



BusinessMatters

2020 EDITION

NEWS FROM LAMAR UNIVERSITY'S COLLEGE OF BUSINESS



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Dean Dan French delivers the welcome address at the first ever Spring Honors Awards Annual Luncheon.

» A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Welcome to the new edition of BusinessMatters! Lamar University's dedicated faculty and staff in the College of Business are committed to providing an education that offers challenging and rewarding careers to our diverse student body. This past academic year has seen the fruition of a number of initiatives whose highlights include:

- The January launch of our new Master of Science in Management Information Systems which now has an enrollment of 104 online students.
- Creation of the college's Office for Student Success, made possible by a gift of \$1.25 million from Bobbie and Herman T. Wilson Jr. establishing the Bobbie and Herman Wilson Student Retention and Success Fund.
- Fully staffing our Construction Management Program with the addition of two new faculty members.
- The college's first major research grant, \$440,000 from the Economic Development Agency (U.S. Department of Commerce) to study the economic impact of hurricane damage and suggest measures for future resiliency.
- Adding the University of Alicante in Spain as a new faculty-led study abroad program to our other existing locations.

Academic support continues to be a college goal. Our retention rate (freshman to sophomore) for fall 2019 was up 10 percentage points over 2018. Support for scholarships that allow business students to continue with their studies and allow us to competitively attract new students to the College of Business are at an all-time high. Notable new commitments from our alumni this past year have been:

- A major planned giving commitment from Myrna and Milton Dunnam at the Spindletop Society level. At average scholarship award levels, these funds will support more than 25 future LU Cardinals every year.
- Six new endowed scholarships. Endowments provide income both for current awards and awards guaranteed for the future.

As we look to the future, the college will be moving forward with initiatives in areas such as student recruitment, keeping students involved at LU and advancing to their degree. Just to give you a peek, here are some of our plans:

- Our on-campus M.S. in management information systems will kick off in this spring.
- Argentina will become a new destination for study abroad
- The addition of professional student advisors to the college's staff
- Renovations in the Galloway Building

The College of Business cares about the success of our students. Please join me, our faculty and staff team and student body in our efforts. Feel free to call me or to drop by the office in the Galloway Building to visit.



Dan W. French, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Business

BY THE NUMBERS

2019 GRADUATES
 TOTAL GRADS **291**

Including December 2018 & May 2019



43

ACCOUNTING &
BUSINESS LAW



27

ECONOMICS &
FINANCE



142

INFORMATION
SYSTEMS ANALYSIS &
GENERAL BUSINESS



78

MANAGEMENT &
MARKETING



10

REESE
CONSTRUCTION
MANAGEMENT



Real estate investment courses on the rise

This past summer, for the first time in Lamar University's history, the College of Business offered a real estate course. Development on the "Real Estate Investment" course first began in early February, and by July, six students were enrolled. Gevorg Sargsyan, assistant professor of economics and finance is one of the faculty members spearheading the real estate initiative, "Real estate is a demanded course all over the world," he said. "Many colleges of business offer these courses."

Students enrolled in the summer course had the opportunity to visit the office of Albanese Investment

Group LLC and Albanese Cormier Holdings LLC headquartered in Edison Plaza. Cormier Holdings is a multi-property real estate company with buildings in 25 states nationwide. "Principal Tom Cormier shared with students his real-world business experiences and how he started investing in real estate," Sargsyan said. "We want to provide first-hand experiences, project-based learning methods and case studies."

This fall, more students are enrolled in the real estate course work and will take the classes, "Real Estate Portfolio Analysis" and "Real Estate Investment Trusts" or REITs. The dean of

the College of Business, Dan French, who has a long record of researching and teaching real estate and formally served as director of the Jeffery E. Smith Institute of Real Estate at the University of Missouri, will teach both courses.

Sargsyan, along with Dean French, will also share the real estate instruction load with David Rose, a certified public accountant, real estate agent and adjunct professor in the College of Business. Rose will teach real estate accounting and taxation principles. Sargsyan says he hopes the course will bring hands-on knowledge and real-world experience to students.



Dare to dream

Tristan Jackson '09, '13, has made it her life mission to empower students in higher education to achieve their dreams. Jackson is an award-winning author and motivational speaker and says her moment of realizing her dream started at LU. "Lamar University was my golden ticket to a college that focused on graduating students and helping students develop professionally. All the classes and knowledge I was exposed to opened up a world of curiosity," she said. She has released 10 books since 2015, inspiring the world to never give up.

Jackson's first book, "Dream the Impossible Dream," is a narrative of her life that reveals a journey of tragedy, triumph and achieving goals. As a motivational speaker, Jackson hopes to inspire students to discover their moment and live their dreams, "Never Give Up! Nothing worthwhile is easy, as the old saying goes, and this certainly is true of a college education."



Recent graduate presses forward to success

Tori Smith '19 is taking the marketing world by storm, and she isn't slowing down any time soon. She currently serves as account executive at one of the largest screen printing, embroidery and promotional product companies in the Texas region, Buffalo Specialties Inc. "We have been in business for over 30 years and have built a foundation on superior service and products. Our team helps clients big and small make a statement with their brand," she said.

Smith landed an internship with the company just eight months earlier after connecting with recruiters at an LU career fair, and, in April, she was named intern of the year. She attributes her go-getter

spirit in the field to College of Business faculty. "Prof. Dyson was most influential for me. His management class taught me a lot about what kind of leader I want to be in my career," she said. She also named Marleen Swerdlow, Delvin Seawright, John McCullough and Melissa Baldo as a few of her other favorites.

Currently studying for her MBA in management, Smith doesn't know what the future holds for her, but what she *does* know is, "I love the company that I work for now, so I plan to see where it takes me," she said. I have big hopes to be successful here or elsewhere to end up in the C-suite."



Alum finds career success in management information systems

Natalie Wilson '12 knows all too well the power of social media. It's how she landed a job at one of the largest social media and social networking companies in the world.

A political science major, Wilson minored in management information systems and learned industry skills that she considers the backbone to any technical job. "The skills that I learned at LU in the MIS curriculum were extremely valuable and helpful because they taught us to solve common, yet complex, information systems problems. I now feel confident that I can go into any company and adapt to their professional culture."

Wilson snagged a job at multinational technology company Hewlett Packard right out of college and accredits Kakoli Bandyopadhyay for her start to a successful career. "She really took me under her wing along with the rest of my classmates," she said. "Dr. B was really one of my biggest influencers." Starting out as an information technology developer during a span of four years, Wilson had worked her

way up to global IT project manager within the company.

While most would consider this the pinnacle of their career, Wilson still had bigger dreams in mind.

She created a business profile on the social networking platform LinkedIn to market herself to job recruiters, and it didn't take long before she got a bite. She was contacted by a Facebook recruiter who invited her out to interview on site, and the rest, as Wilson said, is history.

Now a systems project manager at the multibillion-dollar company, Wilson says she has hopes of becoming a senior-level individual contributor or project consultant. Her advice to future LU grads? "Be open and always embrace change. Run towards it. Technology and everything else around you is constantly changing, and you don't want to get left behind."

In memoriam



Lamar University honors the life of Distinguished Alumnus Joseph "Joe" Tortorice Jr., who died Aug. 10, 2019, after a 19-month battle against cancer. Tortorice is most widely known as the founder of Jason's Deli, a business employing more than 10,000 people in more than 250 locations across the nation. Lamar University also memorializes Tortorice for his many generous, extraordinary and personal contributions to the university.

An LU College of Business alumnus, Tortorice was a member of the College of Business Board of Advisors, a Mirabeau Society member and member of the Cardinal Club and the Friends of the Arts. He was a well-received LU commencement speaker and an esteemed keynote speaker for the Beta Gamma Sigma banquet as well as for the Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies Series. Tortorice will always be remembered for his service in the community and his unwavering support for Lamar University.

STANDING TALL

The Bobby Allen story

Ruby and Bob Allen Sr. recalled this day as if it were yesterday. It was a Sunday morning in 1970 when the doorbell rang at the Allen household. A postal telegraph messenger had come to deliver a telegram from the War Department. Very briefly, it read that their eldest son Bobby, a U.S. Airforce airman, had been in a diving accident and broke his neck while on duty. "I'll never forget that day," Bob said, "It changed everything."

Robert E. "Bobby" Allen Jr. was born June 14, 1947, in Yuma, Arizona, to Robert "Bob" Earl Allen Sr. and Ruby Comeaux. The eldest of nine, the Allens describe Bobby as having

always been self-reliant. "I guess you can say he was always independent," Ruby laughed. "He sort of felt that he had to set an example and lead the smaller kids. He was a good big brother." In 1965, just out of high school, Bobby started taking classes at Lamar State College studying business. However, after only a short time, he realized that he was not ready for college and decided to enlist in the Air Force.

Bob, a retired airman himself, felt that Bobby had made the right choice, "I was a pilot in World War II, and I spent 38 years in the Air Force Reserves. I guess because of my background with the reserves, he

decided to join. They really made a man out of him."

In 1969, Bobby was stationed in Vietnam along Cam Rahn Bay working as a communications specialist. "His assignment was simple," Bob said. "He was in charge of monitoring the cable line that ran from Washington D.C. down to Cam Rahn Bay and then to the Air Force headquarters in Saigon." Bob had reached out to a friend who was an Air Force officer stationed at the Pentagon to inquire about Bobby's job duties. "He said, 'Oh, Bobby has the safest duty in Vietnam, don't worry,'" Bob paused. "But the safest job turned out to be not so safe."

Along the coast of Cam Rahn Bay, several airmen would frequent the beach shores on their days off. It wasn't uncommon for the men to dive off of nearby cliffs -- something that Bobby himself had done before. However, as he dove into the waters this time, a passing boat created a wave for which he could not adjust in time. Still arched in his swan dive, Bobby was pushed into submerged rocks, causing him to break his neck on impact.

The Allens were devastated. "When we first got the news, all we could think was horror," Ruby said. Bobby was evacuated to Wilford Hall Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, where he spent the next several months. "We were told he had very little movement in his fingers and toes — it wasn't a lot of hope for him." After having surgery to repair two broken vertebrae in his neck and two months of rehabilitation, Bobby was met with a harsh reality — he would never walk again.

With Bobby now a quadriplegic, the Allens quickly realized that this would be a lifestyle change for the entire family. In 1976, the family moved from their home

in Beaumont, Texas and found a more spacious home in Port Arthur, Texas. Both the Allens and the Veterans Affairs office spent a combined \$50,000 to remodel the home to accommodate Bobby. He was given an electric wheelchair, a hospital bed for his wing of the house and a medical assistant to help with his needs.

It wasn't long before Bobby decided to reenroll in Lamar State College, now Lamar University, to earn his business degree. Without the use of his arms and legs, he understood that he was limited physically and decided to enroll in one class per semester. Ruby said, "he recorded the lectures on a small tape player, then re-recorded them on the reel-to-reel at home, listening to each lecture numerous times as his study method."

While on campus, Bobby met injured veteran Joan Letulle, also a quadriplegic, and together the two became advocates for the disability rights movement. They also served together on several committees that were instrumental in making Lamar University ADA compliant for those with disabilities.

chair of their annual apple sales. He didn't stop there. Occasionally, Bobby would also assist LU students who needed scholarships.

"He did a heck of a lot more than I would have done in his condition, that's for sure," Bob said proudly. Sadly, Aug. 5, 1998, Bobby passed away from colon cancer that had spread throughout his body. It wasn't until after his death that the Allens realized how influential Bobby truly was in the community. They received an overwhelming amount of support from several of Bobby's friends, colleagues and mentees. The Allens spent the next several years preserving the legacy that Bobby left behind, and, in 2016, they endowed the Robert E. "Bobby" Allen Jr. Scholarship for all business majors, veterans or wounded veterans.



In 1988, after 17 years of taking classes at the university, Bobby finally earned his bachelor of business administration in management. He went on to work as a door-to-door Amway salesman for several years, and, in fact, he was very good at it. He purchased homes to renovate and sell, became president of the international service organization, the Kiwanis Club, and served as

"We felt that it was time to do something in memory of him. Bobby was a leader in the community; he really was," Bob said. "He really took an interest in scholarships, so we had an obligation to LU." Through the Robert E. "Bobby" Allen Jr. Scholarship, the Allens hope to continue the work that Bobby started so many years ago.



It's been an **eventful** year.

Here's a peek into some of what our students organizations have been doing in the College of Business.

- 1** Alpha Kappa Psi Fraternity serves in the community
- 2** Student Advisory Council assists with the first-ever Spring Honors Awards Annual Luncheon
- 3** LU NABA Student Chapter members Yasmine Johnson and Mariah McCoy receive 2019 NABA Houston Metropolitan Chapter Scholarships
- 4** American Marketing Association speaks to students at Spring Festival
- 5** LU Green Squad hosts Earth Day celebration on campus
- 6** Beta Gamma Sigma induction ceremony
- 7** American Marketing Association members place at regional conference in San Marcos at Texas State University
- 8** Finance Association tours the Port of Beaumont
- 9** Construction Management Student Association improves the community with Habitat for Humanity
- 10** LU Green Squad builds community garden
- 11** Alpha Kappa Psi Fraternity shows community support at the first-ever Housing Fair at Lamar State College in Port Arthur







New study abroad trip to Spain

Traveling, living and studying abroad can be an incredibly unique and eye-opening experience. This past spring, the College of Business launched its new study abroad program in Alicante, Spain. Students had the opportunity to take in all sights, sounds and flavors of the Valencia region of Spain while exploring the rich history of Spanish culture. Interdisciplinary seminars at the campus of the University of Alicante provided coastal views while students gained experience necessary to be successful in today's global workforce.





CoB hosts Spring Honors Awards Annual Luncheon

The College of Business hosted its first ever Spring Honors Awards Annual Luncheon April 17, 2019. This event honors those students who achieved outstanding academic accomplishments and involvement in the College of Business. The event also celebrates faculty and staff who displayed exceptional dedication reaching milestones of five to 40 years of service.

Those recognized for their years of dedicated service were: Jeff Dyson for 10 years of service, Alicen Flosi and Phyllis Johnson for 20 years of service, Marleen Swerdlow for 35 years of service and Larry Allen for 40 years of service.

The Aaron Rose Award was awarded to

economics and finance major, Madison Marino. Recipients of the Ben J. Rogers Outstanding Business Student Award are Krystle Riley Delcambre and Kendra Coleman. The Texas Business Hall of Fame Scholarship was awarded to Madison Apsire. The Financial Executive International Scholarship was awarded to Diana Turcios. The TSCPA Accounting Excellence Award was awarded to master of science in accounting senior, Alexander Defrancis.

Recipients of the Dean's Award for Excellence: Jonathon Moore, Ryan Malone, Syed Ali, Tori Smith, Luis F. Rodriguez Salinas, Lindsey Fontenot and John Ellis.

Recipients of the Carter Innovation Fund Study Abroad Scholarship: Alexander Exum, Jackson Dolce, Kara Ficken, Robert Salazar-Diaz, Casey Smith, Farouk El-Houbi, Bailey Thompson, Garrison Spring, Nicole Kyles-Burton, Yesenia Loera Romo.

Recipients of the Janie Nelson Steinhagen and Mark Steinhagen Global Fellows Study Abroad Scholarship: Lindsey Fontenot, Reid Johnson, Lindsay McManus, Bra'as Hamdan.

Faculty service, new faculty and staff awards: Dan French, Heather Doornbos-Boler, Ahmad Mohassel, Gevorg Sargsyan, Paul Howell, Shelbe Rodriguez and Lindsey Jackson.

Noted donors: Dr. and Mrs. Larry Rose, Regina Rogers, Nick Carter, Kal Kinkaid, Craig Messer and the Steinhagen family.





SPRING FESTIVAL

March 27, 2019

The College of Business hosted its annual Spring Festival — always lots of fun on campus! Spring Festival gives current students, prospective students and members of the community the opportunity to experience our programs and organizations hands on. This year's event was a cool vibe with games, a raffle, sweet treats and a delicious lunch sponsored by Chick-fil-A.





Marketing students make their mark in the community

This past spring, Komal Karani, associate professor of marketing and management, along with several of her marketing students, teamed up with local and eco-friendly business Beau-tanicals. The team had the opportunity to experience life on the family-owned farm while brainstorming marketing strategies for the business. “The student team had

to come up with creative marketing ideas which did not cost much and still got the message across. They even personally created a promotional video for the business,” Karani said. “Students in my entrepreneurship class did a great job analyzing the business model of Beau-tanicals and coming up with a set of recommendations for them.” Karani recognizes that small

businesses face unique challenges and are usually operating with limited resources. Through developing a student marketing team, she was able to establish a unique marketing plan for Beau-tanicals as wells as connect students with real-world project engagement. She described the experience as a win-win for both LU students as well as the business owners.



Lamar University’s College of Business Team was honored as the No.1 fundraising team Oct. 6th at the 2018 Gift of Life Julie Richardson Procter 5K Ribbon Run Color Rush. The CoB Team, headed by Delvin Seawright, raised more than \$2,000 for the Gift of Life Foundation.

FACULTY IN THE COMMUNITY

Delvin Seawright



Whether it's serving as a member of the national Professional Ethics Board of the Association of Government Accountants or as a weekly volunteer reading coach for second-graders at a local elementary school, Delvin Seawright, assistant professor of accounting and business law, strongly believes in serving others. "You can't spell community without the letter 'u.' And, like the letter, we should be inserted or rather serving at the center of our communities as well."

Jeff Dyson

Jeff Dyson, vice president of M&D Supply Inc. and instructor of management and marketing, shares how he excites learning for his students through his 30-something years of experience in retail.

"One of the things that's really, really fun for me at Lamar University is to relay my business experience to students in class. I've got sort of my unique style of doing what I do that's not necessarily better, it's just different."

Dyson says that staying active in the business community is a big part of what he brings to the university and it gives his students "a little different flavor of learning."



Alicen Flosi



As a member of the Big Thicket Association, Alicen Flosi, director of sustainability and professor of management information systems, has the opportunity to meet several people who are active in preserving the Big Thicket National Preserve. She also volunteers at the Big Thicket River Rally event each year. "The River Rally is a fun day for families and friends and a great way for the Big Thicket Association to raise money to promote conservation and environmental education."

Melissa Baldo



This past summer, Melissa Baldo, an attorney and MBA program professor, taught port professionals the skill of negotiating. "Proficient negotiation skills are critical in the business arena where

managers often have to negotiate contracts with employees, suppliers, customers and other stakeholders," she said. "The better your negotiating skills are, the better the contracts you will enter into will be which can save money for your company."

Kakoli Bandyopadhyay



No one knows the value of a management information systems degree more than Kakoli Bandyopadhyay, professor and chair for the Department of Information Systems and Analysis.

This past spring, she attended the 8th annual

Management Information Systems Academic Leadership Conference on the UT Dallas campus. The conference was open to information systems faculty, program directors and deans. Participants had the opportunity to discuss best practices in MIS academic leadership.

"I immensely benefited from attending" Bandyopadhyay said. "The conference included panel discussions of graduate and undergraduate curricula, research, recruiting and strategic issues pertaining to IS academic leadership."

New associate deans appointed in the CoB



Antoinette Mulvaney

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Administration

“As associate dean, I focus on helping our students earn their B.B.A. in a timely manner by ensuring a consistent offering of undergraduate courses, both on campus and online; advocating individual and personal outreach to support them with both financial and academic resources; expanding their horizons by offering a wide variety of study abroad experiences and experiential learning opportunities; and, increasing their engagement with faculty through collaborative research and service to business and the community.”

Soumava Bandyopadhyay

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research

“As newly appointed Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Business, my main focus is on growing the MBA program, both on-campus and online, but particularly the former. I also lead the College of Business’ efforts to support research and scholarly activities of faculty and students. We are developing more concentrations, such as Business Analytics, Accounting, and Management Information Systems, within the MBA program. We are also planning to add more Graduate Certificates, such as in Business Analytics.



New Faculty & Staff



Heather Doornsbos-Boler
Instructor
Management & Marketing



Minkyum Kim
Associate Professor
Construction Management



Zhe Luo
Assistant Professor
Construction Management



Marina Ruseva
Assistant Professor
Accounting & Business Law



Shelbe Rodriguez
Marketing Coordinator



Kristin Helm
Cardinal Success Coach

Promotions & Appointments

Accreditation and Assessment
Director, Shannon Klutts

Business Manager
Cindy Rhoden

Department of Accounting and Business Law
Chair, Ricardo Colon

Department of Economics and Finance
Chair, James Slaydon

MBA and MS-MIS
Coordinator, Jana Austin

Reese Construction Management
Interim Director, Seokyon Hwang



Clayton Lau named 2018 Hall of Fame inductee

Clayton Lau was been selected as the 2018 College of Business Hall of Fame inductee. For decades, Lau has displayed outstanding business performance throughout his tenure, his local community and the state of Texas. His tenure in the rotating equipment industry started some 50 years ago when he joined Behring's Bearing Service Inc. as a trainee. Sometime later, he was promoted to branch manager overseeing the Exxon and United States Steel contracts. He later joined Bearing Chain and Supply, working closely with the rotating equipment industry along the upper Texas Gulf Coast. Since then, Lau has served in various managerial roles, including sales and marketing manager at Kreiter Geartech and regional manager at Prager Gear. In 2001, he purchased rotating equipment repair company Houston Dynamic Service Inc. He had served as general manager in the company only a year earlier. Today, the company is one of the largest independent

rotating equipment repair companies in the greater Southeast Texas region.

An alumnus, Lau earned his bachelor of business administration in marketing in 1969 and served in the U.S. Army Reserve. During his time as a student, Lau served as president of his fraternity, Sigma Nu. During his tenure, the chapter bought and remodeled a home on Highland Avenue. Lau's work in the community did not stop there.

Lau is a lifetime member of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and served as chairman of the Souvenir Program Committee from 2003 to 2005. Today, he is a lifetime past committee chairman of the rodeo. He has served on the board of the East Houston Chamber of Commerce, is a member of the American Institute of Iron and Steel Engineers and is past president of the Houston Chapter of the International Vibration Institute.

Lau's wife of 49 years, Georgia, is also a Lamar University graduate and together the two have shown an abiding amount of support to the university. Both are members of the Mirabeau Society and charter members of the President's Circle. They have created the Clayton and Georgia Lau Faculty Development Fund in Business and also contributed to various campus needs, including the President's Fund, Alumni Fund and the Dean's Fund in business.

In 2006, Lau's involvement with LU blossomed. He was invited to the College of Business. He spoke on campus as the ExxonMobil Executive in Residence Speaker and he joined the Alumni Advisory Board. Lau would go on to serve as chair of both boards. He currently serves on the Lamar University Foundation Board and on the foundation's Development Committee.

Business Students hall of famers

Casey Smith, a senior management and human resource management major from Orange, and Lance Taylor, a senior accounting and finance major from Port Arthur, were both recipients of the Texas Business Hall of Fame Scholarship. The Texas Business Hall of Fame Scholarship is awarded to those students who “exhibit entrepreneurial aspiration and demonstrate a propensity for leadership, entrepreneurial achievements or an industry innovator.” The scholarship program is made possible through the Hall of Fame’s Ben J. Rogers Scholarship, endowed by Regina Rogers, daughter of Ben Rogers.

Both Smith and Taylor aspire to own their own business after graduation: Smith has hopes to open his own Chick-fil-A in Orange, “Orange does not have a Chick-Fil-A, which is a travesty in my opinion, and I would love to change that!”

Taylor, who already has his own real estate business, which he started in 2018, interned with Chevron this summer and hopes to launch his career within the company. “Ideally, I will be working with Chevron again next summer. Hopefully once I complete my finance and accounting degrees, I can take my CPA exam in the year 2021 and start my career off here at Chevron. That’s how I see life turning out, as of now.”



Newly endowed scholarships

Hawthorn Family Scholarship in Accounting endowed by Hubert F. Hawthorn Jr.

Rice Family Scholarship in Business endowed by Rodney and Norma Rice

William Grantham Endowed Scholarship in Entrepreneurship

Gisela R. Houseman Scholarship in Business

Ronald and Anita Proctor Scholarship in Accounting

Edwin E. Vallery Scholarship Fund in Business (annually funded)

King A. Campbell Scholarship in Business

Giving Back

One of the greatest things you can provide our business students at Lamar University is your time and knowledge.

► Share Your Expertise

Mentor a student, sponsor a student internship, lecture in a classroom...the possibilities are endless. Your business expertise can help shape the lives of our students.

► Refer Exceptional Students

Refer the best and brightest students to our undergraduate and graduate programs. Your referral will allow us to introduce new students to leadership, stimulating and rewarding course work, international faculty, meaningful relationships and a world of new opportunities.

► Recruit Our Graduates

Participate in career fairs and networking events on campus. When new job and internship opportunities arise in your organization, think of our students in the College of Business.

► Engage in Social Media

The most accessible way to give back to the College of Business is by connecting on social media. Follow each of our platforms and engage with comments and likes. This is a great way to share pros and cons for every part of the graduate and undergraduate experience.

Contact Uliana Trylowsky, major gifts officer in the Division of University Advancement, at uliana.trylowsky@lamar.edu or 409-880-8419.

The Carter Legacy:

Family Tree Has Deep Roots at Lamar University

When Nick Carter says that his family deeply intertwined with Lamar University, he's not kidding. He graduated from the College of Business in 1975 and is one of six family members who are College of Business alumni. Carter and his wife, Judy '78, both hold a bachelor's degree in business administration with an accounting focus. Nick earned his CPA certificate, worked in public accounting for a couple of years and then finished with 38 years in the industry, the last eight as CEO of a small NYSE petrochemical company. Judy worked in accounting for about 20 years and is currently owner and operator of two antique malls in Lumberton.



Left to right: Darren Smith '93, Nikki Carter Smith '92, Amanda Carter Ternes '03, Andy Ternes '02 | Seated: Nick Carter '75, Judy Smith Carter '78

The two actually met as students on the LU campus in the dining hall. Carter calls the occurrence completely serendipitous. "This was back in the day when the dining hall served donuts and hot chocolate during final exam times," Carter said jokingly. "I had gone over to the dining hall for a cup of hot chocolate and I happened to meet my wife. Over time we really got along, the flame ignited, and the rest is history." The pair celebrated 51 years of marriage this past spring.

Following in the footsteps of their parents, their daughters Nikki (Carter) Smith '92 and Amanda Ternes '03 also hold a B.B.A. in accounting and Nikki is a CPA. Nikki was also a twirler at the university for two years. Son-in-law Darren Smith '93 holds a B.B.A. in general business with a minor in management information systems and even played football on a scholarship. Their second son-in-law Andy Ternes '03 earned his B.B.A. in marketing while on a golf scholarship at the university.

The Carter family has no ties to any other university, and Nick Carter says that he'd like to keep it that way. "We've got no reason to go anywhere else," he said. "Lamar University has provided us with a good education, a good style of living for all of us, and we are certainly happy with it."

For several years, Nick Carter has been a dedicated member of the College of Business Board of Advisors and serves on the Board of Trustees of the Lamar University Foundation, but he doesn't stop there. In 2012, he established the Nick Carter Innovation Fund. The fund, created with a gift from Carter matched by his employer, provides study abroad scholarship opportunities to students majoring or minoring in any program in the College of Business.

Carter says that he wants students to recognize that they don't have to travel far from home for unique college learning experiences and opportunities. "I got

to thinking that this could be a great experience for a lot of students at LU who have never had the opportunity to travel anywhere or fly on a plane for that matter," he said. "There's a lot of scholarships out there, which is good, but I wanted to create a way for students to get a unique experience and broaden their horizons."

There's no denying that Lamar University holds a special place in the Carter family. Nick Carter says that both he and his wife plan to continue giving to the university until he ultimately reaches his desired amount. The final target in question, he says, will remain a secret. "I don't think I will say how much, but LU is such a big part of our family. We treat the university like family and we wouldn't have it any other way."

A group of five diverse students are gathered in a modern, brightly lit lounge area. They are seated on a mix of yellow and grey modular furniture, including sofas and large round ottomans. The students are engaged in conversation and working on laptops. In the background, a large window allows natural light to fill the space, and the word 'FAIL.' is visible in large, faint letters on the wall. The overall atmosphere is collaborative and focused.

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HANNAH RUMSEY:

FOCUSING AFAR

Hannah Rumsey, senior accounting and finance major, took her undergraduate research abroad to Alicante, Spain. In 2018, Rumsey submitted a research proposal that analyzed the structural differences between Spain's not-for-profit sector and that of the U.S.

The first part of her 37-day trip was spent with College of Business study abroad students focusing on international business courses at the University of Alicante. "I really learned a lot about culture, and I got an experience that I have never had," Rumsey said. "We were right there with the students on campus and had an opportunity to meet with real professors of the university."

A part of her research required her to take part in field interviews with professors, experts and directors of not-for-profit organizations throughout Spain.

"I had maybe 10 to 15 meetings while in Spain. I asked questions comparing strategic planning in the United States to Spain. What I really wanted to know was how they saw strategic planning being implemented within their organizations and what other changes that occurred."

Now that Rumsey is back from Spain, she says the research project is still in the data collection stage, but she's hoping to conduct one final study that will yield good results.

"Once we wrap up all of the data, we will redistribute a survey out to those professors and hopefully get a good study going." She said. "We really want to know how we can improve differences on each side. Maybe we can take some of their practices and bring them back to the U.S. to implement them locally."

Rumsey says that her end goal is to be able to publish a paper on her research and jokes that she will be doing research until she crosses the stage at graduation, "This is something that I can see drawing out for the remainder of my time in college. That's just how it goes. It definitely keeps me busy. But, I'll tell any student, if you want to travel, research is the way to go."



Henry Venta



Frank Badua



Vivek Natarajan

Team's Recovery Project Focuses on Disaster Relief

Following devastation from Hurricane Harvey, Henry Venta, professor of marketing and management, receives \$441,000 grant from the Economic Development Agency to help fund the study of effective disaster recovery in the region. Through his research, Venta hopes to discover the recovery efforts that impact the community most. Co-investigators for the project are James Slaydon, associate professor of economics and finance, Gevorg Sargsyan, assistant professor of economics and finance and Ricardo Colon, professor and department chair of accounting and business law. "Hurricanes happen all the time" Dr. Sargsyan said. "We want to really focus on how we can better prepare for hurricanes and then how we need to overcome after it happens. That is our main focus."

Badua Takes Research on Sustainability to Paris

In 2017, Frank Badua, associate professor of accounting and business law, set his sights on business transaction cycles related to the environment. Through his research, he was able to develop green transaction cycles.

"These are activities focused on things like recycling or finding out how much pollution or effluent has been generated by business activities," he said. Badua has presented his research on green transaction cycles at numerous conferences, and, this summer, he presented related research at the Conservatoire

Nationale des Arts et Metiers in Paris for the 10th Accounting Historians' International Conference. His presentation focused on how Roman Catholic socioeconomic thought may be used to formulate social and environmental accounting measures.

"I believe the importance of sustainability research is summed up by this quote from the French priest, philosopher and scientist Fr. Teilhard de Chardin: 'Le sens cosmique doit être né dès que l'humanité s'est retrouvée face à la forêt, à la mer et aux étoiles.' The awareness of the cosmos is born of studying the forest, the sea and the stars."

Natarajan Tapped to Study Research in Port Management

Vivek Natarajan, associate professor of marketing and management and Purnendu Mandal, professor of management information systems, received a grant of \$20,000 from the Center for Advances in Port Management at Lamar University for a research grant titled "Analysis and Modeling of Resilience of a Port to Natural Disasters employing Systems Dynamics Perspective: A Case Study of the Port of Beaumont."

The two conducted interviews on resilience and developed a systemic dynamics model to study the resilience of the port. Graduate students Sesha Gubbala and Dheeraja Karlapalem were recruited to work as research assistants. Natarajan said, "our research trained them in analysis of data, developing the system dynamics model and setting up the system dynamics. We expect this study to generate future grant and training opportunities with ports and grant agencies."



Michael G. Weinert Entrepreneurial Lecture Series presents: The Walters Brothers

Brent Walters '03, Clint Walters '04 and Aaron Walter '01 all LU alumni, have many years of management and entrepreneurial experience. On October 17, the three brothers gathered in Landes Auditorium to share their journey to success. Aaron Walters is the chairman and chief executive Officer of Altar'd State, a christian retail clothing chain. Aaron, along with brothers Brent and Clint, co-founded the company

and opened the first location in Knoxville, Tennessee, in 2009. Altar'd State has donated more than \$7.7 million to local and global communities through the Mission Monday Program and other partnerships. Brent Walters is the sole owner of an exclusive Allstate agency. Clint Walters is the senior vice president and chief operations officer for Mobil Oil Federal Credit Union in Beaumont, Texas, with more than 16 years in the banking field.



Anthony Menendez, CPA, CFE, knows all too well the high cost of being a corporate whistleblower. Best known as the “Accountant Who Beat Halliburton,” Menendez shares with Lamar University students his decade-long legal battle with the multinational corporation and how his reputation as a whistleblower has impacted his life.



Tom Cormier '84 is owner of Tom Cormier Homes. He plays a key role in principal of Albanese Cormier Holdings LLC. Cormier has 27 years of management experience.



Amy Lovoi '13, '15 is a buyer for TJX Companies. TJX operates T.J. Maxx, Marshall's, Home Goods, Sierra Trading Post HomeSense, as well as e-commerce sites.



Juan Luis Nicolau, Marriott professor of revenue management at Virginia Tech, lectured CoB students on undergraduate research, tourism research and success in academics.

Phillips **focuses** his
attention on his future
in Accounting

EYES ON THE PRIZE



Darien Phillips, senior accounting major and future certified public accountant, has taken full advantage of his time here at Lamar University. Phillips has attended countless conferences and stayed active in several campus organizations: Student Government Association, LU Ambassadors, the National Association of Black Accountants, the Transformational Scholars, Cardinal Communities and Beta Gamma Sigma. Phillips has also shaken hands with corporate CEOs and other dignitaries across the country, which has led to him scoring three accounting internships—all before reaching his senior year.

accounting job fairs and met recruiters from a very early age,” Phillips said. “Accounting firms have sent me to conferences in Chicago, Dallas, Houston and, most recently, Atlanta. It’s been an awesome opportunity.” It was through those very conferences that Phillips earned internships with accounting firm BDO, national firm RSM and Big Four firm, PricewaterhouseCoopers.

“I think it’s just a matter of knowing where you want to go and getting the job done.”

Here’s how he got there: During his freshman year at LU, Phillips connected with Delvin Seawright, assistant professor of accounting and business law. Seawright has since served as a mentor to Phillips, often notifying him of upcoming conferences and opportunities to develop professionally. “I went to

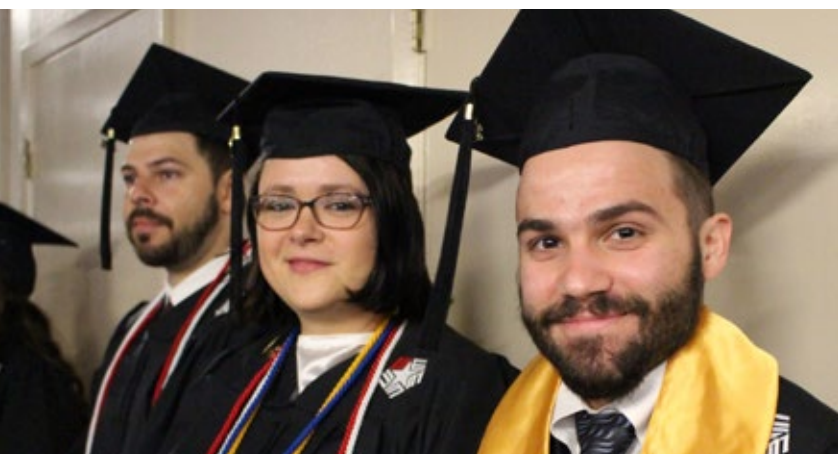
This past spring, Phillips had the opportunity to meet with Texas Sen. Brandon Creighton to discuss solutions to political issues on the LU campus. He was also able to meet with dignitaries from the Texas State University System and student government association representatives from several Texas

institutions. “If you would have told me three or four years ago, ‘Hey Darien, you’re going to be representing an entire university before a senator,’ I would not have believed you. But, it’s all possible.”

In Phillips’ eyes, accounting is the language of business and CPAs are the safeguards of financial information for all. When asked what drives his passion to become a CPA, Phillips says the answer is simple: “I think it’s just a matter of knowing where you want to go and getting the job done. I know that I want to be a partner someday. I am here now, and this is where I want to be. Each morning, I look in the mirror, and I tell myself, ‘Darien, you are great. You are the best at what you do,’ and I go out and get it done.”

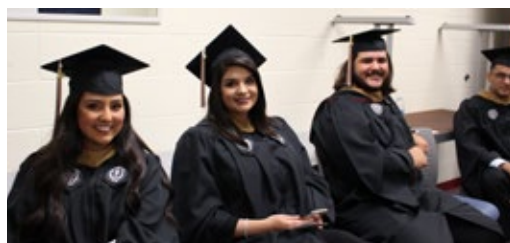
Now entering into his senior year, Phillips reflects on what the future holds for him at LU. “Lamar University is a hidden gem, and the College of Business a well-oiled machine. I still have a little more time to go, more things to do and more goals in mind. With the support of an entire institution, family and friends, coupled with the plethora of opportunities I’ve been given, I’m excited for what the future holds.”





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