatic challenge,” says Ferrin. “We are trying to develop new performance metrics for assessing supply chain performance in relation to on-shelf availability and market responsiveness.”

Ferrin and Zondag have finished phase one of this project, conducting qualitative research that includes interviews with marketing and sales people at Bell’s, beer buyers for Meijer and representatives from some of the distributors.

Additionally, student Karen Kalinski has been working on a concurrent research project looking at the connection between alcohol sales in grocery stores and surrounding bars and restaurants and if the craft beer experience extends to the grocery store aisle. Her thesis work indicates that it is difficult to maintain the craft experience and brand promise in a retail establishment that typically has restrictions in how the product is displayed and customers’ experience of it.

"Karen’s work raises more questions for the research that Bruce and I are conducting," says Zondag, “We are looking at what drives the demand signal for stores to replenish inventory, and Karen’s work looks at what creates the demand signal in the aisle.”

By analyzing the procedures used for deciding which beers and wines to sell and combining it with store-specific sales data, the researchers intend to improve the assortment decisions and inventory management procedures used in the adult beverage supply chain.

“The store is the place where marketing strategy and supply chain management come together,” says Zondag.

This complex research raises many questions—questions that businesses struggle with but may not have adequate time or available staff to explore in an in-depth way. With world-class food marketing and integrated supply management programs, WMU’s Haworth College of Business has robust expertise that can aid businesses.

In fact, student Brianna Amat is currently conducting a research project on shopper anxiety and wine. She will be exploring the incongruence between wine consumption and wine shopping and viewing the issue from a multi-channel perspective.

“Collaborating with industry partners provides valuable insights and data for our academic research, but it also provides a direct link from theory to practice, helping to improve business operations and performance for our business partners,” says Ferrin.

Kalamazoo to be Home to Sustainable Brewing Degree

The nation’s first higher education programs in sustainable brewing are being launched at Kalamazoo Valley Community College and Western Michigan University. The brewing programs, which will be offered starting in fall 2015, were developed by the two schools working in close coordination with industry. The resulting “two-plus-two” program in sustainable craft brewing will offer students the opportunity to earn a certificate or associate degree at KVCC, then move on to a Bachelor of Science degree that marries industry art and science with WMU’s national reputation in sustainability.

Addressing the industry’s need for talent well-versed in the science and technology of brewing, the degree promises to help support the rapidly growing craft brewing industry in Michigan.
When you step into the Greenleaf Trust Trading Room, you are greeted by a scrolling electronic ticker, interactive market display boards, noting the rise and fall of stocks, bonds, currencies and commodities, and an atmosphere charged with analytical thought and the energy of discovery.

The trading room, located in the main corridor of the college of business, lets students experience the excitement of a Wall Street trading floor. Equipped with Bloomberg and Morningstar terminals, students use the facility to track real-time data on market movements while keeping an eye to the world news updates on large screens in the front of the room.

Hands-on learning is at the center of this new classroom. Using the hardware and software commonly used by finance professionals, students analyze the latest stock quotes; build and test investment portfolios; compare currency exchange rates; and scrutinize company fundamentals.

A Transformative Experience

“This space transforms what we are able to do with our students in terms of teaching about the financial markets,” says Dr. Devrim Yaman, chair of the Department of Finance and Commercial Law. “Professors are able to illustrate concepts using the powerful features of the room, creating a very dynamic learning environment.”

And students agree.

“I believe that in order to properly learn something as intricate as finance, you need the right tools,” says senior Adriano Deabreu, who has taken two classes in the space, including the student managed investment fund course. “The trading room has provided me the opportunity to use the same technology and applications as finance professionals in order to gain the knowledge I need to be successful post-graduation. With the use of the technology in the trading room, I have been able to attain a true understanding of finance-related concepts that I may have otherwise never explored in a hands-on way until being hired.”

With the U.S. Department of Labor predicting employment in investment and related fields will expand 25 percent by 2020, the space and the access to knowledge the classroom represents is critical in fully educating WMU students in the range of financial assets available for trade and the globalization of securities markets.

Eugenia Cunningham, a senior, has studied both computer applications in finance and investment analysis in the trading room. In her computer applications course, a semester-long project involved student groups selecting a publicly traded company listed on the New York Stock Exchange and presenting the financials from the last three years. “In my team, I was responsible for reconstructing all the financial statements using key formulas I learned in my previous business finance course. In order to complete the financial ratio analysis, I
heavily relied on using the Bloomberg terminal in the Greenleaf Trust Trading Room to extract key financial data.”

Cunningham has also used StockTrak, a simulation where each student is responsible for managing a $100,000 portfolio, in her investment course. “Having the real-time ticker in the trading room allows me to stay current with my investments and make trades accordingly if any of my companies are underperforming my pre-determined expectations,” she says. “It is difficult to put into words the impact that the facility has had on me and on others. I feel like a true investment researcher, and overall, I am a much more educated business decision maker from my learning experiences in the space.”

And knowing where to go for relevant data to make key decisions is half the battle. “When I first used the Greenleaf Trust Trading Room, I was amazed, and I was really excited to start learning how to use the Bloomberg terminals,” says senior Aaron Yaden. “At first, the volume of information was overwhelming, and it still can be, but learning more about how to use Bloomberg and other tools to interpret data has been incredible.”

The world of financial data can be staggering. Guiding students through that world is new faculty member Dr. Matthew Ross, assistant professor of finance and commercial law, who notes that the trading room provides “a teaching experience like no other. The facility allows instruction on a different level, according to Ross. “I’m able to connect the theory with real examples almost immediately.”

Teaching students how to wade through the high volume of data available, analyze key pieces and make sound decisions is a challenge. “The space must be carefully managed to meet its full potential, which is extraordinary,” says Ross. But facilitating student learning in the presence of some very big data is a challenge that Department of Finance and Commercial Law faculty embrace and enjoy.

Connections are the key to all of the technological tools available in the trading room. Connections with professors through expert instruction, connections between world economies and financial market movements, and the connections that students form with each other while researching projects and bouncing ideas off of each other in a space that is electric with hands-on exploration and investigation.

The gift of this trading room allows us to improve the student experience in so many vital ways,” says Dr. Kay Palan, dean of the Haworth College of Business. “The facility improves student readiness for careers in the financial sector through an enriched classroom experience, and it allows students to heighten their analytical skills. We are so grateful to Greenleaf Trust for making this space a reality.”
Student Managed Investment Fund

Many classes call the Greenleaf Trust Trading Room home, including the student managed investment fund, which has served as a large cap manager of a portion of WMU Foundation Funds since 2009. The fund is managed by a select group of business students.

The course, to which undergraduate and graduate students must apply, has a strong focus on interpretation and coaches students to thoroughly articulate not only the decisions they are proposing, but also the reasons behind them.

“I consider this kind of a laboratory,” says David Mange, instructor of the student managed investment fund course and vice president and senior research analyst at Greenleaf Trust in Kalamazoo.

“The objective of the class is to move students from having an academic understanding of financial analysis and investment markets to having a chance to practice it,” he says.

“They are building on financial concepts that they already know, and they are analyzing a company in depth and trying to put a value to the company. Most students say they haven’t done that before,” Mange notes.

The students make the investment choices, not Mange. He guides them and urges them to deeply research their stocks, but by the end of the course, the students vote on which stocks to buy and direct Mange to make those trades.

The fund has more than doubled in the last five years, reaching a current value of $1 million.

The trading room features several market data boards, one of which is devoted to the performance of the student managed investment fund, so progress can be charted day-by-day or minute-by-minute.

Greenleaf Trust is excited about the opportunities that Western Michigan University’s Haworth College of Business students have as a result of the new Greenleaf Trust Trading Room. The real-time integration of news and data come alive for students in a dynamic way. The state-of-the-art tools that students use in the trading room to build models and paradigms of variables are the tools they will be exposed to in their internships and careers. Their experiences in the trading room will be a great Bronco advantage.

– William Johnston, Chairman, Greenleaf Trust
Companies are currently a part of a gold rush—racing to mine material so critical and precious that it can put them ahead of the competition. The gold in this case is big data—the data all around us that maps our behaviors from what we buy, to how we spend our time, and more.

Panning for big data gold comes with a number of challenges, including the volume and speed with which it enters and exits an organization. “All businesses accumulate data from different sources for many reasons,” says Dr. Kuanchin Chen, professor of business information systems. “However, research shows that companies are only analyzing 12 percent of the data they collect due to a lack of technology, talent and infrastructure.”

Though big data can be difficult to manage, Chen notes that training IT professionals on how to properly use and analyze this data can give companies a definite edge against the competition. “If collected, stored and analyzed well, deep insights can be derived from big data about human behavior and interactions, such as what people are doing or how they are feeling,” says Chen. “And while tools for measuring big data are maturing, what's currently lacking is talent in analytics. The use of these tools is easy to train someone on, but the ability to use the right technique to answer the right question takes time to cultivate.”

WMU is providing a solution to many organizations’ data headaches by teaching students to be knowledgeable and experienced in data analytics. The recently developed business analytics minor was designed to build capabilities in analytical thinking, techniques, methodologies and tools. “Students in the program are able to uncover patterns, estimate effects and predict trends for all types of data,” says Chen. “In a recent survey by The Economist magazine, 63 percent of executives indicated that faster processing of large amounts of data by knowledgeable staff using the right technology has the greatest impact on strategic decision making.”

Chen adds that WMU business information systems students have the knowledge and skill sets that can have a significant impact on the decision making processes of middle and upper management, enabling those leaders to answer questions and make critical decisions that were once difficult or impossible to make, by providing them with carefully extracted answers mined from big data.

The Four Vs of Big Data

“The four Vs are frequently used to explain the complexity and dimensions of big data,” Chen says.

Volume: The "big" of big data—the amount of information and data flowing in and out of an organization at any given time.

Velocity: The rate at which big data flows in and out of an organization from data generators such as social media and digital devices.

Variety: All of the ways that data can be accessed.

Veracity: The uncertainty and abnormality of data.
A Conversation with Kurt Mueller, B.B.A.’00, Senior Vice President at The Onion

“Doctor Just Uses Same Ultrasound Picture For Every Baby” … wait, what?

This is one of many headlines from The Onion, a digital media company that specializes in satirical content on international, national and local news. Reporting on events both real and fictional, the writers at the publication parody traditional news coverage so well that stories from The Onion are often mistaken for breaking news.

Alumnus Kurt Mueller is senior vice president of sales and partnerships at The Onion and walks us through how he got to where he is, The Onion’s business model and just what goes into being “America’s Finest News Source.”

Give us a brief overview of your career pathway from graduation to today.

I was in the integrated supply management program at WMU and started out in logistics at the Chicago Tribune. I then moved to digital media at Tribune Company and eventually ended up at The Onion after meeting the leadership team and being impressed by their vision for the business.

Give us a brief description of your role at The Onion.

I am currently our senior vice president of sales and partnerships. My team is responsible for capitalizing our business (making money) so the talented people at the organization can continue doing what they do best (being funny).

The Onion has a strong brand and loyal audience. How are you able to leverage that brand to generate advertising sales on a national level?

We have an internal content services team called Onion Labs. We specialize in content services, which combine the Onion’s writing talent with people who have strong marketing backgrounds to create content for brands. We then distribute that content natively on our sites to that loyal audience. That’s how we generate sales.

You specialize in branded content and native advertising solutions. Explain what that involves, the strategies you employ and how brands benefit.

It is becoming harder and harder to reach people through traditional marketing tactics. Onion Labs specializes in creating great content that just happens to include a brand. We believe that if you create branded content that people want to watch and share, then the brand benefits. Too many brands are creating content that people try to avoid. That makes no sense to us. The Onion has a rich history of creating great content, so it seems natural that working with advertisers to create content together will benefit both our audience and their brands.

How would you describe the culture at The Onion? How does the organization’s culture contribute to the success of the publication and the company’s business model?

The Onion is a special place in the universe, but whenever I get this question, I feel like people are always disappointed in the answer. The truth is—we are a pretty serious organization despite what you think when you see comments from people who mistake The Onion’s satire for genuine news. So, tell us honestly … what do you think when you see comments from people who mistake The Onion’s satire for genuine news?

What is one of the most challenging or rewarding business decisions you have made in your career?

Describe the decision, the circumstances, your decision-making process and the outcome.

I think the hardest decision I have made in my career was leaving an otherwise successful and safe career at a larger company to come to The Onion and take a chance on building something new. It has certainly turned out to be the most challenging decision that I have ever made. It is also the best decision I have ever made, other than marrying my wife Jamie (B.B.A.’99) whom I met at WMU.

What do you see as one of the greatest challenges in your industry over the next 10 years?

The exciting thing about the digital media business is that challenges come to you in 10-week intervals versus 10-year intervals. I think it is difficult to predict what those challenges would be 10 years from now, but I do believe that the solutions will stay the same. The ability to create great content, like we do, and monetize that content in new and interesting ways will always be the answer.

How has your education in integrated supply management prepared you for your current role and past roles?

I learned a great deal about process discipline in my ISM classes. I believe that process discipline is applicable in any industry; even the most creative business needs to be built on a foundation of strong processes to achieve results.

How did The Onion going to an all-digital format as a publication change the company?

We are arguably in the most successful period in The Onion’s history and closing the chapter on print has been symbolic of the changes to our business model. We believe in operating as the business we want to become and not the business we used to be. Exerting any energy in print simply took our focus off of our long-term vision to build this digital content services business.

So, tell us honestly … what do you think when you see comments from people who mistake The Onion’s satire for genuine news?

Not sure what you mean. The Onion is genuine news.
Students at the Haworth College of Business are doing more than learning—they’re discovering, evolving and defining their success. Committed to recognizing excellence, the college developed Trailblazers—a student recognition program that highlights 25 students who are fundamental parts of the campus and community. Students who self-identified as being leaders, both on and off campus, were encouraged to apply.

A panel of business college faculty and staff had a difficult decision to make, selecting the top 25 Trailblazers from a pool of more than 50 applicants, choosing students who demonstrated excellence in the areas of academics, personal and professional development, leadership, and community or campus involvement. The program also contained a voting portion in which more than 8,000 votes were cast to determine 20 percent of the students’ overall scores. For the voting portion, students recorded videos, showcasing their personal branding and communication skills.

“When I look at this group of inaugural Trailblazers, I am proud to see an extremely accomplished group that represents what the Haworth College of Business is all about,” says Dr. Kay Palan, dean of the Haworth College of Business. “We are looking forward to watching this year’s students continue to blaze trails for themselves and others and evolve as leaders in the business world.”

On April 15, all Trailblazers were honored for their accomplishments, service and leadership. Determined by the panel’s score and the public voting portion of the program, Brianna Amat, a food and consumer package goods marketing student, was named Trailblazer of the Year.

“A Trailblazer isn’t the person with the longest resume, highest GPA or best job or internship offer,” says Amat. “To me, being a Trailblazer means being someone who embraces opportunities to be different, motivated by the pure thrill of the unknown. As Trailblazers, we are individuals who see failures as lessons and successes as new starting lines.”

A WMU Medallion Scholar and Lee Honors College student, Amat has served in various roles on campus, most recently as an undergraduate research assistant in the Department of Marketing. She has also completed several marketing internships at organizations including J.M. Smucker and the Lee Honors College. Amat participated in the National Grocers Association University Case Competition, winning first place with her teammates in 2014. She is also the vice president of professional events in the Food Marketing Association. Amat will be working as a category leadership intern at Kraft in the summer of 2015.

“The Haworth College of Business gave me an opportunity when my resume was bare and my major was undecided,” says Amat. “I was an investment for the Haworth College of Business, and I plan on having a great ROI.”
David Hoogendoorn, B.B.A.’88

At just 35 years of age, David Hoogendoorn found himself facing the most challenging business decision of his career. As managing partner of the Grand Rapids office of Arthur Andersen, he was responsible for leading the sale of the dissolving practice to one of its competitors. That process was instrumental in refining his decision-making skills and also began his deep dive into the West Michigan community.

His goal in the sale of the practice was to provide the best opportunities for both clients and employees to continue their success. Today, Hoogendoorn is the market segment leader of the Michigan and northwest Ohio Ernst & Young practices (the firm he chose for the sale) and is responsible for the growth, people and brand of the firm.

According to Hoogendoorn, success in any organization is largely based on culture and a collaborative approach. “You build a culture of success when you help clients achieve their business objectives, people attain their potential, and have a positive impact on your community. You are able to build effective collaboration by ensuring that teams are diverse and inclusive, which allows the ideas of the group to prevail over individual or homogeneous thinking. I believe that this can only occur when you allow people to bring their whole selves to work, and they do not feel the need to check their personal lives or beliefs at the door.”

The West Michigan community has certainly benefited from Hoogendoorn’s civic engagement as an active member of many boards, including the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, Goodwill Industries and The Right Place Inc., among others. Hoogendoorn is quick to point out that community engagement is a two-way street, “Because I was relatively young when I was handling the sale of Andersen to Ernst & Young, I found myself seeking mentorship from client executives and community leaders. It was through this experience that I learned that community engagement is a two-way street, “Because I was relatively young when I was handling the sale of Andersen to Ernst & Young, I found myself seeking mentorship from client executives and community leaders. It was through this experience that I learned that business was built on relationships and that caring about your community meant community members would care about you when it mattered most.”

In Hoogendoorn’s view, with the community behind you, it is all the more important that you are worthy of that trust as you work on behalf of business and civic enterprises. Implementing decisions effectively is a key part of that trust.

Hoogendoorn outlines principles that aid him each day in decision implementation.

- Teams make better decisions. While collective decision making generally takes longer, the resolution is more thoughtful, and it is easier to gain buy-in for immediate implementation.
- Objectives, timelines and accountability measures are crucial for implementation progress.
- Constant communication is central as implementation occurs, regardless of the news. In fact, I often ask clients “how fast does bad news travel in your organization” as a benchmark of the environment. An open and direct line of communication is vital, especially as change is occurring.
- The central tenet of process improvement is to never be satisfied with success. But even more importantly, to stay humble when you have it.

Culture and Community
Perspectives

Jesiele Neves de Lima, MBA’04

Known as an agent for positive change at the Eaton Corporation, Jesiele Neves de Lima has spent more than 20 years with the company, recently taking on a newly created supply chain design manager position in Eaton’s electrical division. Responsible for the design, setup and improvement of sales forecast information and material processes to optimize a material network across 26 countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Lima leverages industry models and best practices while driving regional integration and maximizing the company’s competitive advantages.

It’s a complex job that involves leading multiple transformative changes across the organization. And as Lima notes, it’s a job where people must come first.

Many of Lima’s roles at Eaton, both in the automotive division and now in the electrical business, have involved restructuring and integration. Periods of significant change can often be difficult times for employees to feel valued and involved. “I believe in people,” says Lima. “As a leader, my priority is to first engage people in the ultimate vision. Then, I break large objectives into reasonable-sized goals for quick wins along the way. Next, I focus on the strengths of each individual, and as we align processes, I seek the right place for each person.”

A six-year journey to develop a global footprint for Eaton’s vehicle business, with the goal of being able to build any product anywhere, illustrates Lima’s approach to process improvement through people. Motivating an initial team of 76 people in the U.S., Lima then worked with a team of 26 in South America to align processes. The lead was then passed to teams within the U.S. and EMEA who executed their parts of the plan. The project involved 25 manufacturing sites worldwide. Lima shares, “This project and its success were possible because all the teams were inspired and felt rewarded for their contributions to the future of the company.”

Lima has a laser focus on forming optimized teams to enable the company to continuously improve and win markets, but she is equally focused on the individual people who make up those teams and make that possible. “It is important that each person feels positive about his or her work and its importance each day.” She describes herself as a coach, who makes the success of the team her first concern.

“I don’t embrace a micromanaging style. I like to work as democratically as possible and delegate projects to people who can succeed in the work. I adopt what I would call a “commanding” leadership style only in a crisis when it is a must in order to gain a faster recovery. And still team communication and sharing the ownership of the matter at hand is essential.”

Listening is a skill that Lima uses daily in her work. “The key to change management is to listen to multiple stakeholders,” says Lima. “They know their business. Then, find options to gain their support while moving forward and tailor the process to the area based on feedback.”

A constant feedback loop has been crucial to a current project Lima is leading, advancing the sales forecast process across five divisions in the electrical business in the EMEA. “Feedback helps us reinforce and adjust the new model that is being adopted country by country, product by product.”

Lima’s communication roadmap for transformational change always includes
Kevin Carter, B.B.A.’89

It was a challenge starting a business advisory firm more than 20 years ago, but it was a challenge worth undertaking for Kevin Carter, president of Carter Advisory Group Inc. After graduating and establishing his career in public accounting, Carter decided to pursue the world of entrepreneurship, starting his own accounting and consulting practice in his hometown of Detroit. Now, Carter and his firm represent clients ranging from international corporations to estates and trusts, all with the same goal in mind: understanding the dreams of clients and providing the means to accomplish them.

Before he could help others reach their goals, Carter needed to set his own. Just six months removed from Coopers and Lybrand (now PricewaterhouseCoopers), Carter knew it was time to start his own firm. “I remember my biggest challenge wasn’t getting clients but learning how to manage an office and staff effectively,” says Carter. “Once I got a handle on that, I saw my firm prosper beyond my wildest imagination, and it was at that point I knew what my true calling was and who my target market would be.”

For Carter, that true calling has been working with entrepreneurs. Because of his own experience, Carter not only understands the language of business but also the desire to turn a passion into a successful career. “I have been blessed with the gift to assist entrepreneurs in seeing their vision from an outside perspective,” says Carter. “One of the key areas often overlooked by people starting their own businesses is having the wisdom to understand that you don’t have to be an expert in everything.” Being cognizant enough to relinquish some control is something Carter helps his clients to do. “It is difficult for some to ascertain whether an idea can actually turn into a viable business or if it is a well-crafted hobby. However, once it’s apparent that we have a sustainable business, many of my clients become successful in their ventures.”

One of the ways Carter measures his success is by making a difference in his community. “I have great passion to help those with talents but limited opportunity to use them,” shares Carter. Through his involvement in numerous charitable and civic organizations, including developing non-profit programs for youth and senior citizens in Southeast Michigan, Carter is attempting to bring those talents to light. “To me, success is leaving a situation better than I found it and providing hope where there is very little. I’m thankful I am able to share my experience with others who struggle with some of the same challenges I did and to help where I can.”

In 2015, she was tapped to lead a resource group at Eaton with a focus on women in leadership in the EMEA. “The resource group’s goal is to influence a new mindset in order for men and women to work together more effectively, encourage women to take new assignments and support women in terms of work-life balance,” says Lima. “This is an important journey for our teams and for our company across multiple countries and cultures.”

She is also a supporter of Grupo Primavera in Campinas, Brazil, which provides professional courses to teenage girls from poor areas seeking an education in order to find jobs. And in 2012, she began working as a volunteer with the United Nations’ efforts on women’s initiatives.

“I am thankful to outstanding mentors, including professors at WMU, and to all the different teams and cultures that welcomed me along the way,” says Lima. “I embrace learning and helping others to transform the world and to succeed—helping usher in positive change where people are central is part of my DNA!”

Redefining Success

For Lima, helping to empower people in their careers is not something confined to just the projects she manages. Since 2003, she has been active in Eaton’s mentoring program, where mentees are placed with a mentor who is a match for their individual needs.

For Lima, helping to empower people in their careers is not something confined to just the projects she manages. Since 2003, she has been active in Eaton’s mentoring program, where mentees are placed with a mentor who is a match for their individual needs.

Perspectives
Laura Jordan, MBA’13

Laura Jordan began her career in banking accidentally. As an undergraduate music major, she took a job at a bank to help pay for college expenses. Her first manager saw something in her and took the time to explain the “why behind the how.” And for Jordan, something just clicked. Today, she is senior vice president at Royal Bank of Scotland Americas, managing a field support team with responsibility for operational soundness in more than 1,200 branch banking locations.

Jordan’s team drives and models behavior in the field, through coaching, mentoring and training, to ensure that branch management has successfully embedded sound controls into all aspects of the customer experience, thereby earning the customer’s trust and loyalty. It is vital work, and it is performed by a virtual team.

What are the essential elements of leading a successful virtual team? Jordan points to communication, engagement and accessibility. “The key to managing employees remotely is to first develop an atmosphere which promotes teamwork and employee engagement,” says Jordan. “Dedicated, engaged colleagues hold themselves accountable to the team which reduces stress over production, security and non-performance.”

Successful leaders in a virtual environment must first develop a relationship with team members face-to-face, according to Jordan, allowing the team to view the leader as a person and not just as a voice on the phone or words in an email message. This relationship must be maintained by periodic in-person interaction during the year and through ongoing communication. Being available is another important aspect of leading a virtual team. “You cannot be a ‘virtual’ or absentee leader; employees must be able to reach you when they need something,” says Jordan.

Unbound by geography, Jordan is able to recruit a team of highly skilled individuals regardless of location. Yet one common thread unites all her team members. “In our company, we understand that we exist to anticipate, meet and service the needs of our customers,” says Jordan. “When our customers succeed, we succeed.”

A core part of that commitment to customers is employee engagement, as engaged employees are best able to ultimately assist customers with their needs. “Engagement scores in our company measure the level of ownership the colleagues feel about the company and their level of satisfaction with the leadership and communications they receive,” says Jordan. “High engagement scores are not an indicator that everyone is happy about every decision. What they do indicate is how effectively you have communicated the decision and why it was made, that you were honest and open about the advantages and disadvantages, and that you have provided a safe environment for questions and feedback.”

Communication— it’s the lynchpin of success for a virtual team and also the greatest challenge for a manager. Jordan has two communication models that she has developed and internalized that assist her in always putting communication at the center of all her team interactions.

Conflict Coaching Model: “Very few people enjoy conflict resolution, but disagreements and misunderstandings within a team must be dealt with in a timely and positive manner. By using a tried and true format for such discussions, the manager will feel less hesitant to postpone the inevitable discussion.”

This communication model consists of the following elements:

- Ensure that you understand the situation and be certain that you are the best person to resolve it. You want to be mindful of authority levels. Instead of speaking with the colleague yourself, a better approach might be to coach your colleague’s leader to handle the situation.
- Praise in public and criticize in private.
- Clearly state the situation and why it concerns you.
- Listen!
- Acknowledge the employee’s feelings but do not condone the problematic behavior.
- Agree upon an action plan to correct the behavior.
- Follow up.

Human Communications Model: “I find that beginning and ending business conversations on a human level leads to enhanced cooperation and improved communications. It also gives people a chance to get to know you as a person. Instead of opening the conversation, or the email message, with the problem or issue, which is the business aspect of the communication, I start the discussion on a personal note based on how well I am acquainted with the colleague.”

Jordan exits conversations in the same manner. The result is a rapport that is much more likely to warrant assistance. “I have had many colleagues tell me that when they see my phone number or email message pop up that they answer it right away because they know the discussion will be lively and fun. An atmosphere in which individuals are seen and valued is a big part of solving business issues.”

When it comes to measuring success, Jordan’s teams get results, her engagement scores as a manager are very high, and she has mentored several colleagues who now hold senior leadership positions at the bank. Perhaps it is because she, like her first manager, takes the time to explain the “why behind the how.”
Kim Hammonds, MBA’93

Kim Hammonds started her career as a safety engineer at Ford Motor Company. She pursued her MBA from WMU after deciding that she needed an advanced degree that gave her more expertise in business.

That business expertise led her to several leadership roles at Ford, ranging from engineering, to manufacturing, to marketing, to IT.

Information technology became Hammonds’ home at Ford. She then moved to Dell where she held roles in manufacturing and supply chain, helping to set up manufacturing facilities in Brazil, Poland and India. Next, she took her skills to Boeing, where she worked in IT, eventually becoming the global chief information officer. Now at Deutsche Bank, she serves as global CIO and global co-head of technology and operations.

Hammonds has had a brilliant career, with her leadership recognized and rewarded at some of the most respected corporations in the world. And though many things have contributed to her success, she cites ethical leadership and work ethic as among the most important.

Hammonds’ role as global CIO at Deutsche Bank includes all aspects of IT; additionally, she is responsible for the bank’s worldwide operations. She also works with her team on technical innovation—areas such as mobile capability and applications for customers. The goal is to better understand how customers use mobile banking and to ultimately become a more digital bank, capitalizing on the latest developments in digital banking technology.

For Hammonds, along with the apps, the code, the processes, there is a focus on making decisions that are in the best interest of the business and its customers. “Every day we must look at ourselves in the mirror and be sure that we did our best and led others ethically with a strong core value system,” she says. “Information technology touches every business. Without IT, most businesses would not be in business. IT staff have access to systems, networks, data centers, computers, phones and security systems that run companies. A high degree of trust is required to ensure that works properly every day.”

Hammonds looks for an ethical compass in her employees. “For my team members, I ask myself whether they can always be trusted, exhibit the right judgment, have good technical problem solving abilities, and set a high standard for themselves and those who work for them. I also want to see how they reward ethical behavior.”

She also expects her colleagues to work hard. “I always expect a lot of myself and others, and I have a strong work ethic. I expect teams and people that work for me to do what they say they will, deliver results, and lead by example,” says Hammonds. “Working hard and working strategically will often make the difference in solving a complex problem.”

A lifelong student of data, Hammonds believes that data, paired with diligent and thoughtful analysis, is the key to good business decision making.

In making any decision, she always gathers the facts and data and then begins problem solving. “When looking at a challenging business decision, I work to understand what the issue really is, what data confirms that, what the customer implications are, what we need to do immediately and long-term to solve it, where the problem exists elsewhere, and whether the team has what it needs and the right expertise.”

It is this comprehensive approach to problem solving that has earned Hammonds the respect of her colleagues throughout her career. And it is her colleagues that she values above all else.

“The most rewarding experience in my career has been watching teams excel and deliver outcomes they never thought possible. The best part is then rewarding and promoting people during that process of success. One of my personal legacies will be the people I have helped excel and live up to their full potential. I have learned this from my mentors who have always believed in me at times when I didn’t necessarily believe in myself. It is extremely satisfying to coach people to always do their best, and when success doesn’t always happen, to help them understand why and learn from their mistakes.”
A Strategic Point of View

The task: Provide strategic direction, resources and advocacy for Western Michigan University’s Haworth College of Business.

The team: The Haworth College of Business Advisory Council—a group of executives composed of alumni and friends of the college, representing a variety of industries and perspectives.

The target: Helping the college achieve vision-aligned goals in regard to operational strategies, academic programs, friend-raising and fund-raising.

The Haworth College of Business Advisory Council is a group of individuals committed to working for the betterment of the college each and every day. During both the council’s focused meetings, where members assist Dean Kay Palan and her leadership team with a variety of projects related to the health of the college, to everyday encounters with potential college of business advocates, the council members work diligently on behalf of the Haworth College of Business.

“Our focus is on highlighting the great work happening at the Haworth College of Business and helping the college meet its goals for the future,” says outgoing council president Mike Lewis, recently retired executive vice president at BMO Harris Bank in Chicago. “The college provides a superior business education, and its reputation is growing regionally. The council members are here to assist in any way we can to promote the quality of the college. This is a true labor of love for us.”

Acting as a vital sounding board for the dean, council members have the perspectives, backgrounds and skills to help move the college forward in significant ways.

What sorts of projects occupy the time and talents of the council members?

- Connections: Council members help to engage fellow alumni in the life of the college through alumni events, recruitment of prospective students and recruitment of talent from the college of business. They also connect the college to valuable resources through their own personal networks.

- A strategic point of view: The council engages in a number of strategic initiatives. Currently, council members are working with the dean on evaluating potential risks and opportunities for the college in the next five to ten years.

- Fund-raising: Members of the council assist in fund-raising efforts on behalf of the college by encouraging awareness about the impact of philanthropy as well as the fund-raising needs of the college.

“The advisory council plays a vitally important role in our college,” says Dean Kay Palan. “We are fortunate to have a wonderful group of leaders who give unselfishly of their time and expertise with the sole purpose of helping us to become an even stronger college. By collaborating with our administrators, faculty and staff, council members make the Haworth College of Business a vibrant and forward-focused business college.”

Haworth College of Business Advisory Council Members

Sandi Lucie Doctor, MBA’83, vice president, Northwood Group

Mike Gerfen, B.B.A.’87, executive director, VML

Ann Harten, vice president, Global Human Resources, Haworth

Dave Hoogendoorn, B.B.A.’88, market segment leader, Michigan and Northwest Ohio, and office managing partner, Grand Rapids, Ernst & Young

Mark Jackson, B.B.A.’81, global director, Process Systems Organization, General Motors

Michael Lewis, B.B.A.’71, executive vice president (retired), BMO Harris Bank

Tony McKinney, B.B.A.’92, vice president and assistant treasurer, Stryker

Kenneth Miller, B.B.A.’69, MBA’70, president and CEO, Millennium Restaurant Group LLC

Phil Straniero, executive-in-residence, Western Michigan University

Shawn Toldo, B.B.A.’98, director, National Partner Sales, Microsoft

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In the Spotlight

Curriculum and Technology Headline ISM Rankings

Even as the headlines touted the latest Integrated Supply Management program rankings—No. 5 in undergraduate education and No. 2 in teaching technology—the buzz on WMU’s campus was that this amazing news was only part of the story.

Long heralded for its unique curriculum that combines business and engineering coursework, the WMU supply management major also includes an arsenal of courses and opportunities to help students learn advanced supply chain tools that in turn help their companies make better decisions.

“It’s simply what we do,” says Dr. Robert Reck, director of the program. “Our faculty and students make the connections from research and theory to practice, and our industry partners help our efforts to continually improve.”

Making those connections also requires continuous examination of course offerings and content. Faculty members stay connected with alumni and industry to make sure students are “Ready Day One”—prepared to add immediate value to companies. It was the program’s attention to developing effective curriculum that Gartner Research discovered during the ranking evaluation—scoring WMU the highest of all schools for curriculum offerings and development and No. 5 overall, up seven spots from 2012.

And the news kept coming. In February, the program was named No. 2 for teaching technology, software and quantitative tools in undergraduate courses, just behind Penn State and placing ahead of Michigan State University, University of Tennessee and Arizona State University.

“Our supply chain program is ranked highly due to the unique integration of engineering and IT courses in our undergraduate program,” says Dr. Sime Curkovic, professor of supply management.

A leading factor in the No. 2 ranking from Software Advice was WMU’s technology-related coursework—ERP with commercial software (SAP), geographic information systems, computer-assisted design software, manufacturing engineering, quality assurance statistical packages and manufacturing resource planning platforms. A recently added business analytics minor requires students to take courses in data analytics, database management and data mining.

“It wouldn’t surprise me to see us at No. 1 soon,” adds Curkovic.
WMU has several new initiatives that faculty and industry advisors agree will improve student learning and respond to industry needs while maintaining a commitment to the unique curriculum.

“We learn from our program’s executive council members and other industry partners who place a high value on hiring our graduates,” says Reck. “Deciding how and when to integrate industry input is an important role for our faculty.”

The ISM program is poised to evolve again. To support one of the nation’s best undergraduate supply chain programs, WMU has launched a Center for Integrated Supply Management that provides a structure for the many facets of the program. Housed in Schneider Hall, home to the college of business, the center creates a focal point for integrated supply management education, research and resources.

But it is the faculty’s insistence that students learn from a curriculum ahead of the curve and one that responds to industry needs that keeps the program current.

After all. “It’s what we do.”

In the Works

• Supply Management Center: A new space designed to stimulate interdisciplinary communication, collaboration and innovation among faculty, business executives and students

• Support of learning opportunities: This includes providing industry projects within the curriculum, support for internships and curricular assessments, and development. An experiential learning classroom is also in the works.

• Faculty research: Support for supply management faculty to pursue high-impact research on topics ranging from relationship management to cross-functional integration that help businesses to improve processes.

• Graduate offerings: A master of science degree in supply chain is in the works that faculty say will focus on creating value with supply chain rather than integrating supply chain activities into the value stream. A master’s degree is also being planned for students in the Republic of Georgia.

• Consultative solutions: Faculty and students, working for corporate partners, address difficulties supply chain managers face and determine best methods to solve those problems in the workplace through a variety of consulting avenues, including Bronco Force Solutions Team (see pg. 22).

Reasons Companies Say They Hire WMU ISM Graduates

1 Multitasking abilities, specifically demonstrated by working during college.
2 Breadth of the program’s curriculum and responsiveness to industry trends and projections.
3 Ranking by industry leaders: No. 5 by Gartner and No. 2 by Software Advice.
4 Capability, willingness, drive, energy, passion.
5 Projects, internships and work experience—Ready Day One!
6 Self-guided.
7 Technical understanding of tools such as blueprints, components, engineering concepts and ERP/SAP.
8 Faculty support of students’ work during internships making learning a goal for everyone.
9 Knowledge of quality concepts.
10 Demonstrated success working with multidisciplinary teams.
In 2014, two teams from the integrated supply management program identified lean process improvement recommendations for the city of Detroit that could lead to as much as $2 million in annual savings. The Bronco Force solutions teams worked with city officials to identify operational efficiencies in two facilities—the Russell-Ferry Garage, a citywide vehicle maintenance and parts warehouse facility, and the Shoemaker Terminal Garage, a bus maintenance and parts warehouse facility for buses that are part of the Detroit Department of Transportation. Charged with working with city personnel in each facility to identify and devise lean systems that can help improve the city’s bottom line, the teams presented their findings to representatives from the Detroit mayor’s office, city council members and major city services department heads.

The teams’ reports outlined work for the city that will result in:

- Significant reduction of vehicle downtime.
- Achievement of a 95 percent rate of parts on hand for repairs at one facility, based on a pilot project with Detroit’s parking operations vehicle fleet.
- The potential for annual savings of $500,000 to $1 million in maintenance and repair costs at each facility, upon completion of recommended shorter-term actions.

According to Ken Jones, instructor of integrated supply management and director of executive education in WMU’s Haworth College of Business, the teams were able to use external benchmarks to identify and evolve a best practices process that already existed in the city’s structure. Using that as a base, the teams developed easy-to-use forms and checklists for both vehicle operators and mechanics to manage maintenance cycles; developed a better process to leverage an existing NAPA inventory-parts optimization system; and developed a citywide set of fleet rollout priorities.

At the bus facility, they also developed an internal management system and communication plan to improve asset utilization, mechanic productivity and morale as well as strengthen relationships among DDOT leadership, mechanics, bus operators and their respective union leadership.

The teams’ goals included eliminating waste, reducing expenditures, and providing the structure, scale and flexibility for maximum efficiency for the facilities.

Team members included recent graduates Hanna Downs of Novi and Tom Monette of Sterling Heights; current students Leo Bieniek of Warren and Jacob Williams of Traverse City; alumnus Joe Fleck of Oakland, a retired senior leader from General Motors; and Ken Jones, who is director of executive education and instructor of integrated supply management at WMU.

Alumna and team member Hanna Downs says that the consulting experience was very rewarding. “I was able to observe the complexities of managing a large municipal organization, and it was wonderful to work with the staff members of the city, who are passionate about improving services and helping rebuild Detroit.”

Tom Monette, team member and alumnus says that getting involved in the project was an easy decision. “I have a great deal of pride in being from the metro Detroit area and felt compelled to help serve and give back to the city in a way where I could utilize my academic and supply chain skills.”

City officials expressed interest in the Bronco Force Solutions Team concept, which is designed to provide consulting assistance to entities with broad-based student-professional teams like the ones assembled for this effort.

“When the call for expertise in the area of lean consulting came from the city of Detroit, we knew that our students and alumni could provide the necessary talent and teamwork to help the city,” says Jones. “The culture of our program and of WMU is to take on complex challenges for the right reasons and work hard to accomplish goals.”
The sales and business marketing program’s success is spotlighted in rankings and competition wins, highlighting the core courses that make our graduates stand out in the professional arena. The core selling courses required to earn the degree are designed and delivered like high-level corporate sales training, while the program’s 280 students and more than 1,500 alumni also benefit from the program’s growing recognition as one of the leading sales programs in the country.

| 17 | Number of times teams from WMU have placed in the top 10 at national sales competitions including the National Sales Challenge and the National Collegiate Sales Competition. This includes winning the National Sales Challenge in 2013, the State Farm Sales and Marketing Competition in 2014 and placing third overall in the National Collegiate Sales Challenge in 2015. |
| 223 | Minutes of video each sales and business marketing student will watch evaluating themselves in the role of salesperson as part of their learning experience. |
| 9 | Consecutive years on the Sales Education Foundation’s list of the Top University Sales Programs. |
| 42 | Weeks of sales training that sales and business marketing students spend specifically in curricular sales training. |
| 90 | Percent of students reporting placement after graduation. |

Our status as one of the best sales programs in the country comes from having the best curriculum: the specific techniques and skills we teach our students and the interactive and demanding way we teach them, translates to sales success in the real world.

– Dr. Jim Eckert, associate professor of marketing

“‘The sales and business marketing program prepared me to be an effective sales professional on the first day of my first job. This program proves that great sales professionals are made, not born.”
- Nathan Falk, B.B.A.’06
  Senior Territory Manager, Medtronic Inc.

“The sales professors are very accessible and care about equipping students with practical skills that employers need. The program also provides exceptional networking opportunities for students and alumni. I had multiple job offers after college and am happily employed in sales today.”
- Chelsea Biermacher, B.B.A.’07
  Account Manager
  – West Michigan, Stryker Sustainability Solutions

“We’ve partnered with WMU for years, and I can’t say enough positive things about the WMU sales program. The WMU graduates consistently outperform those from other programs or those with no formal sales training. WMU has given us many of our past and present top performers! We look forward to continuing to work with the program for years to come!”
- Chuck Haling
  Vice President of Sales, MSDSonline

“The sales and business marketing program is spotlighted in rankings and competition wins, highlighting the core courses that make our graduates stand out in the professional arena. The core selling courses required to earn the degree are designed and delivered like high-level corporate sales training, while the program’s 280 students and more than 1,500 alumni also benefit from the program’s growing recognition as one of the leading sales programs in the country.”

Rank by Study.com.

No. 1
Making a Difference

Leading the Haworth College of Business is a job where decisions—big and small—have an impact on students and the quality of their education. It’s a 24-7, complex, challenging, rewarding job—a job which Dean Kay Palan loves.

“Educating and supporting our students in their development as business professionals, who will add tremendous value to companies, organizations and communities, is why we do what we do,” says Palan. “Our students are capable problem-solvers and hard workers who put ethics at the center of their decision-making processes and who understand the value of being an innovator, a team player and a responsive colleague, all while contributing to the bottom line. I am extremely proud of our students and their positive impact in the business world.”

Maintaining and continuously improving the quality of a Haworth College of Business education is challenging in today’s economic and higher education environment. “We have had to think creatively about how we fund our core activities as a business college and also how we plan for and invest in our growth and development,” says Palan. “Taking both a visionary and strategic look at the college has been extremely important as we look at our budget and where we need to be.”

Some key elements that have helped ensure the health of the college are:

• **Careful analysis:** The administrative team at the college reviews all programs, assessing risks and opportunities and seeking areas for continuous improvement in program or service delivery. This process of strategic planning helps to inform investment in areas that add significant value to student learning and professional preparation.

• **Partnerships:** Robust and meaningful partnerships enhance both the business community and the college. Engaging and providing business expertise, the college serves as a convening point for dynamic partnerships. Employer partnerships support career programming and recruitment relationships. Advisory boards help college programs to define the cutting edge. Student and faculty consulting teams work closely with the business community. And the college’s newly launched executive and workforce education programs provide a tailored approach to programming that both benefits and fits the college’s industry partners.

• **Constant feedback and planning:** Business faculty members and administrators embrace the concept of the college as a learning laboratory in the fullest sense. Feedback from students, alumni, community members, parents and others, coupled with critical institutional benchmarking, provides an environment where the educational
experience can be adjusted, recalibrated and even rethought as merited. Feedback and research have resulted in transformational changes such as development of new programs, students being matched with a single advisor throughout their college careers, facility enhancements and differential tuition.

One of the most important resources for the college, and one which allows Palan to be proactive in the management of the institution, is funding from donors. “We greatly appreciate the gifts of our alumni and friends, and I cannot emphasize enough how important they are,” says Palan. “The stewardship of donations is of paramount importance to us. When an individual or company makes a gift to the college, we want them to know, unequivocally, that their gift is going to a thriving organization that plans carefully for the future and puts student success at the forefront of all its decisions.”

WHAT DOES THE DEAN’S DISCRETIONARY FUND SUPPORT?

The Dean’s Discretionary Fund: Student Impact in Action

The Dean’s Discretionary Fund is very much what its title indicates, a fund comprised of annual donations from alumni and friends that the dean can use for the operational or programmatic needs of the college.

- Travel for student competitions: giving students the opportunity to compete, connect with students from other universities and meet industry professionals.
- A graduate assistant with specialized expertise to assist faculty in the college’s communication center.
- Trailblazers Student Recognition Program: a program recognizing outstanding student leaders and their accomplishments.
- Student registration fees for conferences and seminars outside of WMU: professional development opportunities that add value to a student’s degree.
- Dean’s Leadership Scholars Program: a select group of students with an interest in leadership development who discuss and live what it means to be a leader.
- DESIGNEDtoLEAD Conference: a student-led conference providing an intensive professional development opportunity in leadership to more than 300 students annually.

Funding the Future (aka our students!)

“DESIGNEDtoLEAD was created to pack an entire year’s worth of inspiration into one day,” says Giovanni Roberto, B.B.A.’13, co-founder of the student-led leadership conference. “My friends and I sketched out an idea of what the conference would look like—top-notch speakers, engaging sessions, opportunities to network with leaders—as well as the benefits to students and how it would be student-run. After meetings and more discussion, Dr. Palan agreed to fund the conference, which is open to all WMU students. I am so thankful to have been given the opportunity to create something that can positively motivate students for years to come.”

To give to the Haworth College of Business, please use the envelope in this magazine, visit MyWMU.com/business or call (269) 387-8700.
Challenging their own perspectives of corporate social responsibility, 17 WMU business and health and human services students trekked to India for two weeks with Dr. Tim Palmer, meeting up with social work students from Australia. In search of change taking place in the developing economy, including India’s new corporate social responsibility mandate, this group of students and faculty found room for change in themselves.

During the program, students toured one of India’s largest and fastest growing cities, Bangalore (officially known as Bengaluru); attended and participated in cultural events; and visited non-governmental organizations as well as businesses to learn the many forces at work in this expanding economy.

“Our goal was to expose students to the spectrum of social stratification across India, giving them the opportunity to critically analyze the role of business in society,” says Palmer. “The students challenged their own biases about corporate social responsibility and their preconceptions of India. They also challenged each other, resulting in personal and academic changes that we did not expect.”

The first belief that was challenged had nothing to do with India. Palmer and the WMU students learned of the mismatch between what is taught in business schools today and the perception by the social work students about what is taught.

“Their belief was that a business’s only obligation is to the stockholders,” says Palmer. While the WMU group was surprised by this perspective, they were able to dispel many of the misconceptions.

“I was able to teach many of the social work students that the more nuanced view we teach our students today is that business and society are tightly coupled and that long-term organizational success requires healthy communities,” says Palmer.

And, while students were changing their perspectives about one another, they were also learning about changes in corporate social responsibility and the business environment taking place in India.

“My hope for the human services students was that the India Gateway Program would provide exposure to another world where human services work could
“India has the opportunity to make change on a very large scale.”

- Audrey Frank, accountancy student

ENTREPRENEURSHIP OFFERINGS LAUNCH

Adding to the robust entrepreneurial offerings already in place, the college of business launched both an entrepreneurship major for business students and an entrepreneurship minor for all WMU students.

Both programs began in fall, offering two paths to entrepreneurship. By choosing the major, students can develop skills necessary for a professional life in entrepreneurship while the minor helps students develop business skills to enhance their interest in a particular field. The business major is limited to 40 business students per year. The minor does not have an enrollment cap and is open to all WMU students.

“Students have the choice of putting entrepreneurship at the center of their studies and adding technical skills through the track options, or putting their technical skills at the center of their studies while adding entrepreneurial skills to their knowledge base,” says Dr. John Mueller, assistant professor of management and advisor for the major.

The entrepreneurship minor is a University-wide program with the purpose of providing a foundation in entrepreneurial concepts to students from any major.

“Students from music to visual arts, education to engineering, science to fashion, and beyond, gain key entrepreneurial skills and the confidence to start their own business one day,” says Dr. Laurel Ofstein, assistant professor of management.

In creating the major, the business college developed new courses in entrepreneurial marketing, small business finance, funding new and growing ventures, technology entrepreneurship, and legal aspects of entrepreneurship. The major provides students with the ability to understand how business ideas and companies develop and to possibly start their own company around their business ideas. After graduation, they are ready to work for a startup, start their own company or work in a family business.
Football players and coaches know the win depends on first downs, but they also know the effort required to advance the ball down the field. And they understand the potential is always there for an impact that can twist a knee or tear a ligament, or sometimes, much worse.

Amid the recent national focus on concussions in athletics, a team from WMU invented a way that advancements in sensing technology can be combined with wearable electronics to help reduce the effects of undiagnosed concussions among football players. The team now has a patent for its Smart Helmet.

The WMU Starting Gate company—SafeSense Technologies—is working toward on-the-field testing of Smart Helmet, which has earned national attention for its potential in helping football coaches and trainers determine the risk of concussion.

“There is an unmet need for detecting life-threatening injuries both in sports and in the military,” says Binu Baby Narakathu, a WMU post-doctoral student who is part of the SafeSense team. “Our product is capable of providing a full, 360-degree mapping of the skull and report of the force sustained.”

A first line of defense

The technology uses a printable electronic device that can be embedded in football helmets and wirelessly relays data of the force and impact to a football player’s helmet to a coach or trainer on the sidelines via a Bluetooth-enabled smartphone app.

“We have developed a working lab prototype and have an agreement with an independent organization to provide the testing teams,” says Narakathu, who adds that finding investors to manufacture more than 100 devices for testing is the company’s focus. “The feedback from the testing will allow us to begin making the device market-ready.”

The device not only warns of an impact on the field but also provides information about its severity and the location on the player’s skull. Providing the information wirelessly gives in-the-moment information, but the data is also stored on a cloud-based server that can transmit urgent data to doctors in emergency rooms.

“Having the information available wirelessly would be helpful for doctors, who are treating a patient,” Narakathu says. “Our application would be able to store that data so doctors can also retrieve past impacts and provide treatment accordingly.”

On the offense

Narakathu says the company is exploring future applications, including shoe sole sensors, bed sore sensors and military injury sensors.

“The device is not only advancing detection of impact injuries, but our technology is also advancing the manufacture of wearable electronics,” says Narakathu.

Developing their game plan

After a Top 8 finish in a regional competition, the team of engineering students applied to be part of Starting Gate, WMU’s student business accelerator, to gain business knowledge they would need to launch a company.

As engineering experts, the team had a promising product but needed help figuring out how to bring the device to market.

“When SafeSense came to us, they needed help launching their business, and they needed to make many decisions,” says Lara Hobson, director of operations at Starting Gate. “They had a great product but had not developed a partnership agreement, business plan or a way to approach investors. We were able to help them navigate these processes.”

Narakathu credits Starting Gate with helping get the company set up. “We learned the art of pitching our product, received help writing a business plan and gained valuable contacts and potential strategic partners, especially with economic development organizations.”
When preparing to advance their careers, most business professionals know what it takes—a strong work ethic, connections and a track record of excellent performance. Often the final piece is earning an MBA.

Barb Caras-Tomczak, coordinator of student support services and advisor for the MBA program, says that many business professionals know an MBA is important and relevant to advancing their careers. “Experience is extremely valuable; but without a graduate degree, it can be hard to advance. With experience and a graduate degree, the leadership opportunities are endless,” says Caras-Tomczak.

An MBA gives productive professionals the opportunity to become great leaders, and the key is the diversity of experience that the MBA offers—diversity through the curriculum, specialized concentrations and networking opportunities.

When it comes to excellence in the MBA program, college leaders look for ways to grow and improve the program. “We are constantly researching industry trends to identify areas for growth,” says Dr. Satish Deshpande, associate dean for operations and graduate programs. “Not only do we seek out external expertise, but we also leverage our internal resources. There are great opportunities for us to partner with industry leaders and academic colleges right on our own campus to offer multi-faceted graduate degrees.”

Two recent opportunities resulted in new MBA offerings. A dual MD-MBA degree was developed in response to industry demand for healthcare providers with business-focused knowledge and the Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine’s desire to train physicians with business acumen. The need for advanced business knowledge in the aviation industry sparked a partnership with the college of aviation, one of the largest aviation programs in the nation, for a new aviation concentration within the MBA program.

“One prevailing example of the importance of collaboration with varied disciplines in networking comes from one of the MBA program’s new ventures, offering an MBA degree exclusively within the walls of one company. Parker Hannifin, a global manufacturer of motion and control systems, is offering a WMU MBA to employees onsite. The program uses business issues within the organization to discuss curricular topics. Deshpande notes that this opportunity is available to any organization wishing to deliver a unique educational opportunity to its employees.”

“The value of the MBA goes beyond specialized concentrations. In the program, business professionals have the unique opportunity to network with other professionals of not only different cultures and social backgrounds, but also of different professional disciplines and industries, allowing MBA students to fully understand all of the working parts that make up a successful organization. A typical MBA class includes approximately 15 percent international students and professionals from dozens of industries, ensuring an academic experience full of diverse perspectives.

“From our findings in post-graduate surveys of our MBA students, their experience in the program has led to increased collaboration and helped fortify relationships within their companies,” says Deshpande. “A great leader must understand the needs and demands of other business disciplines, and that can be accomplished by the networking opportunities and conversations that occur in our courses. Students develop a nuanced view of business thereby making them better decision makers.”

“One prevailing example of the importance of collaboration with varied disciplines in networking comes from one of the MBA program’s new ventures, offering an MBA degree exclusively within the walls of one company. Parker Hannifin, a global manufacturer of motion and control systems, is offering a WMU MBA to employees onsite. The program uses business issues within the organization to discuss curricular topics. Deshpande notes that this opportunity is available to any organization wishing to deliver a unique educational opportunity to its employees.”

“Offering an MBA program exclusively to one company gives employees the opportunity to explore topics critical to that company,” says Deshpande. “For example, an accounting professional at the organization may gain an understanding of the needs and demands of the marketing department, and that well-rounded understanding of the company’s functions can be critical to the organization’s success.”
Whether you are looking for a car, a refrigerator, or the best day care in town, the process of researching goods and services as a consumer has changed vastly with the availability of online reviews and discussion from fellow consumers. Today, a consumer’s first stop on the way to purchase is most often the Internet. Dr. Kelley O’Reilly, assistant professor of marketing, researches the influence of online, consumer-generated commentary. Termed “online word-of-mouth,” these positive and negative statements about products or services may be included in consumer reviews, blogs, forums, social media or threaded discussion boards where consumers share, interact and engage with others online.

“Much of my research focuses on how consumers make assessments regarding which consumers and reviews to ‘believe’ and deem ‘credible’ through these online exchanges,” says O’Reilly. “Recognizing that most online consumer-to-consumer communication occurs among people who have no prior relationship, it is important for marketers to understand how these exchanges are evaluated and assessed as trustworthy or credible.”

O’Reilly’s research to date has centered particularly on the 18 to 25 year-old age group. So what do these younger consumers look for in assessing the credibility of online word-of-mouth?

- A high overall star rating;
- A relatively high number of reviews but very few negative reviews;
- Balanced reviews that include both pros and cons of the product or service; and
- Logical, well-written reviews.

“In certain contexts, online word-of-mouth has been shown to be more effective than traditional marketing tools like personal selling and advertising,” notes O’Reilly. “Interestingly, research tells us that more and more people are turning to the Internet than consulting experts or family members when making purchasing choices. This is really intriguing to me—the fact that young consumers are giving more credence to online strangers than to their face-to-face family and friends.”

This trend of trusting the opinions of unknown fellow consumers has important consequences for businesses, both in terms of brand management and strategy. “Because information online always has the potential for going viral, extreme review ratings can have a significant effect on a company’s brand, either for the good or bad,” says O’Reilly. “At the same time, online word-of-mouth is visible to marketers, so it also allows a company to
be ‘a fly on the wall’ and passively listen to the conversations among consumers. This can be very valuable to companies that understand how to effectively monitor their brands online.”

What are best practices that companies should be considering in terms of harnessing the power of online word-of-mouth? O’Reilly notes three items to consider:

• **Share Control.** “As marketers, recognize that we must share control of our brands with consumers online. Consumers are in control more now than ever since they create our brand’s stories and reviews online. Smart marketers know how to listen and appropriately respond to issues or problems raised by customers online.”

• **Drive Likes.** “Marketers can benefit from driving fan likes for their products as much as they can from motivating purchase behavior. Why? Because friends of fans typically represent a much larger set of consumers and can receive social-media brand impressions by way of their friends.”

• **Adapt Review Systems.** “Design company website review systems to adapt and customize the manner, number and polarity of reviews a particular consumer will see by matching the form and function of the review system to the appropriate decision-making style of the consumer.”

O’Reilly’s research also highlights an opportunity for marketers to better understand how technology will impact online word-of-mouth behaviors. Knowing that young, technically savvy Internet users are predictive pathfinders to the behaviors and practices of average consumers 12 to 24 months in the future, O’Reilly suggests marketers use a longitudinal consumer panel of technically sophisticated young consumers to better position themselves for future marketplace adjustments.

What’s next for O’Reilly? She has teamed up with Dr. Alhassan Mumuni, associate professor of marketing, and Dr. Karen Lancendorfer, associate professor of marketing, along with Amy MacMillan from Kalamazoo College, to pursue several projects. The team is considering how gender and purchase motivation may affect online word-of-mouth credibility assessments. Additionally, some of their early work highlights that consumers may create their own systems of credibility by considering the relevance and likeness of reviews.

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**Chinese Civilization in the 21st Century**

*Editors: Dr. Andrew Targowski, professor of business information systems, and Dr. Bernard Han, professor of business information systems*

This book examines the belief that the 5,000-year-long-history of Chinese civilization is the main factor in the re-emergence of China in the 21st century. As the Chinese economy has grown, many have attributed its success to companies outsourcing business to China. While outsourcing was a significant development, this book explores how today’s China is creating its own economic opportunities.

And the discussion is not confined only to the economic dimension; the volume also takes into account the legacy and practices of the Chinese in terms of society, culture, religion, and infrastructure and how these elements of civilization shape China today. The book maintains that China should not follow proposed recommendations by advisors from the West but that China has the chance to develop its own eco-political system in light of its history and also the current global business and political environment.

Targowski and Han were awarded a Timothy Light Center for Chinese Studies Research Grant for this project.

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**Sensible Tax Reform: Simple, Just and Effective**

*Author: Dr. Christopher Korth, professor of finance*

Korth offers a revolutionary approach to tax reform. This book discusses reform where businesses will be untaxed. Social Security and Medicare will receive stronger financial backing, most individuals will no longer pay any income taxes, and estates will no longer be taxed.

Working from the premise that a simple, broad-based federal consumption tax should be introduced as the foundation of our tax system, Korth explores how the consumption tax will apply to most expenditures by individuals but will provide critical buffers to ease the impact on healthcare, housing, transportation and higher education.

“Sensible Tax Reform will replace the existing tax system with a simple, just, and economically dynamic tax system that will reinvigorate American businesses, greatly increase the real income and purchasing power of most Americans, and stabilize the finances of the federal government,” says Korth.
For Dr. Robert Harrison, associate professor of marketing, research into the role of the marketplace in the personal development of multiracial individuals was both a personal and professional challenge. As the parent of three, his challenge is helping his daughters develop a sense of identity as members in a multiracial family; professionally, his research strives to address market strategies for a growing force in the marketplace—multiracial families in the U.S. who yield considerable buying power.

“I initially started this project to have better answers to questions my daughters ask related to their own ‘mixedness,’” says Harrison, adding that “the project has also been surprisingly well-received professionally.” In addition to publishing two journal articles, one book chapter and five conference papers on this topic, Harrison’s paper, “Consuming Ambiguity: Multiracial Identity Development and the Marketplace,” earned a Best Paper Award at this year’s American Marketing Association conference.

While representations of multiracial families are increasing in advertising—with groundbreaking ads by brands such as Cheerios, Swiffer and Ikea, and in films such as the recently released Black or White—marketers do not yet fully understand this group of consumers, whose buying power exceeds $148 billion, according to the Selig Center of Economic Growth.

Harrison’s research addresses shortcomings in the marketing literature related to advertising representations and the role of the marketplace in the identity development process for multiracial individuals, who often embark on a journey of self-discovery during adolescence as they recognize themselves as living in multiple cultural worlds.

“While a biracial individual may self-identify as being both white and black, for instance, they may not be viewed by others as either and so they must negotiate a process of self-awareness,” says Harrison.

And some of the negotiation occurs in the marketplace. The symbolic values of products are used by these young consumers in an attempt to successfully navigate their heritage. That is, multiracial individuals use brands and marketplace access to enhance or suppress associations with specific aspects of their racial backgrounds.

“I’m also interested in how multiracial individuals view representations of multiracial individuals in advertising,” says Harrison, who notes that the 2010 U.S. census reported more than 9 million self-identified mixed-race Americans, with the population of multiracial U.S. children having increased 50 percent to 4.2 million since 2000.

Advertisers have taken note of this growing group and have begun to incorporate multiracial people into their marketing. And while Harrison’s research participants expressed appreciation for the inclusion of mixed-race bodies into the advertising landscape, they were also concerned about the practice of “othering” multiracial bodies as exotic and erotic.

“The multiracial students in my study have very powerful and interesting stories to share, and I find it interesting because no matter what we think we know about people, we are often surprised when we really try to understand their experiences,” says Harrison.

Based upon the micro-LAM technology and with the help from the recent NSF grant, Mueller is assisting in developing a plan for commercializing an industrial tool capable of drilling brittle, non-metal material using lasers and diamonds. The tool holds promise in five areas: semiconductor; ceramic; composite structures; bone and tooth; and rocks and high-quality gems.

Management students Alexa DeVos and Macey Putnam are assisting Mueller by researching industry contacts and prioritizing the commercialization rollout by industry.

“Working across campus increases the possibilities of developing innovative technologies like micro-LAM, and obtaining robust results both on campus and in the market. This cross-pollination and commercialization focus is of particular interest to the NSF,” says Mueller. “Alexa, Macey and I have the opportunity to support that initiative with Professor John Patten and the team from the college of engineering.”
When you enter the office of Doralee DeRyke, you truly enter the nerve center of the Haworth College of Business. Responsible for supervising and administering the college’s operating budget as well as its facilities and support services, DeRyke celebrated 50 years of service at Western Michigan University this year, making her one of just a very few Broncos to have ever achieved this impressive milestone.

Beginning her career in the Department of Management in 1964, she was promoted seven years later to administrative assistant to the dean. In 1991, she was elevated to director of budget, services and operations. She earned both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in business administration while working. “I’m most proud of being able to complete my two degrees while working full time,” DeRyke remarks. “Of course, that was with lots of encouragement from [former] Dean Darrell Jones.”

Any given day in DeRyke’s position is different than the last and may include anything from a painstaking review of the budget to ensure that each dollar is working as hard as it can for the education of students, to working with departments on hiring and tenure and promotion paperwork, to discussing the needs in the computing labs with information technology staff, to coordinating a major remodel such as the recent Greenleaf Trust Trading Room (see pg. 8). In fact, sometimes a day might involve all of the above!

Yet DeRyke takes everything in stride with professionalism and a gift for nuanced logical thinking that is unrivaled.

DeRyke has played a vital role in the college being what it is today. She cites the accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business in 1970 for the undergraduate program and in 1981 for the graduate programs as the most significant accomplishments in the history of the college.

She has established and tracked the capital campaign funds that have supported the Distinguished Speaker Series, student experiential learning projects, endowed faculty chairs, and the construction of Schneider Hall itself. “Knowing that what I do, or have done, has made a difference in the lives of students, faculty and staff is what is most rewarding,” she says. “I feel I have helped to make the college one of the best business schools in the country. Pair that with all the friendships that I have made over many years, and I feel very lucky.”

Throughout 50 years, many things have changed, but the one constant has been the commitment of the faculty and staff. “We work very hard to provide an education to students that will make them successful in their professional life,” says DeRyke. “It requires everyone to be at the forefront of their disciplines to make sure that change is implemented when required, and we are willing to work together to accomplish it. We care about each other. We help each other. We are family. And that’s why I’m still here!”

Editor’s Note: With her knowledge of the college and attention to detail, Doralee is an excellent proofreader. She proofreads nearly everything that goes out to an external audience from the college, including this magazine!
When alumnus Sandro DiNello, B.B.A.’75, president, CEO and director of Flagstar Bank and Flagstar Bancorp, was asked to speak to an audience of business students and community members, he knew exactly what the topic would be: how Western shaped his life.

For DiNello, his decision to attend WMU spurred other key decisions, both personal and professional, which put him on the path to where he is today.

The son of Italian immigrants who became business owners here in the U.S., DiNello had a knack for numbers and learned the ins and outs of small business from his parents. As he grew older, he envisioned a career as an accountant. When he thought of what college he would attend, there was only one choice. “My dad came from a family of seven, and his oldest brother had a son Chris, who was my only cousin to have gone to college, and he was quite a bit older than me, so I sort of looked up to him, and Chris went to Western,” DiNello recalls.

And the decision to go to WMU and study business changed DiNello’s life.

Personal Impact

During DiNello’s first semester in the business college he took a business communication course. The first assignment in the course was to write a paper on any topic and deliver it in an oral presentation in front of the class. That assignment sent a bolt of pure, white-hot fear through DiNello. A self-described “shy kid” who preferred to be in the background, DiNello states, “I wasn’t very confident. And with writing, I would have to sit and look at the piece of paper a long time before I wrote something. I was also deathly afraid of speaking in public.”

After the students gave their oral presentations, the professor met one-on-one with them to go over their strengths and weaknesses. “When I got my paper back, it had more red ink on it than the blue ink I wrote in,” says DiNello. “And he told me that my oral presentation was absolutely awful. I didn’t use the right inflection or make eye contact, and I had poor use of body language. I was feeling the lowest I could possibly feel.”

But then something important happened. The professor asked DiNello what he wanted to do for a career. “He said, ‘So you want to be an accountant, that’s fine, but if you want to be successful as a CPA, you are going to have to write reports, talk to people and make presentations, and you are going to want to get better at that.’”

DiNello made it a goal to improve his communication skills. And that is when WMU really started to shape his life. “That professor and I really clicked; he took an interest in me and worked with me a lot. I got an A in the class despite the slow start and took five business communication courses during the next three years at Western. I did well in all of them, but the most important thing wasn’t the grades but how the experience started to change me as a person.”

DiNello grew in confidence. Knowing that he could master something that he had once thought out of reach, he tried new things, moving from the background into the foreground of his life.

With his newfound confidence, he made deep and lasting friendships with a number of his residence hall mates from that first year—friends that he counts as an extended part of his family. DiNello also met his wife, Cathy, during his sophomore year at WMU. Five years later they married, and now 36 years later, they have raised two children and recently celebrated a new grandchild.

Professional Preparation

With a well-rounded degree and the competitive edge that the accountancy program had given him, DiNello landed his first position as a bank examiner for the Federal Home Loan Bank—a position that helped him to see firsthand both thriving institutions and problem ones. The job gave him a good foundation in what would become his long-term field: banking.

One of the banks that DiNello served as examiner for, Security Savings Bank, recruited him for an entry-level management position. Working in the mortgage part of the company, DiNello cultivated a reputation as the go-to person to get important projects accomplished. “I was always first in and last out,” he says. “I wanted people to know that if they wanted to tap someone on the shoulder who they knew would work hard that I was the one. I am a big believer that you make your breaks; they don’t just happen.”

By the age of 30, DiNello was a part of the bank’s executive management team and had the opportunity to personally lead the charge to take the company public in 1984. Stock was priced at $6.50 per share, and a total of $3,240,000 was sold. “I remember the stock sale total very well because we sold most of it going door-to-door at businesses around Jackson, Michigan, to people who had $50,000 to $100,000 to invest, and we told them the story of what we were going to do with the bank,” says DiNello.

During the next ten years, DiNello became more involved at the executive level of the company and was named president at the age of 40.

The stock was now trading at $17.50 per share, so investors were happy. DiNello and his team were also happy as they looked
Leadership and Decision Making

forward toward what they might do with the bank, knowing that they had built a solid company. Would they keep it small? Would they grow it?

What they would do is sell it, though they had no inkling that such a development was on the horizon.

“We didn’t really want to sell,” says DiNello. “But if you are a public company, and someone makes you a fair offer, then you really don’t have much of a choice.”

The due diligence on the possible sale proceeded and the interested party offered $35 per share. “I had to try not to smile, because at that point, even I was happy that we had that opportunity,” says DiNello.

One of the most rewarding aspects for DiNello was that the original investors got a great return on investment, at over five times their initial investment. “To this day, I have people telling me that because of that investment they were able to put their kids through school,” he says.

The company that bought Security Savings Bank was primarily a mortgage company, though with a bank charter, and formed Flagstar Bank. DiNello became executive vice president and was charged with building the retail banking business. “Over the next ten years, we built a really good company, growing it from a billion dollar company to a $17 billion company and taking five branches in central Michigan and growing to 178 branches throughout Michigan, Indiana and Georgia. And we grew a regional mortgage operation so it was nationwide, becoming one of the top ten mortgage lenders in the country.”

For two years in the mid-2000s, U.S. Banker Magazine named Flagstar the No. 1 bank in the U.S.

“A lot of really good things were happening, and then we took our eye off the ball,” says DiNello. Heavily reliant on their mortgage business, the bank suffered a major blow when the recession hit in 2007-08. “We had known that we had to diversify the company, but it was hard to do because there was too much money to be made, and we paid the price in the recession.”

Leading Through Difficult Times to Success

As the Great Recession took its toll, Flagstar decided that they needed to make a leadership change. After attracting $1.3 billion in private equity to save the bank, the investors wanted a new CEO.

DiNello was running retail banking, which had grown into a strong area, and he really wanted the opportunity to serve as CEO. “I had been with the company for 30 years,” he says. “I knew the people. I knew what needed to change, and I wanted it very badly.”

The national search narrowed it down to two people. The board was split. And DiNello lost.

Despite the disappointment and thoughts of leaving, he stayed and decided to do everything he could to support the new organization. “I tried not to show my disappointment to anyone in the company and just kept doing the right things,” says DiNello. Three years later the company was in even worse shape, and the Office of the Comptroller of Currency, part of the U.S. Department of Treasury, put the bank under a consent order.

At that point, the board of directors realized that they needed to make a change at the top again. With several board members who had supported DiNello’s candidacy for the job the first time still serving as board members, the board leadership approached him about becoming CEO and turning the bank around.

DiNello knew it would be no easy task.

The most difficult thing that needed to be addressed was shoring up the bottom line, which meant cutting expenses severely and quickly, including more than 1,000 jobs.

Downsizing was both the hardest and most straightforward business decision that DiNello has ever had to make. “I had been there more than 30 years, and you have a hard time letting people go who are doing their jobs, even if it is to preserve the company, but from a management perspective, we had to shrink our operations or fail. I had to look at it as saving the jobs of the people we could keep.”

Today, Flagstar is starting to turn the corner, and DiNello is working diligently to lay the foundation for future operational soundness. The company returned to profitability in the fourth quarter of 2014 and was the ninth largest mortgage lender in the U.S. in 2014. It also is the largest bank headquartered in Michigan. “We are diversifying the company. If we rely on just one business, then we will run into the same problem again,” says DiNello. “I want to build a real community bank within the organization. We are going to get a lot of diversification from the banking area of our business. We also plan to grow our mortgage servicing business, and I think we will be on the cutting edge of building that new business line. There are many great things happening at Flagstar, and I look forward to building on this new foundation.”
Alumni and friends of the college were honored for their outstanding professional and service accomplishments at the annual Haworth College of Business Awards Ceremony during Homecoming week. These individuals serve as a representation of the values of the Haworth College of Business and as an inspiration and example to our students. To read full biographies about each recipient, visit wmich.edu/business/alumni/awards.

College Awards

Haworth College of Business Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award
David C. Hoogendoorn, B.B.A.’88
Market Segment Leader, Michigan and Northwest Ohio, and Office Managing Partner, Grand Rapids, Ernst & Young

“Dave demonstrates personal stewardship by providing his time, talent and generosity for the betterment of the community’s projects and organizations.”
– Marty Allen, Chairman Emeritus, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation

Haworth College of Business Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award
Debbie Kenyon-Cassidy, B.B.A.’89
Senior Vice President and Market Manager, CBS Radio Detroit

“Debbie has an incredible gift for being able to read people, identify their strengths and enable them to take on roles where they will be successful and able to work for the strength and betterment of the team.”
– Jay Jennings, General Sales Manager, CBS Radio
Celebrating Alumni and Friends

College Awards

Haworth College of Business
Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award
Theodore B. Stone, B.B.A.’78
Tax Quality Leader, Transaction Tax Practice, Ernst & Young

“Ted has provided invaluable professional advice to many, and he is very well-respected for his business acumen. His ethics and moral compass are the envy of most.”
– Paul Meighan, Partner, Ernst & Young

Haworth College of Business
Outstanding Service Award
Stephen K. Parker, B.B.A.’67, MBA’07
President and CEO, Pacific Corporation (Retired)
Founder, Longview Consulting

“Steve has shown time and time again that he understands the work of everyone in a business, from the shop floor to the corporate boardroom.”
– Martin Stein, Managing Director, Blackford Capital

Haworth College of Business
Outstanding Young Alumni Award
Matthew D. Mace, B.B.A.’98
CEO and Co-Founder, BlueGranite

“Organizations are a reflection of their leadership, and this is certainly true of BlueGranite’s Matt Mace. Nationally recognized by Microsoft on several occasions for their outstanding achievement, Matt’s team understands successful partnerships, whether personal or professional, are built upon mutual respect.”
– John Miller, Technology Solutions Professional in Business Intelligence, Microsoft

Haworth College of Business
Outstanding Young Alumni Award
Jennifer K. Rutledge, B.B.A.’04
COO, Sales Page

“Jen is one of those people who not only brings tremendous value to the company and her co-workers but is also a genuinely good person. She cares equally about her work and the people with whom she interacts.”
– Mike Gerfen, Executive Director, VML
Department and Program Awards

**Department of Accountancy**

Outstanding Alumni Award
Frank B. Arford, M.S.A.’72
CEO, Crowe Horwath International (Retired)

“Frank Arford is a consummate professional, role model and friend. His ability to lead by example has made an indelible mark on our organization.”
– Kevin McGrath, CEO, Crowe Horwath International

**Department of Business Information Systems**

Outstanding Alumni Award
Thomas R. Wolf, Jr., B.B.A.’84
Chief Technology Officer, Western Michigan University

“Tom is one of my favorite people to work with on issues big or small. He is responsive and creative. If you have a need, Tom is always available.”
– Jan Van Der Kley, Vice President for Business and Finance, Western Michigan University

**Department of Management**

Outstanding Alumni Award
Carrie L. Jones-Barber, B.B.A.’82
CEO, Dawn Food Products

“Through humility and a thirst for knowledge, Carrie has become a strong and influential leader. She is compassionate but with the confidence to make tough decisions.”
– Eric Metzendorf, President, Bakery Distribution, Dawn

**Department of Marketing**

Marketing Hall of Fame
Yoshiaki Nakazawa, B.B.A.’76, MBA’78
President and CEO, Advanced Medical Innovation Crossroad, Japan

“Yoshiaki Nakazawa is the first international student, now alum, to be inducted into the Marketing Hall of Fame. He is an accomplished international business leader who has made exceptional contributions to the marketing discipline and profession.”
– Dr. Mushtaq Luqmani, Chair, Department of Marketing, Western Michigan University

**Food and Consumer Package Goods Marketing**

Outstanding Alumni Award
Amy M. Feldman, B.B.A.’97
Vice President for Key Accounts, KeHE Distributors Inc.

“Amy is a driven individual with clear goals and objectives which she has set for herself in her career. She is a true asset to any organization in which she is involved.”
– John Contesso, Senior Director, Crossmark
Department and Program Awards

Food and Consumer Package Goods Marketing
Adrian Trimpe Distinguished Service Award
Marvin G. Imus, B.S.’78
Owner, Imus Solutions

“Marv is a tremendous example of an unselfish individual committed to our students. He is a strong role model and caring individual.”
– Phil Straniero, Executive-in-Residence, WMU Food and Consumer Package Goods Marketing Program

WMU ROTC Wall of Fame
Colonel James J. Love, B.A.’87
Deputy G9/Chief of Staff (FMWR), U.S. Army Installation Management Command, Fort Sam Houston, Texas

“Colonel Love is the most exceptional officer it has ever been my pleasure to know. He is intelligent, articulate and politically astute, and possesses extraordinary technical and tactical abilities.”
– Scott Nahnwold, Colonel (Retired), U.S. Army

Wendell L. Christoff, B.S.’68
WMU Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient

Christoff earned a food distribution degree from WMU in 1968. The company he heads, Litehouse, produces salad dressing and sauces and is listed by Entrepreneur Magazine as a top-100 privately held company.

He is also well known for his humanitarian efforts. He founded and serves as president of the SafeWater Team, a nonprofit organization that produces water filtration devices and improves access to clean drinking water in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and other developing nations.

Christoff and his wife, Helen, were selected by the Rotary Foundation in 2011 for membership in the foundation’s Arch C. Klumph Society. In addition, Christoff received the Outstanding Food and Consumer Package Goods Marketing Alumni Award in 2001. A scholarship for the food marketing program has been established through Litehouse. Christoff has been a long-time member of WMU’s Food and Consumer Package Goods Marketing Advisory Council.
SC Johnson—a family company, a global company, an innovative company—building brands that are as familiar to many of us as our own homes. From Windex® and Glade® to Ziploc® and OFF®, the company has built its success through an unwavering commitment to its core principles, an engaged workforce, and by seeking out talent to join with the company as it encounters global challenges and opportunities.

How does all of this happen? Through thoughtful leadership, a deep-rooted culture and inventive people who want to make an impact.

Join us as SC Johnson, a Premier Partner of the Haworth College of Business Career Center, takes us through the company’s journey to success.

Describe the culture of SC Johnson.

The culture is what sets SC Johnson apart from other companies. We believe people do their best work when they’re treated with respect, integrity and fairness by their company and their colleagues. SC Johnson supports this culture of respect through:

- **A commitment to diversity and inclusion.** The company’s commitment to respecting people’s life stories and valuing their individuality spans all of its 129 years; this commitment starts at the top and includes efforts from recruiting to business councils.
- **Open communication.** Regular communication meetings and opinion surveys gather thoughts and insights; the company believes in being transparent and talking openly and directly with employees.
- **Respect for life outside work.** Some examples of work-life balance initiatives include health and fitness programs, onsite childcare or childcare vouchers, generous maternity, paternity and adoption leave, and benefits for domestic partners.

How does SC Johnson make leading with integrity central to its business operations?

Integrity is central to the way SC Johnson manages its business. At SC Johnson, integrity is not a fad or a phase. It has been ingrained in the company since 1886. From the ingredients in company products to the way SC Johnson runs its manufacturing facilities, the company is committed to working every day to do what is right for people, the planet and generations to come.

In keeping with the core value of integrity instilled by the company’s founder Samuel Curtis Johnson, later generations of company leaders made bold decisions of their own. These decisions sometimes involved radical changes to products such as the removal of chlorofluorocarbons from aerosol products years before government mandates and the recent removal of polyvinylidene chloride from Saran Wrap.

By focusing on doing what is right, company leaders have made decisions for the betterment of consumers and future generations which also support the company’s commitment to create winning products, ensure less waste, reduce its carbon footprint and help make life better for families around the globe.
A sincere belief in the company’s principles inspires SC Johnson people to act with integrity at all times. Herbert F. Johnson, Sr., first summarized the company’s guiding principles in 1927: “The goodwill of people is the only enduring thing in any business,” he said. “It is the sole substance. The rest is shadow.” This philosophy, now known as “This We Believe,” encourages SC Johnson employees to:

- respect the dignity of each person as an individual human being,
- assume moral and social responsibilities as a matter of conscience,
- make a concerted effort to use each person’s skills where they are most needed, and
- strive for excellence in everything they do.

How does SC Johnson develop its employees as sound business decision makers?

Professional development is critical to the strength and vitality of a global company, so it is imperative that the company invest in its people. At SC Johnson, we take people development seriously and, at every level and in every discipline, the company offers ways to help its employees grow. The company offers learning opportunities in project leadership, change management and consumer insights, among others.

Mentorship is also highly valued as a professional development tool. Mentors and mentees are paired by shared interests, experiences and skills, and formal objectives are set to ensure the relationship is a productive one.

How does the company foster innovation?

Innovation is the lifeblood of any consumer goods company. We know that inspiring people to make bold decisions while doing what is right long-term for the business and the planet instills innovation that is good for business.

The people of SC Johnson work hard to uphold our pledge to make life better with innovative, quality products, great workplaces, and a commitment to people and the planet. Whether exploring ways to reduce packaging, tackling emissions reductions or helping prevent disease, innovative approaches have propelled SC Johnson to be a recognized leader in the household consumer products industry. In 2001, SC Johnson launched the SC Johnson Greenlist™ process, an internally developed ingredient selection and tracking process used to help continuously improve the company’s products and packaging.

SC Johnson has signed on as a new Premier Partner of the Haworth College of Business Career Center. Why did the company make this decision?

SC Johnson chose to become a Premier Partner because the company wanted to invest deeply in the relationship with the Haworth College of Business. One of the company’s priorities in establishing this partnership is to help Western Michigan University students launch their careers at SC Johnson. The Premier Partnership allows SC Johnson access to the Career Center, business students, and faculty and staff to showcase the company and its people, ultimately allowing SC Johnson to maximize recruitment efforts for full-time and internship opportunities.

Campus partnerships are a great strategy when a company is starting a recruiting relationship with a school because they provide employers with opportunities to maximize the brand on campus and give access to students of targeted majors through both traditional and unique campus recruiting events year-round. This partnership really helps an employer gain traction in getting recognized by students and being competitive with other employers that recruit on campus. This is why SC Johnson decided to participate as a Premier Partner in the first year of having a recruiting relationship with Western Michigan University.

The Premier Partnership allows a company registration for all fall and spring recruiting and professional development events, attendance at career fairs and open houses, keynote speaking opportunities and membership on the employer advisory board. This partnership provides ample opportunity for a company to showcase its people and the company as well. Being on campus often allows a company to build deeper relationships with the students and also helps the company get additional support from the university to effectively recruit talent.

What does SC Johnson look for in terms of new talent for the organization?

SC Johnson is a global organization so ideal candidates will have an international mindset and be globally mobile. They will also be self-directed, agile and energized by change. Interns and candidates will have a strong competitive spirit and be motivated to make an impact. Being continually curious, proactively raising new ideas and embracing personal ownership are also highly sought-after attributes that the company looks for in new talent.
Off track, on purpose. It’s the motto Ryan Blanck lives by and why he decided to start his performance improvement company Deviate five years ago. Born from Blanck’s two passions, coaching and fitness, Deviate operates from one simple belief: productivity, performance and leadership will only go as far as your health and happiness. Blanck and his multidisciplinary team, including his wife Amanda, spend their time helping clients navigate the road to success. But before Blanck could help others achieve their goals, he had to make the decision to accomplish his own, and started down the path to the off-track but purposeful lifestyle he has today.

Even before Deviate was an idea in Blanck’s mind, he made crucial decisions that shaped his entrepreneurial journey. With a gift for bringing out the best in people and infectious authenticity and enthusiasm, Blanck decided to major in sales and business marketing. “Whether we know it or not, we are all in sales,” shares Blanck.

One of the ways Blanck holds himself accountable is through collaboration, especially working with his wife Amanda, managing partner of Deviate. “Certainly running a business with your wife is not rainbows, butterflies and unicorns all the time, but it’s the best,” says Blanck. “Most importantly, we trust one another. I know Amanda is always in my corner and has my back.”

And Blanck brings this collaborative mindset to his business every day. Following the reverse CARE model (Expectations, Responsibility, Accountability and Consequences), Blanck’s team is given the opportunity to grow and succeed through teamwork and camaraderie. “No one is successful alone,” says Blanck. “When you work in an environment where there is open communication, where a vision is set, and people are clear on their roles and expectations, that is when true collaboration happens and your organization can move forward faster.”

Quick Detour: Ryan’s Recommendations

Blanck shares the best advice he has received thus far in his career:

• Be in the moment, 100 percent present. Your audience deserves all of you. Don’t try to fool yourself and multitask. When the phone rings, fold your laptop. When your kids come into the room, turn off the television.

• Leverage adult conversations. When something is on your mind and bothering you, say so. When you experience an employee doing something counter to their character or corporate culture, call it out immediately. Too often we shy away from the real conversation. When we embrace conflict as an opportunity to learn and grow without judgment, big things can happen.
Alumni and Businesses to Watch

Jessica Smith, B.B.A. ’09, MBA’13, counts walking across the stage with her degree in general business and management, and then again with her MBA in computer information systems, as her proudest achievements. Smith would graduate to use the skills and knowledge achieved in her studies to become an IT business analyst for Kellogg Company.

The business foundations and principles Smith studied in her time at Western prepared her in many ways for the fast-paced business environment she entered as a professional.

“It really gave a foundation for everyday work. If a vice president requests an activity-based costing on a presentation I give, I have the fundamentals to respond quickly and in an intelligent way,” says Smith. “My major courses exponentially improved my presentation skills. When I first started college, I shook like a leaf and would blank on the simplest topics. Now, I am presenting to several different audiences, including the CIO of Kellogg, and I feel completely comfortable.”

Managing Digital Media

Former IT professional Matt Morgan, M.S.A.’05, was looking to make a change, and decided earning his M.S.A. at WMU was the best way to expand his knowledge of business and transform his career. Currently vice president and controller, as well as secretary and treasurer of the board, at First National Bank of Michigan, Morgan has used the last ten years to grow his experience as an accounting and business professional.

“Completing the M.S.A. program not only gave me knowledge and skills in accounting, but also exposed me to marketing, management and finance, to give me a well-rounded business education,” says Morgan. “Furthermore, group projects and study groups allowed me to experience work in a collaborative environment which easily translated to the working world.”

When collaborating or making important decisions, Morgan often recalls a tip from a business faculty member. “Dr. Jerry Kreuze taught us that you don’t always have to know the answer, but as long as you know how to research and find the answer, you will be successful,” he says.

After earning his graduate degree, Morgan worked as an auditor and tax preparer at Plante & Moran and an accounting manager at Manatron Inc. and counts both positions as giving him noteworthy field experience.

“Plante & Moran gave me a vast array of experience and exposure to various industries and prepared me to work in private industry,” says Morgan. “Working at Manatron allowed me to experience the private industry side of accounting and gave me the managerial and supervisory experience to help me take the next step in my career.”

Morgan is actively involved in the greater Kalamazoo community, serving as a board member in several organizations, including serving as a member of the planning commission for the City of Parchment. As a proud WMU graduate, Morgan recommends the Haworth College of Business to any prospective business student and enjoys attending WMU sporting events.

As an IT business analyst, Smith works under the umbrella of Digital Marketing IT, which manages any website or mobile app associated with Kellogg. With more than 600 websites worldwide, this results in a very global position for Smith, as she manages the process for onboarding sites.

“I had the opportunity to travel to Bangalore and Warsaw this past year to meet with our partners. Beyond the onboarding process, I am also a part of demand planning, new workflow tool delivery, vendor management, and much more,” says Smith. “The biggest opportunity in this position is to create a fully global-friendly environment.”

She has many goals for her career, including magnifying the global nature of her position. “I would like to be able to work with all regions and travel to expand my own development in global business,” says Smith.
1960s
Nancy Roswell Willans, ’62, and Davey L. Willans, B.B.A.’64, received a key to the city from the Mayor of Parsippany-Troy Hills, New Jersey, in recognition of their outstanding support of The Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms.

1968
Judge Frank D. Willis, B.B.A.’68, joined the Willis Law firm as chief senior counsel and a member of the probate and estates division. Judge Willis served more than 38 years as the former chief judge of Van Buren County. He retired as the longest standing judge in Van Buren County Probate Court history.

1970
Roy S. Roberts, B.B.A.’70, received the Michigan Chronicle’s Legacy in Motion Lifetime Achievement Award.

1971
Paul E. Boyer, MBA’71, has been elected chair of the board of trustees by Ferris State University.

1974
Jack A. Siebers, MBA’74, of Foster Swift Collins & Smith P.C., was recently selected by his peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America© 2015 edition in the field of corporate law.

1975
Randy L. Gilbert, B.B.A.’75, was announced by the APICS Grand Rapids Chapter as president of the board of directors for 2014-15.

Guy W. Morgan, B.B.A.’75, joined KPMG LLP as advisory managing director in the industrial manufacturing, automotive practice.

1976
L. Leonard Harrison, B.B.A.’76, MBA’86, was announced by the CFA Society of West Michigan as a board member for 2015.

1977
Donald L. Joseph, B.B.A.’77, M.A.’93, was named to the newly created position of president of American Axle & Manufacturing Inc. Asia.

1978
Mark R. Smith, B.B.A.’78, was awarded the Grand Rapids Bar Association’s 2014 President’s Award for his special contributions and service with numerous committee chair positions and for being a champion of diversity and inclusion.

1979
Ronald E. Harbour, B.B.A.’79, is senior partner overseeing global automotive manufacturing for Oliver Wyman, a global management consulting firm and a division of Marsh McLennan Corporation. Harbour co-authored and developed “The Harbour Report” in 1989. He was also appointed to the board of directors of Lincoln Educational Services Corporation.

1981
Daniel S. Ward, B.B.A.’81, is now the area vice president of employee benefits and brokerage operations at Group Associates Inc.

1982
Steven R. Ossewaarde, B.B.A.’82, was designated as a member of Wells Fargo’s Premier Advisors Program. Ossewaarde is the managing director of investments for the company.

Keene B. Taylor, B.B.A.’82, was promoted to senior vice president and retail mortgage manager by Horizon Bank.
Robert G. Short, MBA’85, works with the Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran Program, which helps veterans returning from overseas conflicts get information about services and resources available to them following a deployment. For his efforts, Short was honored with the 2014 STAR Award as volunteer manager of the year.

DeAnna Terrell Burt, B.B.A.’89, MBA’97, Ph.D.’09, was named to the executive board for the Michigan American Council on Education Women’s Network. Burt is the vice president for academics and chief academic officer for Baker College in Muskegon, Michigan.

Denise M. Hunt, B.B.A.’89, has been named the District 62 Toastmasters public relations officer.

Michael P. Stapleton, B.B.A.’85, is now dual manager of commercial banking in Grand Rapids and the Fifth Third Healthcare division in Western Michigan.

Laura Albright Large, B.B.A.’89, has joined LVM Capital Management Ltd. as a wealth management assistant.

John M. Crandle, B.B.A.’90, MBA’93, was announced by the Economic Development Foundation as the 2014 Southwestern Michigan Small Business Administration lender of the year.

John C. Denny, B.B.A.’90, was hired as area manager at Northpointe Bank.

Douglas A. Lockhart, MBA’90, joined HarperCollins Christian Publishing as senior vice president of Bible marketing and outreach.

Terrence M. O’Rourke, B.B.A.’90, M.A.’92, was hired as a senior vice president of finance to oversee Lake Michigan Credit Union’s finance department and its strategic planning initiatives.

Kaileigh Campbell Eddy, B.B.A.’92, was promoted to manager by DeBoer, Bauman & Company.

Pat Ferschweiler, B.B.A.’93, was named assistant coach for the Grand Rapids Griffins hockey team.

Daniel J. Scheid, B.B.A.’94, was recognized as a finalist for the CFO of the Year award under the corporation category. Scheid has been working with Zeigler Auto Group for more than a decade.

Rhonda Hollowell Bolding, B.B.A.’96, has joined MASSolutions as project manager.

Thomas W. Cronkright, II, B.B.A.’97, is the CEO and founder of Sun Title, which was included on Inc. Magazine’s list of the fastest-growing private companies in the U.S.

Denise M. Spaulding, MBA’97, is the recipient of the CFO of the Year award for the non-profit category. Spaulding is employed with D.A. Blodgett – St. Johns in Grand Rapids.

Judy C. Swafford, B.B.A.’97, was named marketing and communications supervisor at Educational Community Credit Union.

Kristina L. Watson, B.B.A.’97, was promoted to manager at Yeo & Yeo.

Shari A. Weber, MBA’97, joined Honor Credit Union in St. Joseph as chief administrative officer.

Leonard D. LaRocca, B.B.A.’98, was promoted to partner-advisory at KPMG LLP. LaRocca previously served as the managing director-advisory.
1999
Eric F. Deuker, B.B.A.’99, was named partner at HS&C Wealth Management.
Ronald P. Foor, MBA’99, became Fifth Third Bank’s new community president for the greater Kalamazoo and Battle Creek region in January 2015.
Elise Prisby Payton, B.B.A.’99, began her career with J. Walter Thompson and has held several marketing roles at various firms. She currently is client services supervisor of campaign management at Pandora Internet Radio.

2000
Andrew J. Gyorkos, B.B.A.’00, MBA’03, has joined Midwest Realty Group as a brokerage associate with a concentration in investment properties.
Steve J. Maniaci, B.B.A.’00, has been admitted to the BDO USA LLP firm’s partnership as a tax partner.
Shani J. Penn, B.B.A.’00, became an advisor to Gov. Rick Snyder, focusing on Belle Isle and the redevelopment of Historic Fort Wayne. Penn also received the Marshall Memorial Fellowship, which selects 75 people from across the globe to study topics that interest them and can help their home communities.
George G. Smojver, B.B.A.’00, has earned the Retirement Income Certified Professional designation. Smojver is the financial advisor and franchise owner of Smojver & Associates.
Scott A. VanderLeek, MBA’00, is now the manager of Fifth Third Bank in Western Michigan. VanderLeek will be responsible for developing the group’s business plan as well as ensuring customer satisfaction.
Toby M. Wendt, B.B.A.’00, has joined Perrigo Co. as human resources manager, providing HR support to Perrigo’s distribution, receiving and liquid value teams in Allegan, Michigan.

2001
Kevin M. Beauchamp, B.B.A.’01, is now the vice president and director of strategic partnerships at Schechter Wealth Strategies LLC.

Rene L. Buggs, MBA’01, was hired as the director of human resources at Tubelite Inc. in Walker, Michigan.

Jeffrey R. Munford, B.B.A.’01, was appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder to the Michigan Board of Physical Therapy.

Stephen R. Scholler, MBA’01, was recognized as one of Bank Investment Consultant Magazine’s Top 50 Bank Advisors. Scholler is the senior vice president of investments at Wells Fargo Advisors in Grand Rapids.
Nicole M. Walters, B.B.A.’01, was announced as the new director of development for the Western Michigan March of Dimes.

2002
David T. Jewell, B.B.A.’02, has been promoted to the position of principal at Yeo & Yeo.

Ronald T. Oppat, Jr., B.B.A.’02, was promoted to global market representation manager at Ford Motor Company.

Mark A. Tomasik, B.B.A.’02, was welcomed as associate general counsel at DP Fox Ventures.

Brookes Elders Welc, B.B.A.’02, has joined Bright Financial Advisors Inc., in Portage, Michigan, as a financial planner and advisor. Welc was most recently the branch manager of PNC Bank’s westside branch in Kalamazoo.

2003
Richard “Chip” M. Everett, III, B.B.A.’03, M.P.A.’10, received the Training Officer of the Year award from the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Heather M. Jach, B.B.A.’03, M.P.A.’06, has joined the YWCA of Kalamazoo as the new director of development. Jach was previously the senior associate director of development at Kalamazoo College.

Kenneth E. Leonard, B.B.A.’03, MBA’09, was hired as vice president of commercial loan services at Educational Community Credit Union.

Joel M. Schipper, B.B.A.’03, was announced by APICS Grand Rapids Chapter as the vice president of marketing of the board of directors for 2014-15.

2004
Aimee J. Jachym, B.B.A.’04, B.A.’04, corporate attorney, has rejoined Miller Canfield as an associate in the Kalamazoo office. Jachym was previously with Miller Canfield’s corporate group before spending two years in South Korea serving as president and chief administrator of Korean Kids and Orphanage Outreach Mission, a non-profit she founded in 2007.

Nicholas J. Yetter, B.S.’91, MBA’04, has been named a member of Wells Fargo’s Premier Advisors Program for the fourth consecutive year. Yetter is the senior vice president and investment officer of Wells Fargo Advisors.
2005

Jeffrey D. Kelosky, B.B.A.’05, was appointed senior director of sales, Detroit, for Tapad in New York.

Matthew A. Russell, B.B.A.’05, was hired as chief financial officer at Solarity Credit Union.

Jonathan M. Sanborn, B.B.A.’05, was named associate vice president and investment officer at Wells Fargo Advisors. Sanborn was previously a financial advisor with the Portage, Michigan, branch of the firm.

Christopher A. Sieklucki, B.B.A.’05, joined the administration of the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport as assistant director of operations and maintenance.

2008

Jason Machnik, B.B.A.’08, has joined the Kalamazoo office of Willis Law.

Daniel L. Redmond, B.B.A.’08, M.S.A.’12, of Seber Tans PLC, has completed the requirements to become a certified valuation analyst.

2009

Brian D. Niewiek, B.B.A.’09, was welcomed by Berends Hendricks Stuit in the sales department. Niewiek specializes in property and casualty insurance.

Suzanne D. Otten, B.B.A.’09, was promoted to budget analyst for CSM Group.

2011

Kyle J. Leemon, B.B.A.’11, MBA’13, was promoted to staff accountant at Yeo & Yeo.

2012

Bridgette D. Clock, B.B.A.’12, joined DeWys Manufacturing Inc. in Marne, Michigan, as the inside sales and marketing coordinator.

Megan L. Weller, B.B.A.’12, joined the executive management department at Nobis Agri Science, in Plainwell, Michigan. Weller will help in strategic planning, lead the regulatory compliance department and serve as the human resource director.

2013

Holly J. Kequom, B.B.A.’13, has been hired as a systems analyst I for the information technology and systems team at Perrigo Co.

2014

Ashley M. Aiello, B.B.A.’14, was recently hired full-time and promoted to marketing consultant at OsborneKlein. Aiello enters the position having previously served as the company’s first-ever marketing intern.

Marcus J. Brussee, MBA’14, joined Mercantile Bank of Michigan as assistant vice president and commercial lender in the Kalamazoo market.

In Remembrance

Caryl Freeman

Dr. Caryl P. Freeman, associate professor emeritus of business information systems at Western Michigan University, died Sept. 30. She was 86.

Freeman joined the WMU faculty in 1976 and retired in 1987. She served as the advisor for the business communication concentration and served as chair and a departmental representative on many WMU committees. For her entire WMU tenure, she was an advisor for Delta Pi Epsilon, the Association for Research in Business Education.

Her scholarly work included the 1986 book “Support Staff Procedures in the Electronic Office” as well as the 1984 book “Objective Writing for Business and Industry.” The latter work was co-written with her partner, Dr. Marcia Mascolini, WMU associate professor emeritus of business information systems, who survives.

J. Michael Keenan

Dr. J. Michael Keenan, a long-time faculty member in WMU’s Department of Management, died July 28. He was 82.

Keenan joined the WMU faculty in 1962, the year his department was established, and helped design the management curriculum. He then took a position as an operations analyst at the Stanford Research Institute, before returning to WMU.

He retired in 1999 after 31 years of service to WMU. He served as chair of his department, a member of the Faculty Senate and a member of the executive committee of the WMU chapter of the American Association of University Professors. In 1992, Keenan pioneered a distance education model at WMU by offering a graduate seminar taught completely by what was then called electronic mail—now commonly called email.
A circular electronic stock ticker in the main corridor of the Haworth College of Business instantly says “business” and announces the latest addition to Schneider Hall. The new Greenleaf Trust Trading Room gives students, faculty, staff and community members the opportunity to check on stock prices as well as world news updates and additional market information, using one of several interactive displays, which are located both inside the classroom and in the main hallway of the business college. The trading room, which opened in fall 2014, is having a significant impact on teaching and learning for finance students and keeps all business students engaged in what is happening in the financial markets.