Mays Business School’s Alumni Relations Office hopes you’ll get engaged with your alma mater this year!

**STAY INFORMED** In addition to publishing @Mays magazine twice a year and producing a quarterly MBA alumni e-newsletter, we’ve recently expanded our alumni web presence. Go to mays.tamu.edu/alumni for a number of resources. Tap into career services for graduates. Search for classmates or update your contact information. Read the latest news on fellow alumni. Build your professional network on Mays social media sites.

**GET INVOLVED** Our graduates participate in a whole host of Mays programs and activities. Whether you’re interested in recruiting or mentoring our students, attending alumni events or starting a Mays alumni chapter in your area, there’s no shortage of ways for you to get involved.

**BECOME INVESTED** Alumni gifts enable us to enhance our academic programs, recruit outstanding faculty and attract the best and brightest students. By making a gift to Mays Business School, you can express your appreciation for the education you received, strengthen the stature of your alma mater and invest in the future.

**MORE INFORMATION** To learn more about alumni events and activities, visit mays.tamu.edu/alumni. For questions about how you can get engaged with your alma mater, contact Josh Ellison at jellison@mays.tamu.edu or 979.845.5435. For questions about giving opportunities, please contact Joy Monroe at jmonroe@mays.tamu.edu or 979.458.1452.
Diverse partnerships hold key to Mays’ future

New collaborations advance research to create knowledge, spur innovation

Alumni update
2014 Outstanding Alumni Award recipients
Alumni profile: Kevin Fontenot
Alumni engagement: FT MBA Class of 2003

Business Research in Action
Balancing research and academic outreach
Employee engagement
Variance in equity lending fees
Regulatory pendulum
Corporate brands and executive pay

Departments
From the dean 2
National recognition 3
Program news 6
Faculty & staff achievements 14
Mays in the news 17
Distinguished Scholar 35
Executive speakers 36
Dear friends,

I am pleased to welcome you to the Fall/Winter 2014 @Mays magazine. As interim dean of Mays Business School, I look forward to building on the school’s many successes and strengths cultivated during the long and distinguished service of Jerry Strawser. Under Jerry’s leadership, Mays firmly established itself as one of the leading business schools in the world. We look forward to partnering with him in his new role as vice president of finance and administration and CFO of Texas A&M University. We are also delighted that Jerry will continue to serve as a member of our faculty.

Mays is fortunate to have a strong leadership team in place. During the ongoing search for our next dean, we will address challenges that require our attention, we will enhance aspects of our operation that can be improved and we will pursue a strategic framework that will enable our next dean to lead us to even greater prominence.

In this issue of @Mays, we explore the vital role that partnerships will play in the future success of Mays Business School as we pursue our mission to create new knowledge and develop ethical leaders for a global society. The partnerships we are forging come in all shapes and sizes. They facilitate new kinds of collaboration among students, faculty, alumni, universities at home and abroad, government agencies and industry leaders. And they deliver myriad benefits. These include enhanced skills and high-impact learning experiences for students, as well as professional development opportunities for faculty along with research breakthroughs in disciplines as diverse as consumer behavior and global business strategy. Some of our new relationships will also spur increased revenues, operational efficiencies and employee engagement for industry partners, as well as greater economic growth throughout the Brazos River Valley and beyond.

As you learn more about our many partnerships, I hope you will consider new ways that you might collaborate with Mays in the coming year. These could range from attending an alumni event to mentoring or recruiting students, to serving on the advisory board of one of our centers of excellence. However you choose to engage with your alma mater, we appreciate your continuing support and look forward to seeing you in the not-too-distant future.

RICKY W. GRIFFIN

Interim Dean
Mays Business School
University Distinguished Professor and Blocker Chair in Business
Texas A&M University
National recognition

Mays Executive MBA program continues to climb in *Financial Times* rankings

The Mays Executive MBA program continues its upward trajectory among the top 10 U.S.-based programs at public universities, rising to 6th among U.S. public schools (up from 8th last year) in rankings released by *Financial Times* this fall. The program stands 16th among all U.S.-based schools and 60th in the world—up from 65th previously. To determine its rankings, London-based *Financial Times* surveyed thousands of Executive MBA alumni from more than 100 of the top programs in the world. This year, alumni surveyed were from the Class of 2011.

The improvement from last year in nearly every category indicates the Mays Executive MBA continues to deliver a high-quality learning experience and helps graduates achieve their professional goals. Located at Texas A&M’s CITYCENTRE Houston facility, the Mays Executive MBA performed particularly well in several of the rankings’ key measures:

- **Aims Achieved**: 1st among U.S. public institutions, 2nd among all U.S. schools, 2nd in Texas and 15th globally.
- **Work Experience**: 2nd among U.S. public institutions, 5th among all U.S. schools, 1st in Texas and 30th globally. Executives enrolled in the Texas A&M program consistently average 15 to 17 years of work experience.
- **Research**: 9th among U.S. public institutions, 20th among all U.S. schools and 36th globally. This ranking is based on the number of scholarly publications by full-time faculty during a designated period.
Mary Lea McAnally, associate dean for graduate programs, noted this latest ranking recognized the high caliber of students in the program. “We start each class with a group of solid, experienced executives, a select set of men and women from across the United States, eager to learn from their peers,” she said. “Our careful selection process ensures a class with diverse backgrounds and proven leadership track records.”

McAnally also commented on the rankings’ confirmation of other important aspects of the Mays Executive MBA program. “When our students graduate, they leave having accomplished what they set out to do—that is, to gain valuable tools and skills that boost their leadership abilities,” she said. “In addition, our program’s success owes in large part to a strong, research-active faculty who are experts in their field and who are passionate about teaching. I could not be more pleased with this year’s Financial Times rankings.”

2014 Public Accounting Ranking gives Mays high grades

Mays Business School fared well in the 2014 Public Accounting Ranking, which is based on input from accounting professors nationwide.

* The undergraduate accounting program maintained its 7th place ranking from 2013.
* The master’s program ranked 7th, up from 8th last year.
* The doctoral program ranked 8th, up from 10th last year.
* A new ranking category this year: the undergraduate accounting program ranked 7th in the list of undergraduate programs most frequently ranked 1st by professors at other schools.
* The master’s program ranked 6th among master’s programs most frequently ranked 1st by professors at other schools.

In a separate ranking, Mays held its spot at 11th in the recent Accounting Degree Review, a leading resource for accounting programs. The 2014 ranking included the top 50 graduate schools for accounting.
Mays receives high marks among best business schools for veterans

Mays Business School placed 5th in the Military Times “Best for Vets Business Schools 2014,” an annual list of the most military-friendly business schools in the nation.

Mays offers a number of programs with veterans in mind, such as the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV).

Military Times is comprised of Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times and Marine Corps Times. When conducting the 80-question survey, editors focused on culture and curriculum that caters to military veterans.

“As with all of the ‘Best for Vets’ rankings, ‘Best for Vets: Business Schools’ is an editorially independent news project that evaluates the many factors that make an institution a good fit for military veterans,” Amanda Miller, editor of Military Times EDGE magazine said. ‘Best for Vets’ provides servicemen and women a gauge by which to judge whether a school or program will truly benefit them. The rankings factor in academic quality, outcomes and policies, school culture, student support and cost.

Marine Corps Reserve Captain Lloyd McGuire, a Full-Time MBA student at Mays, was featured in the “Best for Vets: Business Schools” article on militarytimes.com. He said, “I’ve had an incredible experience. It’s just a very challenging curriculum here at A&M. That is very similar to…what I had to do in the military.”

To learn more about Mays’ activities and programs for military students, visit mays.tamu.edu/thankyouforserving.

Mays included in list of “30 Great U.S. Colleges for Studying Business Abroad”

Mays Business School was listed in a Business Research Guide article as one of the top 30 colleges for studying business abroad. The article stated that Mays “strives to enhance business and business opportunities in the Southwest.” Among the school’s many study abroad programs, the article noted Mays’ faculty-led courses to Beijing, Moscow and Stuttgart, which are offered during the summer and winter semesters.

Mays MS-MIS students place second in National Case Competition

A team of MS-MIS students placed second in the BMC Student Case Competition in conjunction with the FUSION 14 Service Management Conference in Washington, D.C. Six other teams from across the U.S. also competed.

Mays team members included Darryl Alva ’15, Parul Rannot ’15 and Aravindan Rajamani ’15.
Jerry Strawser was appointed vice president for finance and administration and CFO of Texas A&M University on Sept. 3, 2014. Under Strawser’s leadership as dean of Mays Business School, the school firmly established itself as one of the leading business schools in the world. Following are highlights of the many successes Mays accomplished during his distinguished 13-year tenure:

- The most recent rankings by *Bloomberg Businessweek* identified Mays as only one of 16 U.S. institutions (and one of only seven U.S. public institutions) having both its Full-Time MBA and undergraduate programs ranked among the top 30 in the country.
- Philanthropic giving to Mays exceeded $134 million, with primary focus on faculty endowments, merit-based undergraduate scholarships, MBA fellowships and endowments and funds to support student travel and high-impact learning experiences.
- Annual programming and revenues from custom non-degree executive programs have increased in the last 10 years from $655,000 to $6.1 million.
- A Business Honors major was created to attract high-achieving high school students and provide them with enhanced learning opportunities. The most recent Business Honors class had an average SAT of 1400 and a top 4 percent average high school class rank.
- The Executive MBA program was relocated from The Woodlands to CITYCENTRE Houston and a Professional MBA program was launched in 2012.
- Research and Teaching Councils comprising Mays faculty were created to enhance the research and teaching environments at the school, as well as to devise means to proactively encourage and reward research and teaching excellence.
- An overall communication and branding strategy was implemented to raise the profile of Mays Business School in both the business and academic communities. This ongoing effort includes annual multimedia advertising campaigns, as well as Mays Business Online (a monthly electronic publication), Benefactor (an annual donor recognition publication), @Mays (a semiannual alumni publication) and Business Research in Action (a semiannual publication that features important research by Mays faculty).
GRiffin NAmEd interim deAn

Ricky W. Griffin was named interim dean of Mays Business School in September. He will serve in this role until the national search for the school’s next permanent dean is completed.

Griffin is a University Distinguished Professor, current holder of the Jeane and John R. Blocker Chair and former head of the Department of Management. In addition to his leadership service as department head, Griffin served Mays as interim dean from June 2007 to August 2008 and as executive associate dean from June 2000 to June 2007. He joined the Texas A&M University faculty in 1981.

Mays students launch multicultural association

The Texas A&M Multicultural Association of Business Students (MABS) launched its inaugural membership drive in October 2014. MABS was created to encourage an inclusive environment at Mays that reflects the general and cultural diversity of the entire student body. Annie McGowan, associate professor and director of the Deloitte Professional Program, will serve as the adviser for the group, which seeks to establish a stronger presence of underrepresented groups at Mays Business School through outreach, professional development, academic achievement and community involvement. The organization will also serve as a link between corporate recruiters and its diverse membership.

Undergraduate programs

A group of Mays Regents’ Scholars spent two weeks visiting South Africa and Zambia last summer. Phillips 66 sponsored the trip with a $50,000 gift in addition to its annual giving to Texas A&M University. Regents’ Scholars are first-generation college students from low-income families. The students were selected for the trip based on their academic performance, extracurricular involvement and a short essay. Henry Musoma, chaperone and lecturer in the Undergraduate Special Programs Office at Mays, said the purpose of this trip was to expose the students to global business dynamics as they play out in Sub-Saharan Africa.

WALKing tour provides insight for mays group

In May and June, Kris Morley, director of the Business Honors Program, and Nancy Simpson, a clinical professor, Mays teaching fellow and director of Undergraduate Special Programs, and 12 undergraduates walked El Camino de Santiago—a 490-mile trek across northern Spain. The group visited numerous small businesses and learned how area residents are living in a struggling economy. The trip also taught leadership skills, as the students rotated as leader of the group by taking turns planning the routes, meals and accommodations for each day.

The Communication Lab exceeded 100 consultations in the first two weeks of the fall semester. This is its sixth semester of operation.

Business Honors students visited the Port of Houston in April. They visited the Container Yard and had a boat tour of the entire port. Jim Stark, a member of the Dean’s Development Council, arranged for the students to meet with the CEO of the Container Yard.

The incoming Business Honors class in 2014 had the highest academic credentials to date—an average SAT score of 1423 and a top 4 percent average high school class rank.
The MBA Programs Office hosted the Women’s Leadership Initiative in April at the Mays CITYCENTRE Houston facility. Rebecca Cooke, strategy consultant and leadership researcher, shared a series of concepts and strategies on the topic of “Exercising Power and Influence” with the 90 women in attendance.

The following concepts were discussed:

- The difference between power and influence
- The difference in communication patterns between men and women
- Types of power that emerge in the workplace
- Constraints that tend to hold people back

Cooke also led a program in September 2014 on “Defining Effective Roles.” She is scheduled to speak again on April 1, 2015.

Fifteen Full-Time MBA students teamed up with Camp LIFE to create and host the first Camp LIFE Family Day Camp, which attracted 51 campers in April. Camp LIFE is a unique and inclusive camping adventure for children with disabilities and their siblings. The Mays students are members of MBA Students Helping Our Community (SHOC), an organization for graduate students that focuses on giving back to the community. Chad Riley, president of MBA SHOC, said the event helped members exemplify selfless service, a Texas A&M University core value. “Our organization felt that creating an event with the campers would allow us to be a more effective partner, broaden our experiences and give us an opportunity to have a great time while serving others,” he said.

PMBA CLASS OF 2015 VISITS HUNGARY

The 44 members of the Professional MBA program Class of 2015 visited Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic for a one-week International Business Policy course in August. The class members attended cultural events, visited eight companies, heard eight entrepreneur pitches and participated in two case studies. While in Prague, the class members partnered with Orbi Pontes (Czech for “Bridges to the World”) to help the Czech hearing-impaired community by spending a day volunteering and fundraising at Ticha Kavarna (Czech for “Silent Café”). The cafe is operated by the hearing-impaired for the hearing-impaired. The class was also paired with Czech sign language teachers and interpreters. They travelled across Prague learning Czech sign language and distributing pamphlets to commuters in hopes of bringing Ticha Kavarna some new business. “The opportunity that our class had to learn about the deaf culture and to provide a small service for them was an affirming experience,” said Brent Prigge, PMBA student. “Knowing that our trip was able to serve more than the needs of our classmates, even in such a small capacity, made the trip that much more valuable.”
Department updates

ACCOUNTING

The Professional Program at Mays has received funding from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to support an initiative designed to increase the participation from underrepresented groups in the accounting profession. The Professional Program and PwC will jointly host high school juniors and their parents as they experience “A Day at Mays.” The objective of this program is to give high school students access to professionals who can offer firsthand insight into the world of accounting and to provide prospective students and their parents with an inside look at what Mays Business School has to offer.

The Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) program and the Bachelor’s in Accounting program have added a Professional Development Seminar to their curricula. Both courses offer accounting students the opportunity to enhance skills necessary to succeed as professional accountants. The one-course-credit seminar for the MSA uses the strengths discovery training offered by the Evolve Performance Group as a foundation for helping students improve self-awareness and exposing them to a vocabulary that helps them develop and articulate their personal brands. The comparable seminar for the bachelor’s students, starting in Spring 2015, focuses on increasing students’ awareness about career paths and helping them develop their personal brands.

FINANCE

Financial analysts are in high demand nationwide, as a wide range of firms from traditional banks and investment houses to energy companies seek individuals with strong quantitative and problem-solving skills. The U.S. Department of Labor projects that the demand for financial analysts will grow 16 percent a year between 2012 and 2022, which is well above the average expected job growth of 9 percent for engineers and 11 percent for all occupations. To meet this growing demand for talent, the Department of Finance rebranded its Master of Science in Finance (MSF) program this summer to better target top science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) undergraduate students seeking careers in finance. The MSF program is a 10-month, 36-credit-hour program that places an emphasis on practical finance skills and experiential learning. This combination of hands-on learning and a solid theoretical framework uniquely prepares students to begin a career in finance, giving them a leg up on the competition. “Graduates of our MSF program will be equipped with the skills, knowledge, experiences and finance industry connections they need to make a successful jump from STEM to stocks,” said Kevin Moore, the new MSF program director.

Since the fall of 2013, the Department of Finance has offered courses in technical analysis taught by Executive Professor Kevin Moore, CFA, CMT. This fall, Mays became the first school in the country to participate in a unique pilot program with the Market Technicians Association (MTA), a global organization whose more than 4,500 members are committed to raising professional standards and ethics for technical analysis. Through the pilot program, seven

Master networker, international speaker and best-selling author Keith Ferrazzi served as the keynote speaker at the “Relationships for Career Success” conference, sponsored by Graduate Business Career Services. More than 175 people attended the conference that featured a keynote address, networking session and panel discussion. “Everything you want to achieve—every job, every volunteer opportunity and every interaction—depends on other people,” said Ferrazzi. “It is worth it to invest time in building a more purposeful people plan.” Ferrazzi’s books include the longtime bestseller “Never Eat Alone” and “Who’s Got Your Back.”

Kim Austin was appointed as the new director of Graduate Business Career Services. Before coming to Mays, Austin was executive director of the Career Management Center at SMU’s Cox School of Business. In her new role at Mays, she will oversee career services for current and former graduate students.

GRADUATE BUSINESS CAREER SERVICES

Program News

Kim Austin was appointed as the new director of Graduate Business Career Services. Before coming to Mays, Austin was executive director of the Career Management Center at SMU’s Cox School of Business. In her new role at Mays, she will oversee career services for current and former graduate students.
Mays finance students qualified to receive scholarships to take either the Level I or Level II Chartered Market Technician (CMT) exam. An additional six students will be awarded scholarships in the spring. The CMT is the gold standard requiring candidates to demonstrate proficiency in a broad range of topics in the field of technical analysis. In November, the Mays finance department and the Aggie Investment Club hosted Phil Roth, CMT, a noted technical analyst and former president of MTA. On Dec. 3, the finance department and the Aggie Investment Club hosted David Keller, CMT, director of technical research at Fidelity Investments and also a former president of the MTA.

INFORMATION AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

The Texas A&M Supply Chain Consortium in the Department of Information and Operations Management has hosted a number of academic enrichment events this year to meet the professional development needs of business leaders and working professionals in the Brazos Valley and Houston. These events allow attendees to network with other supply chain executives, learn about cutting-edge research and enhance their knowledge of industry best practices. Events taking place this year included Texas A&M’s 2nd Annual Supply Chain Symposium and Awards Banquet in College Station in April, as well as a case study workshop at Mays Business School’s CityCentre Houston facility this fall designed to help managers apply lean techniques to create cultures of continuous improvement and ultimately enhance their organizations’ customer service, profitability and long-term stability. On Dec. 2, the Texas A&M Supply Chain Consortium hosted a quick response manufacturing workshop designed to help manufacturers rapidly introduce new products and improve product quality while reducing manufacturing, lead times and overhead costs.

MANAGEMENT

Dan Chiaburu received the Superior Merit Award for the third year in a row for serving as the student chapter adviser of the Society for Human Resource Management. The award is for excellence and achievement during 2013-2014. His chapter was also recognized for outstanding achievements in the student/faculty conference on-site brochure, the 2014 Annual Conference and Exposition daily newspaper listed on SHRM’s Student Member Center page and the Fall 2014 edition of SHRM StudentFocus magazine, distributed electronically as a supplement to HR magazine.

The management department hosted a reception at the annual Academy of Management convention on Aug. 2 at the Hard Rock Cafe in Philadelphia.

Students in the Mays MS-HRM program won case competitions at SHRM Southwest Regional Student Conference March 28-29 in Phoenix, Ariz. Practice session coaches were Murray Barrick, Len Bierman, Deidra Schleicher and Dan Chiaburu.

MARKETING

The Department of Marketing is in a soft-launch phase of a new program called the Professional Selling Initiative (PSI). To enhance student abilities, career knowledge and placement opportunities in sales, the Mays Marketing PSI will dramatically increase the amount of engagement students have with sales executives from companies across a range of consumer and business-to-business industries. The PSI will include enhancements to sales course offerings and more extensive professional development activities (competitions, workshops, job shadowing, internships, etc.) for students who choose to pursue this career path. In addition to providing direct contact with many potential employers, PSI involvement will also allow students to signal their training in and commitment to a sales career. The PSI staff members are Director Janet Parish and Assistant Director Andrew Loring. Partner firms are being recruited, and major announcements will be coming in 2015.

The marketing faculty approved a major curriculum innovation in which future marketing majors will structure their advanced coursework by choosing one of four directed elective tracks: Retail Strategy, Advertising Strategy, Professional Selling and Sales Management, and Consulting/Marketing Analytics. In each track, to enhance preparation and attractiveness to future employers, students will take a set of required courses and choose among a set of relevant elective courses that enable them to build a critical mass of knowledge and skills to secure a full-time position. Within each track, students have the option to enhance their credentials by selecting a certificate option that includes an internship, participation in competitions and other professional development elements.
The Center for International Business Studies (CIBS) was awarded a four-year federal grant totaling $1.13 million. The U.S. Department of Education awarded the funds as part of its Center for International Business Education (CIBE) program in September, 2014. CIBE grants are intended to enhance America’s capacity for international understanding and economic enterprise and promote educational and training activities that will help the United States prosper in an international economy. CIBE funding at Mays will be devoted primarily to enhancing programs for students in international business studies and high-impact overseas study experiences. These include study abroad and international internships, as well as support of international business research and outreach activities by faculty.

The Texas A&M Career Center, Mays Communication Lab and the Center for International Business Studies (CIBS) held a workshop for students who had or were considering international job opportunities. The “Leveraging Your International Experience in Your Job Search” seminar described important ways students can share the value of their international experiences with a potential employer. Speakers were Katy Lane, CIBS program coordinator; Lisa Burton, Mays Career Center coordinator; and Jeana Simpson, Mays Communication Lab administrator.

The University of Texas at Austin, Rice University and Texas A&M University received a three-year, $3.75 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to become a regional innovation hub that translates academic research into useful technologies with commercial applications. Richard Lester, executive director of the Center for New Ventures and Entrepreneurship (CNVE) was instrumental in securing the grant and will lead the CNVE team in administrating the grant. (For more information, see page 27.)

At this year’s Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV), a few Texas A&M University former students were among the 25 veterans who participated. The EBV initiative offers cutting-edge experiential training in entrepreneurship and small business management to military men and women who were disabled as a result of their service. The program consists of a three-week online self-study, an eight-day residency period on the Texas A&M campus and a year of mentorship and support as participants launch their new ventures. During their time in Aggieland, the EBV participants took part in numerous activities, including an evening and dinner at the Sanders Corps of Cadets Center, a night at the Traditions Club and a presentation, dinner and tour at the NutraBolt and Seed Sumo offices. At the end of the residency portion of EBV, the participants gave final presentations to mentors and business leaders. Each veteran had 15 minutes to pitch his or her business proposal to a panel.

Students from around the Texas A&M University System came together in early November to create a business in only three days. Every semester, the Center for New Ventures and Entrepreneurship (CNVE) hosts a 3 Day Startup and challenges students to compress three months’ work into one weekend. This semester was the first time West Texas A&M, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Texas A&M at Galveston and the Texas A&M School of Law sent student participants to College Station.
answer questions about the business and defend the viability of the venture.
The week ended with a tour of the George Bush Presidential Library and closing ceremonies at the Annenberg Conference Center.

Richard Lester, executive director of CNVE, is on the team of Texas A&M faculty and administrators directed to design and implement curricular and extra-curricular programs. Texas A&M is one of 12 universities selected to participate in the NSF-funded National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation. The program’s mission is to assist universities by incorporating innovation and entrepreneurship into undergraduate engineering education.

Startup Aggieland was given the Research Valley Commercialization Rising Star Award at the Bryan Rotary Newman 10 Business Performance Awards luncheon. The annual program celebrates outstanding business innovation by recognizing an individual’s or group’s entrepreneurial spirit and introductory work in taking ideas to the marketplace. More than 100 student ventures have launched from Startup Aggieland.

Mays hosted its first Governor’s Small Business Forum in August 2014. Presenters included Hope Andrade, commissioner of the Texas Workforce Commission, and Texas Secretary of State Nandita Berry. The event included presentations on a range of topics, such as the relationship between exports and small businesses, social media, marketing for small businesses and important legal issues for small business owners. Berry joined Richard Lester, executive director of the CNVE, in presenting the State of Texas Small Business Awards to Seed Sumo, T3 Multisports, Study On Board and Love Lemonade. The forum ended with a combined financial panel and a networking reception.

Startup Aggieland has entered into a partnership with The University of Texas and The Borlaug Institute in a business start-up competition: The Food Lab Challenge, which encourages innovation in the global food system. In the competition’s inaugural year at The University of Texas at Austin, the competition will award $30,000 in prizes to teams producing a product or service impacting one of four food-related categories:

- Inputs and Production
- Processing, Packaging and Safety
- Storage and Distribution
- Healthy Eating and Food Education

Center for Management of Information Systems

MIS students participated in a two-day leadership retreat on the Texas A&M campus prior to the beginning of the fall semester. The event included Center for Management of Information Systems (CMIS) faculty, staff and industry representatives. A number of presentations were given on the first day of the retreat, including “Leading Through Core Values” by Mario Coll III from Anadarko and “Careers in MIS” by Jill Kulcak from Phillips 66. In addition, Elizabeth Logan from E&Y discussed personality profiling (The R Factor). Students also had a chance to hone their teamwork skills through “Musical MIS” and “Unplugged Computer Coding.” An evening dinner with CMIS board members and an ice cream social were part of the informal networking events. On the second day, Texas A&M Challenge Works conducted a ropes course for the students with additional teamwork and leadership opportunities.

The CMIS Speed Networking event was held at Texas A&M’s Memorial Student Center in September, prior to the start of the Career Fair. MIS students with a GPA of at least 3.25 in their major and 3.00 overall were invited to attend. The event gave industry representatives and students a chance to mix and mingle. Twenty-six CMIS board members attended, and students had the opportunity to meet with those industry representatives in a setting similar to an informal interview situation. Each networking round lasted seven minutes.
CENTER FOR EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Executive Development (CED) offered two open-enrollment certificate courses for the first time this fall at the school’s CITYCENTRE Houston facility: “Finance and Accounting for Non-Financial Managers” and “Foundations of Project Management.” Attendees represented a range of companies across industries—from international corporations such as ExxonMobil, Baker Hughes, HP and Toshiba to regional and local firms including Chesmar Homes (real estate/ construction) and Moger Media (advertising) in Houston, MK Marlow Company in San Antonio (construction) and Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater, Oklahoma (education). These two courses were well received by attendees and will be offered again in Spring 2015. The CED team is also considering expanding its project management offerings, as well as adding new courses based on feedback from a marketing survey.

CENTER FOR RETAILING STUDIES

The Center for Retailing Studies hosted its largest annual outreach program in October, the 2014 Retailing Summit. Proceeds from the crowd of more than 350 retail executives fund the center’s campus programs for students. Keynote speakers addressed relevant retailing topics around the key theme of “Change!” Attendees enjoyed valuable networking opportunities.

The speakers included:

- **Steve Lovejoy**, SVP of Global Supply Chain at Starbucks Coffee Co.
- **Lisa Malat**, VP of Marketing and Operations at Barnes & Noble College
- **Steven Pho**, SVP of Corporate Development at RetailMeNot
- **Vincent Ottomanelli**, CEO and Regional Director, and **Amy Zuckerman**, SVP of Human Resources, at Salvatore Ferragamo – the Americas
- **Brad Stone**, author of “The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon”
- **Debbie Sterling**, founder and CEO of GoldieBlox
- **Tom Cole**, partner at Kurt Salmon
- **Todd Buntin**, Director of Corporate Strategy at Nordstrom
- **Ashley Buchanan**, SVP of Dry Grocery at Walmart
- **Ann Mukherjee**, SVP and Chief Marketing Officer at Frito-Lay

Speakers included Debbie Sterling (1), founder and CEO of GoldieBlox; Brad Stone (2), author of “The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon;” and Steve Lovejoy (3), SVP of Global Supply Chain at Starbucks Coffee Co.
Faculty & staff achievements

**Mike Alexander**, Director of the Professional MBA Program, presented at the EMBA Council Southwest Regional Meeting and the EMBA Council Global conference.

A paper written by Management Professor **Murray Barrick**, Management Assistant Professor **Stephen Courtright** and Management PhD students Troy Smith and Gary Thurgood was accepted by the *Academy of Management Journal*.

An article written by Marketing Professor **Leonard Berry**, Marketing Professor **Venkatesh Shankar** and recent Marketing PhD graduate **Tomas Dotzel** was awarded the 2014 Best Services Article Award by the American Marketing Association’s special interest group on services marketing.

**Marketing Professor Leonard Berry** was selected as the first recipient of the Arizona State University W.P. Carey School of Business Outstanding Doctoral Alumni Award.

Papers written by Management Associate Professor **Steve Boivie** were accepted by the *Journal of Management and Strategic Management Journal*.

A paper written by Management Professor **Wendy Boswell** has been accepted for publication in *Personnel Psychology*.

Management Assistant Professor **Dan Chiaburu** and Management Graduate Assistant **Tomas Thundiyil** won the Best Paper Award at The Academy of Management Conference in Philadelphia for the Organization Development and Change division.

Management Assistant Professor **Dan Chiaburu** and co-authors received the 2014 Best Paper in Track Award from the Southern Management Association for their paper titled “The Interplay of Trainer Style and Learner Goal Orientation on Training Outcomes.”

**Management Professor Lorraine Eden** has joined the Research Advisory Network for the Global Commission on Internet Governance.

Former Accounting Professor **Gary Giroux** received The Enduring Lifetime Contribution Award by the *American Accounting Association*.

An article written by Management Professor **Michael Hitt** and co-authors **Kati Haynes** and **Joanna Campbell** will be published in the *Journal of Management*.

**Management Professor Michael Hitt**, Management Professor **Duane Ireland** and Marketing Professor **Venkatesh Shankar** have been selected as the 2014 Thomson Reuters Highly Cited Researchers.
A paper by Marketing Associate Professor **Ram Janakiraman** and Marketing Assistant Professor **Rishika Rishika** titled “The Effect of Customers’ Participation on Customer Visit Frequency and Profitability: An Empirical Investigation” has been selected as a winner in the MSI Research Competition on Social Interactions and Social Media Marketing.

Information and Operations Management Associate Professor **Rogelio Oliva** received the 2014 Wickham Skinner Teaching Achievements Award from the Production and Operations Management Society.

A paper written by Marketing Professor **Venkatesh Shankar** titled “Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty in Online and Offline Markets” has been awarded the 2014 Steenkamp Award for Long-term Impact from the *International Journal of Research in Marketing*.

**Shankar** was featured in the November 2014 issue of Shopper Marketing magazine. The article quoted seven professors and researchers, including Shankar, about how major universities are educating students in the area of shopper marketing. Shankar mentioned several ways Mays is incorporating shopper marketing into its curriculum: the Certificate in Retailing, the MS Marketing program, research projects, and partnerships with retailers and manufacturers.

Accounting Clinical Professor **Mike Shaub** was a co-author of a chapter in the newly published book “The Routledge Companion to Auditing.”

Management Professor **Laszlo Tihanyi** and co-authors **David Griffith** of Lehigh University and **Craig Russell** of The University of Oklahoma received the 2014 Excellence in Global Marketing Research Award from the American Marketing Association.

Two of Marketing Assistant Professor **Caleb Warren**’s works were accepted by *Journal of Consumer Research*. “The Progress Bias in Goal Pursuit: When One Step Forward Seems Larger than One Step Back” is coauthored by Meg Campbell of the University of Colorado, Boulder. “Humorous Complaining” is coauthored with Peter McGrath and Christina Kan, both of University of Chicago.

Information and Operations Management Associate Professor **Subodha Kumar** was appointed Senior Editor of both the *Production and Operations Management Journal* and the *Decision Sciences Journal*.

A paper by marketing faculty members **Yan (Lucy) Liu** and **Venkatesh (Venky) Shankar** has been accepted by top-tier journal Management Science. The paper is titled “The Dynamic Impact of Product-Harm Crises on Brand Preference and Advertising Effectiveness: An Empirical Analysis of the Automobile Industry.”

Accounting Associate Professor **Nathan Sharp** received the 2014 Best Paper Award from the *Journal of Behavioral Research in Accounting*. 
### Faculty/Staff quoted in...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABC 40 KRHD</th>
<th>4 TRADERS</th>
<th>REDNEWS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUSTIN BUSINESS JOURNAL</td>
<td>FRIENDSWOOD JOURNAL</td>
<td>SAN ANGELO STANDARD TIMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BANDERA COUNTY COURIER</td>
<td>FUTURITY</td>
<td>SAN ANTONIO BUSINESS JOURNAL ONLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BATTALION</td>
<td>GAMEPOLITICS.COM</td>
<td>SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS NEWS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAY AREA CITIZEN</td>
<td>GLOBEST.COM</td>
<td>SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS ONLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELLAIRE EXAMINER</td>
<td>THE HINDU ONLINE</td>
<td>SCIENCE NEWSLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLOOMBERGBUSINESSWEEK.COM</td>
<td>HOUSTON CHRONICLE</td>
<td>SCIENCECODEX.COM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLOOMBERG NEWS ONLINE</td>
<td>HOUSTON CHRONICLE ONLINE</td>
<td>SIFY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAZOS VALLEY INSITE MAGAZINE</td>
<td>HOUSTON COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS</td>
<td>TAMU TIMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BRYAN-COLLEGE STATION EAGLE ONLINE</td>
<td>INDIA4U.COM</td>
<td>TEXAS MONTHLY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUSINESS RESEARCH GUIDE</td>
<td>KBTX</td>
<td>TIMES OF INDIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUSINESS STANDARD INDIA</td>
<td>KBTX.COM</td>
<td>TOPNEWS.IN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMPUS TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>KCEN-TV</td>
<td>TYLER MORNING TELEGRAPH ONLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTER FOR DIGITAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>KHOU-TV ONLINE</td>
<td>THE WASHINGTON POST ONLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGEMAGAZINE.COM</td>
<td>KROI-FM</td>
<td>US DAILY REVIEW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULTUREMAP AUSTIN</td>
<td>KTEK 1110 AM</td>
<td>VOX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULTUREMAP DALLAS</td>
<td>KVUE-TV ONLINE</td>
<td>THE WALL STREET JOURNAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAILYNEWSSEN.COM</td>
<td>KWGN-TV ONLINE</td>
<td>WASHINGTONTIMES.COM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DALLAS MORNING NEWS BIZ BEAT BLOG</td>
<td>LAREDO SUN</td>
<td>WEBINDIA123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DALLAS MORNING NEWS ONLINE</td>
<td>THE LUFKIN DAILY NEWS ONLINE</td>
<td>WISCONSIN GAZETTE ONLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEER PARK BROADCASTER</td>
<td>MARKETING SCIENCE INSTITUTE ONLINE</td>
<td>WOAI-TV ONLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENTON RECORD CHRONICLE</td>
<td>NETINDIA123.COM</td>
<td>WGMT-TV ONLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE EAGLE</td>
<td>NEW CANAAN NEWS ONLINE</td>
<td>WTAW-AM ONLINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTREPRENEUR</td>
<td>NEWKERALA.COM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUREKALERT!</td>
<td>THE NEW YORK TIMES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORBES INDIA</td>
<td>OUTSIDE ONLINE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PHYS.ORG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mays in the news

FORBES INDIA “17 Percent of Global Innovation Is Coming from Emerging Markets,” April 21, 2014
Venkatesh Shankar, Coleman Chair Professor in Marketing and director of research for the Center for Retailing Studies, answered questions about how emergent markets are reshaping the global innovation architecture. “Emerging market voices are being increasingly heard. So it’s not only that they have a seat at the table, but they have an important role to play.”

THE NEW YORK TIMES “Uncertainty about Jobs Has a Ripple Effect,” May 16, 2014
Wendy R. Boswell, Jerry and Kay Cox Professor of Management, discussed her and her coauthors’ recent study on the relationship between job insecurity and employees’ use of workplace support programs. “When people are anxious about losing their jobs, they might seem likely to seek support from company wellness programs and counseling. But they’re more reluctant to do so.”

Caleb Warren, assistant professor of marketing, concluded that brands are more likely to be perceived as cool if they possess the right degree of autonomy, or differentiation from the norm, without being excessively different. Being perceived as cool “requires showing enough autonomy to bend—but not break—the rules.”

SCIENCE NEWSLINE “Greedy CEOs Bad for Business,” June 20, 2014
Michael A. Hitt, University Distinguished Professor of Management and Joe B. Foster ’56 Chair in Business Leadership, and his co-authors examined the effects of CEO greed on shareholder wealth and looked at whether various contextual factors, like a strong board of directors, CEO tenure and discretion make the situation better or worse. They found that a powerful board or long CEO tenure can moderate the relationship between CEO greed and shareholder return.

Stephen Courtright, assistant professor of management, commented on the growing management trend of holacracy, or management by committee, in which CEOs formally relinquish their authority and re-organize employees into decentralized teams. “Based on longitudinal surveys, less than 20 percent of Fortune 1,000 companies had team-based structures in 1980, compared with 30 percent in 1990 and 80 percent in 2000.”

ENTREPRENEUR “Turning an Oops into an Opportunity,” July 16, 2014
Leonard Berry, University Distinguished Professor of Marketing and M.B. Zale Chair in Retailing and Marketing Leadership, was quoted in an article discussing the importance of great service recovery for companies that disappoint their customers. “The acid test of service quality is how you solve customers’ problems.”

Wendy Boswell, Jerry and Kay Cox Professor of Management, commented on the need to maintain a work-life balance in a culture where technology keeps employees connected to their jobs long after working hours. “There’s a lot of value and importance in turning off technology and disengaging from work.”

Mark Dotzour, chief economist of the Texas A&M Real Estate Center, discussed how low housing inventory partly stems from a labor shortage. “A lot of the people who worked in construction prior to us going through the recession, they have now come out of that and are starting to work for oil and gas—the Eagle Ford Shale—places like that where they are able to have higher incomes and more stable work.”

BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK “A Handful of Elite Business Schools Are Also Academic Powerhouses,” Sept. 23, 2014
Texas A&M’s Mays Business School was cited as one of a handful of business schools with “powerhouse” researchers, or those who wrote papers in the top 1 percent of citations in their field. According to Bloomberg, Mays Business School has four highly cited professors on its faculty.
Diverse partnerships hold key to Mays’ future

In a world of increasingly interconnected individuals, businesses and nations powered by changing demographics and relentless advances in technology, business schools face new challenges to achieve their educational missions. Preparing students to think critically while being technically sound, ethically grounded and culturally competent in an ever-flattening world requires more resources and geographic reach than any one institution could possibly muster.

In this environment, increased collaboration—both inside classrooms and research labs as well as beyond their walls—will be critical to business schools’ success. To meet this challenge, Mays Business School is focused on reimagining traditional interactions among faculty and students and forging new partnerships with companies, other universities and even the broader academy to ensure it is preparing students to pursue satisfying and productive careers after graduation.

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS FORGE NEW ORGANIZATION TO ENHANCE LEARNING

For a number of years, Mays faculty members have attended the annual Wakonse Conference on College Teaching, which brings college teachers together to learn from one another and rekindle the spirit for teaching. More recently, Mays undergraduate students have started attending the concurrent Wakonse Student Leadership Conference, designed to help students understand how they can partner with faculty to enhance their overall learning experience.

“Through their experiences at Wakonse, our students have come to see faculty in an entirely new light,” said Nancy Simpson, clinical professor, director of the Undergraduate Special Programs Office and former director of Texas A&M’s Center for Teaching Excellence. “They have developed a new understanding of the active role students can play in
shaping a dynamic learning culture in the classroom.” To apply the insights gleaned from the Wakonse experiences, undergraduate faculty and students founded the Mays Academy for Learning and Teaching (MALT). The primary goal of MALT is to enhance learning in the classroom by transforming the traditional teacher-student relationship with greater interaction, shared responsibility and mutual accountability. Each semester, MALT hosts at least two events at which students and faculty gather in informal, interactive settings to address topics that directly impact the classroom. Discussions may focus on how to use PowerPoint presentations more effectively, how to introduce ambiguity or uncertainty into the classroom or how to define expectations about the responsibilities students and teachers share in the learning process.

“MALT offers a one-of-a-kind opportunity for interaction between students and faculty at Mays,” said Zach Stevens, BBA ’16, this year’s student leader for MALT. “We are extremely excited about our upcoming events as we continue to bridge the gap between students and professors, both inside and outside the classroom.”

COMMUNICATION LAB CREATES MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COLLABORATION AMONG STUDENTS

Even as MALT reimagines collaboration among students and faculty, the Mays Communication Lab employs a peer-to-peer consultation model in which student-clients learn one-on-one from student-consultants. “The model we use is similar to non-hierarchical consulting models in the world of business,” said Jeana Simpson, Communication Lab administrator. “Our consultants quickly learn what our professors have known for many years—that the best way to learn anything is to have to teach it to someone else.”

Erin Dougherty, BBA ’13, was one of the lab’s first consultants. “As an employee at the Comm Lab, I actively contributed to a program that was clearly making a positive impact on the student-clients,” she said. “I also knew that I was growing as a professional, learning to adapt [to different client needs].”

In one-time sessions typically lasting 30 to 45 minutes, the lab’s business communication consultants (BCCs) help clients with activities such as formatting their résumés, improving the grammatical correctness of their essays and logically structuring class presentations. While clients enter these sessions looking for help with the mechanics of communications, BCCs always incorporate bigger-picture considerations, helping their clients connect to the purpose and practice of effective communication. “We push our clients to communicate with intentional purpose, focus and clarity, and we strive to follow this philosophy in our own work as well,” says Arjun Mohan, BBA ’13 and MSF ’14.

Through more complex multi-session engagements, portfolio consultants (PCs) help clients take a more holistic and reflective approach to their communications. Portfolio clients develop an online multimedia portfolio of their marketable skills and experiences as a byproduct of this process, which is primarily focused on the thinking piece of the writing-speaking-thinking communication triangle. They learn to communicate more effectively by

Outdoor teaming activities are an integral part of the Wakonse Student Leadership Conference.
first developing greater awareness of themselves and others, often beginning with their résumé experiences.

“Creating résumés is not just about listing experiences and putting a marketing spin on them. Rather, the résumé becomes a process by which students think critically about the significance of their experiences in the context of their larger professional goals and aspirations.”

-Jeana Simpson

From its opening semester in Spring 2012 to the Fall 2013 semester, demand for the Communication Lab’s services rose 31 percent, from 380 to 497 consultations. In the first five weeks of the Fall 2014 semester, 12 consultants supported more than 230 total sessions, addressing student questions about writing, speaking and portfolio development.

While these collaborative consultations obviously benefit the clients’ learning, the lab’s consultants also enjoy an enhanced undergraduate experience. “Teaching business students how to build an online portfolio was the pinnacle of my Mays experience,” said Bailey Urban BBA ’14, who served as a BCC and a PC while pursuing the human resource management track at Mays. “It significantly increased my confidence in public speaking and my own creativity, as well as changed how I empathize and communicate with others. I also learned about the importance of asking the right questions—a useful skill that will benefit me no matter where I go in life.”

Dougherty added, “The Communication Lab embodies everything that is good about Texas A&M. As a consultant, core traits such as leadership and selfless service are reinforced, mostly thanks to the peer-to-peer consultant model.”

CORPORATE CONNECTIONS FACILITATE SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION FOR STUDENTS, TALENT ACQUISITION FOR EMPLOYERS

Internships and rotational training programs provide students and graduates with valuable hands-on learning experiences. Mays strives to forge partnerships with corporations that provide these opportunities, as they represent win-win arrangements that help employers meet their talent acquisition needs while facilitating the college-to-work transition for Mays students. One example of this is
Cover Story

21

Fall/Winter 2014 @ Mays

The school’s relationship with CBRE, the world’s largest commercial real estate services firm serving owners, investors and occupiers.

“Commercial real estate is a competitive business, and there will always be significant competition to hire the best and the brightest candidates,” said Mark Taylor, senior managing director of CBRE’s Houston region and a member of the regional leadership team. “It is imperative that CBRE continues to find talented people to help us grow and provide great services to our clients.”

In response to the fierce competition for talent in the commercial real estate industry, CBRE formed the Wheel Program several years ago. The goal of the program is to attract young professionals to the organization and provide them with a structured forum where they receive training and real-world experience with several real estate business lines. The rotational program lasts for 12 months, and it provides recent graduates with the resources and experiences to establish a foundation for a successful real estate career with CBRE.

“Each associate’s experience within the Wheel Program is different,” Taylor said, “but typical days on the job may include a number of diverse assignments. CBRE-Houston Associates, for example, start their day by preparing a news brief to send out to the entire Houston region, which consists of more than 600 employees in several locations. Other daily responsibilities could include helping our professionals conduct analyses on current and future transactions, studying area demographics for a retail client or joining a broker on a tour with a tenant looking for office space.”

Cydney Donnell, executive professor and director of Mays’ Master of Real Estate (MRE) program, has actively encouraged students to apply for CBRE’s program. “While we have consistently placed students in summer internships with various CBRE divisions, those graduates who are selected for the Wheel Program receive a number of unique benefits,” Donnell noted. “The program enables them to learn several lines of business and become more well-rounded professionals before picking an area of specialization. In addition, through the year-long rotational program, our graduates develop relationships with more seasoned CBRE professionals and experience firsthand how to pursue and execute real estate transactions.”

CBRE chooses two to three Wheel Associates from a pool of more than 200 candidates the company interviews each year. In the spring of 2013, the company hired all three of its associates from Mays.

“We underestimated the impact that our three very talented Mays associates could have on the fairly big business we have here in Houston,” Taylor said. “In just a short time with our organization, they have been able to manage a large number of tasks, juggle diverse projects and build successful business relationships to help our organization excel. Our senior professionals have been pleasantly surprised at the many things our Mays associates can do.”

Matt Owen, MRE ’13, a production analyst in debt and structured finance for CBRE Capital Markets, completed an internship at CBRE before being selected for the Wheel Program in 2013. “The knowledge and skills I acquired during the Master of Real Estate program helped distinguish me from other candidates,” he said. “When I graduated from Mays, I thought that tenant services would be a good fit for me, but I discovered in the Wheel Program that I loved the debt side. By rotating through the different divisions of CBRE, I have a great understanding of the intricacies of the business and how everything ties together. In addition, because I was able to meet people in all service lines, I can call on them today when I need their expertise.”

Partnering with Wall Street Provides Transformative Experience for Students

The Aggies on Wall Street Investment Banking (iBank) program at Mays is another example of how the school forms collaborative partnerships with industry to advance its educational mission. “The objective of iBank is to cultivate future finance professionals who are culturally adept and technically competent to work and succeed in the highly competitive global financial markets, with a particular emphasis on investment banking in New York,” said Arvind Mahajan, director of iBank and

Interacting with corporate leaders in New York is an exciting component of the iBank program.
a Texas A&M University System Regents Professor. “There is simply no way to achieve that objective without exposing our students firsthand to the way Wall Street works and giving them an opportunity to interact directly with seasoned finance professionals. We are grateful to our many industry partners who make this transformative experience possible.”

The iBank program comprises a battery of required and elective courses, with two additional elements that distinguish it from other programs. Students are required to participate in the Investment Banking Colloquium, which helps them develop professional résumés and interviewing skills, learn financial modeling skills, gain proficiency in working on Bloomberg financial data terminals and earn the Bloomberg Certification expected of those seeking analyst-level positions on Wall Street. In addition, students learn about various facets of investment banking from senior finance professionals who conduct the colloquium. These executives not only share their industry experience with the students and provide them with tips and guidance, they also assign real-life cases and research reports that the students work on in groups.

The colloquium prepares students for subsequent coursework, as well as for the Aggies on Wall Street (AOWS) program conducted in New York City during the following summer. This two-week course enables students to experience firsthand the major financial markets in the United States. Students visit Wall Street firms, security and commodity exchanges and other financial institutions. Additionally, professional money managers, investment bankers, hedge fund managers, security dealers, private equity firms and other industry practitioners host students for presentations and discussions in their offices. Participating firms include a “Who’s Who” of Wall Street: Barclays, Credit Suisse, Citigroup, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, Jefferies, JPMorgan Chase, Morgan Stanley, UBS and the New York Stock Exchange.

Students also attend sponsored receptions and dinners where they network with former A&M students as well as other finance professionals. Through these various interactions, Mays students are able to secure internships and subsequent job offers from these firms. In the past year, the program has placed several graduates into full-time positions at Barclays, Credit Suisse and UBS.

“The Aggies on Wall Street program allowed me to make invaluable connections with investment banking professionals and get a feel for what it would be like to live and work in New York,” said Carrie Calhoun, BBA ’14, an analyst at Credit Suisse in New York City. “I gained industry exposure through the program and was able to show employers that I was serious about working in New York.”
COLLABORATING WITH UNIVERSITIES ABROAD ADVANCES EDUCATIONAL MISSION

From a broad perspective, Mays’ Center for International Business Studies (CIBS) strives to enhance U.S. global competitiveness by providing students and faculty with opportunities to participate in international business education and research. In pursuit of that goal, CIBS pays special attention to enlisting Regents’ Scholars, minority groups and financially disadvantaged students, in international business programs. Through these efforts, the center helps students understand foreign cultures and business practices, perceive and grasp overseas marketing and investment opportunities, overcome language barriers and expand their global business career opportunities.

To accomplish its overarching goal along with the school’s educational mission, CIBS has formed a number of effective relationships with federal and international agencies, as well as foreign business schools—from UNISINOS Business School in Brazil and Copenhagen Business School in Denmark to the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore and Guanghua School of Management in China.

“The center currently has partnerships with more than 40 universities and research institutions globally, as well as access to 130 Texas A&M University agreements worldwide,” said Julian Gaspar, executive director of CIBS and clinical professor of finance.

“Forging these kinds of collaborative relationships is the only way that Mays can initiate and execute cost-effective, innovative and sustainable global programs to meet our education and research missions.”

For example, each summer several Mays MBA students participate in a two-week European MBA Summer Institute program hosted by WHU – Otto Beisheim School of Management, Mays’ oldest partner and Germany’s top business school. The focus is the “Changing Environment for International Business in Europe,” which combines classroom instruction with visits to European corporations and institutions such as the European Central Bank. Students get the opportunity to work in teams with cohorts from top business schools globally, thereby enriching their cross-cultural and international business skills.

“Studying abroad was the best decision I have ever made, and I strongly recommend it to every student,” said Alisa Zambrano, BBA ’16. “The experience I had at the EDHEC Business School in France is one that is hard to describe in words. The knowledge I acquired and the connections I made with people in foreign countries will help me not only in my career, but in my personal life as well. I will never forget the culture and adventures I got to experience.”

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH SAUDI ARAMCO DELIVERS SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS TO CLIENT, MAYS FACULTY

Earlier this year, Mays entered into a multi-year agreement with Saudi Aramco, the Saudi Arabia-owned petroleum and chemicals company. Through the new relationship, the Department of Management is delivering a Master of Science in Human Resource Management (MS-HRM) program to the client’s employees in Saudi Arabia. Even
though the program with Saudi Aramco is one of the school’s newest partnerships, it is already delivering significant benefits to both partners.

CAPSTONES REPRESENT A “TENT OF COLLABORATIONS SUPPORTED BY A VILLAGE OF RESOURCES”

Perhaps more than any other educational activity at Mays, capstone projects illustrate the multifaceted nature of collaboration, as well as its potential multiplicative effect. Each project requires the individual commitment of students, clients, professors, program staff, librarians and industry coaches, as well as the strategic coordination of their various interactions. Time and again, the mutually beneficial results of these efforts have proven to be greater than the sum of the inputs.

“The capstone provides a structured learning experience in team problem solving and information-based decision making,” said Executive Professor Janet Marcantonio, who leads the capstone courses for the Full-Time MBA, Professional MBA and Executive MBA programs. “Students apply business knowledge and technical skills in scoping and executing their projects, but their ability to build and manage relationships with their teammates and the client is even more critical to their success.”

Through the years, student teams have helped clients address a broad range of business issues and problems—from assessing retail store profitability and evaluating options for expansion, to improving building materials inventory management, to weighing the pros and cons of reporting corporate sustainability performance to investors. Projects are developed in collaboration with client executives and managers facing very real business challenges. The student teams are then formed through a two-stage process that ensures each team has the skills to meet the client’s need and the will to work together. Since Mays initiated the capstone projects several years ago, client organizations have included non-profits, start-ups and small, medium and large companies in a variety of industries. “If it is a significant business challenge that truly matters to the client,” said Marcantonio, “it has the makings of a great capstone project.”

On the client side, the consulting engagement requires a committed project champion who works closely with students, meeting with them in person or by phone on a weekly basis. On the Mays side, success requires student teams with the ability and will to get the job done. Early in the project, each team creates a detailed charter and signs off on it with the client. Taking into account their strengths, expertise and developmental goals, students develop clearly defined roles and responsibilities, including engagement manager, client liaison, focus keeper, deliverables driver, presentation czar and even devil’s advocate.

According to Michael Wesson, associate professor of management and director of the Mays MS-HRM program for Saudi Aramco, the partnership offers significant benefits to the client and its employees, as well as to Mays and its faculty. “First, our 27 Saudi Aramco employees are taught management and leadership practices from a more global perspective,” Wesson said. “They are forced to examine their own leadership styles, why they do what they do and the various HR strategies and tactics available to them. Secondly, Saudi Aramco benefits as a company, as these employees will bring fresh ideas, broader perspectives and improved HR practices to the workplace. Lastly, Mays faculty members increase their knowledge base and understanding by traveling to Saudi Arabia, experiencing what for most of them is a new culture and being challenged in ways that traditional classes in College Station don’t normally challenge them.”
From the client’s perspective, Sunny Sinha, downstream group manager at Hart Energy and a 2010 graduate of the Full-Time MBA program, noted the capstone project is a valuable opportunity for managers to get fresh and creative ideas to address real-world business problems. “I have benefitted not only from the carefully constructed and highly effective processes that guide all aspects of the client engagement, but also from the rich knowledge base and diverse work experience of the MBA students,” Sinha said. “I have always been impressed by the quality of the deliverables produced by the teams I have worked with, and I have used their recommendations for strategic corporate initiatives, such as new product development and expansion into new markets.”

Marcantonio believes that the capstone course represents “a tent of collaborations supported by a village of resources,” all of which play vital roles in its success. “It is a joy to orchestrate a hands-on learning experience that allows our students to build on what they have learned in their MBA classes and throughout their professional careers,” she said.
New collaborations advance research to create knowledge, spur innovation

For more than a century, academia and industry have formed partnerships seeking to translate cutting-edge research into innovative products and services. In today’s global marketplace populated by savvy consumers wielding ever-greater buying power, innovation can play an even more decisive role in separating industry leaders from laggards. Just as Mays Business School is pursuing a range of collaborative partnerships to enhance student learning and leadership development, the school has also forged a number of relationships with other universities, the academy and industry to advance research that creates new knowledge and ultimately fuels innovation and economic growth.

ACADEMIC-INDUSTRY ALLIANCE PROMISES TO TRANSFORM RETAILER’S STOREFRONTS

To combat the rise in digital sales and online shopping, retailers today are looking for new ways to recreate their brick-and-mortar destinations by heightening the in-store customer experience and boosting customer engagement. In March, GameStop formed the GameStop Technology Institute through a partnership with Mays’ Center for Retailing Studies and IBM. GameStop created the new institute to accelerate its goals of reinventing stores and making them come alive, and the company is turning to Mays faculty and students to play a key role in its future success.

“Mays faculty are pooling their expertise in innovation management, digital marketing, multichannel consumer behavior and marketing analytics to create in-store experiments to evaluate GameStop’s vision of the store of the future,” said Kelli Hollinger, director of the Center for Retailing Studies.

GameStop is using beacon technology to create a “digitized” shopping environment. Physically located in stores, the beacons use Bluetooth capability to push information to customers’ smart phones. GameStop isn’t the first retailer to deploy beacons to send promotions to customers, but it is taking a novel approach. After downloading the company’s app, customers will be able to walk up to beacons in GameStop stores and receive information about a product or game that interests them.

This tactic provides customers with greater control of the marketing messages they receive, rather than being bombarded with generalized information that does not match their interests. For example, previous purchasers of sports games will learn about FIFA15, while moms seeking games rated “for everyone” will not see promotions for products like “The Walking Dead” that are rated for mature audiences.

Mays’ faculty will analyze massive amounts of data from GameStop with the goal of improving the targeting of beacon promotions. “For our researchers, access to diverse and large sets of customer information—such as GameStop’s 27 million PowerUp reward customers and geo fencing location details—is extraordinary and enviable,” said Venky Shankar, Coleman Chair Professor in Marketing and the director of research for the Center for Retailing Studies.

In September, beacons were rolled out in test markets in Austin and College Station, allowing Mays faculty and students to actively participate in evaluating the in-store enhancements. “By cross analyzing data collected from geo fencing applications, beacons and GameStop’s loyalty program, our faculty aims to better understand new consumer shopping behaviors that are now very different because of technology,” Hollinger said.
NSF GRANT POSITIONS MAYS CENTER TO PLAY KEY ROLE IN MOVING IDEAS TO THE MARKETPLACE

In August, Texas A&M University, The University of Texas at Austin and Rice University received a three-year, $3.75 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The grant positions Mays’ Center for New Ventures and Entrepreneurship (CNVE) to be a key player in a new regional innovation hub whose goal is to translate academic research into useful technologies with commercial applications.

The NSF Innovation Corps (I-Corps) program designated the three Texas tier-one research universities as the Southwest Alliance for Entrepreneurial Innovation Node—charged with empowering teams of university scientists and industry experts to develop life-changing products. The I-Corps program encourages scientists and engineers to consider how their federally funded, fundamental research projects may become commercial ventures.

Three-person teams comprising an NSF-funded researcher, a business mentor and a graduate student (known as the entrepreneurial lead) will apply to the I-Corps Team program. If accepted, the team is entitled to a six-month, $50,000 grant from the NSF focused on exploring the commercialization of fundamental research ideas. The team will also attend official NSF I-Corps training at one of the National I-Corps Nodes.

Richard Lester, clinical professor and executive director of Mays’ CNVE, is one of the Texas A&M employees who will be leading the I-Corps program. The CNVE serves as the hub of entrepreneurship across the university powering a number of initiatives, including business incubator Startup Aggieland, the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities, the MBA Venture Challenge competition for graduate students, the Start-Up 101 workshop series and the campus-wide Ideas Challenge.

Lester noted that he plans to reach out to universities in the Texas A&M System and others throughout the region for support and collaboration. “The NSF looks for broader impacts, so involving other schools is a way to broaden and advance the initiative,” he said. “The I-Corps program will be an important catalyst for spurring economic development in our region.”

ADVANCING RESEARCH THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT

With more than 18,000 members from 119 countries, the Academy of Management (AOM) seeks to inspire and enable a better world by creating and disseminating knowledge about management and organizations. More than 25 years ago, Mays’ Department of Management embarked upon a unique partnership with the AOM through which Mays faculty members have served (and continue to serve) in a variety of leadership roles to advance its mission.

“For as long as I can remember, Mays faculty have always been present and active among our many dedicated volunteer leaders,” said Nancy Urbanowicz, executive director of AOM who has worked at the organization for 20 years.

Three Mays management faculty have served as president of AOM, starting with Professor Emeritus and former Management Department Head Don Hellriegel in 1988 (49th AOM president) and followed by University Distinguished Professor Michael A. Hitt in 1997 (52nd
AOM president) and University Distinguished Professor R. Duane Ireland in 2014 (69th AOM president.) Ireland (pictured above, left) recently completed his term as president and passed the gavel to incoming president Paul Adler of University of Southern California. Ireland’s four-year path to the presidency took him from vice president-elect to vice president, president-elect, then president.

During his tenure as president, Ireland sought to accomplish three broad goals:

- Leverage the global diversity of the AOM membership to advance scholarship, teaching and mutual learning worldwide.
- Create greater opportunities for AOM members to realize professional aspirations by gaining a better understanding of the professional challenges they are facing, with a particular focus on the needs of alternative track faculty and ways the Academy can serve them.
- Increase the impact of member teaching and scholarship by facilitating member-practitioner dialogue, expanding teaching resources to tend to the next generation of students and implementing a plan to disseminate knowledge more widely to non-academic audiences.

Mays faculty have also served as editors of the organization’s top journals, which seek to develop and test theories that create knowledge leading to improved management practices in the private and public sectors. From 1982 to 1984, Hellriegel served as editor of Academy of Management Review (AMR), the most influential and frequently cited management and business journal, currently ranked #1. Hitt and Ireland served as editors of the Academy of Management Journal (AMJ), the flagship empirical journal in management, currently ranked #3. Other management faculty have also served the AOM over the years as Division Group chairs and as members of the editorial review boards for the academy’s journals.

From Ireland’s perspective, the opportunity to give back to the larger academy through volunteer service and leadership is consistent with the culture at Mays. “It’s about more than ourselves,” he said. “It’s about walking the broader hallway of the academic community around the world.”

**COLLABORATING WITH BUSINESS SCHOOLS ABROAD TO CREATE KNOWLEDGE**

In addition to partnering with the AOM, Mays has created overseas partnerships with top global business schools that enable faculty and doctoral students to create knowledge through joint research with scholars abroad. Led by the school’s Center for International Business Studies (CIBS), these collaborative international research efforts address significant issues related to emerging markets, innovation, American economic competitiveness, global business strategies and pedagogical studies that will advance international business education.

Through one such effort, Management Professor Laszlo Tihanyi is collaborating with international business researchers around the world—including Professors Elitsa Banalieva at Northeastern University, Timothy Devinney at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom and Torben Pedersen at Bocconi University in Milan, Italy. The research team is exploring the opportunities and challenges facing multinational enterprises that consider emerging economies as their destinations or their homes. As a result of this collaboration, Tihanyi hopes to publish the Advances in International Management (AIM) 2015 Volume that will provide a forum for thought-provoking empirical research, theoretical ideas, discussions and reviews on emerging economies. The annual volumes of AIM (Emerald Group Publishing) have been a source of novel ideas in international business. Tihanyi said that “the 2015 Volume will include a unique collection of research papers on the recent challenges of doing business in emerging economies and the successful strategies implemented by a new breed of emerging-market multinationals when they compete in global markets.”

**PARTNERSHIP EXPLORES ROI OF ONLINE ENGAGEMENT VIA SOCIAL MEDIA**

In September, Texas A&M University initiated a partnership with America’s largest collegiate apparel supplier, Knights Apparel, to launch the Costco Back-to-College Tailgate Roadshow featuring Aggie Gameday apparel. Texas A&M and
Knights Apparel utilized the reach of Aggie connections via social media channels to promote the Tailgate Roadshow event and drive traffic to the 20 participating Costco Wholesale locations that exclusively carried the merchandise.

As part of this collaborative effort, Mays’ Center for Retailing Studies and Ramkumar Janakiraman, associate professor of marketing, performed an academic analysis to explore the return on investment of social media activities. Specifically, Janakiraman evaluated the impact of engagement from Texas A&M’s official Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn channels on product sales. “The retail partnership with Knights Apparel, Costco and Texas A&M was a super hit for the Texas A&M brand,” Janakiraman said. “Measured outcomes and engagement in terms of visits by Aggie fans to various social media outlets and actual sales of Texas A&M gear in Costco stores were great.”

“Dr. Janakiraman’s strategic analysis of the effect of social media marketing on sales offered valuable business insights to Knights Apparel,” said Kelli Hollinger, director of the center. “By correlating weekly point-of-sale data with a concentrated social media campaign, we provided the retailer with scientifically derived metrics about the value of online engagement.”

The collaborative project balanced the interests of the various partners—providing increased revenues for Knights Apparel and Costco, increased interaction with online fan communities and profit making for the university through sales of Texas A&M licensed apparel, as well as a rich and unexplored context for academic research for the Center for Retailing Studies.

After reviewing the sales numbers, Clark Dudley Gray, director of digital strategy at Knights Apparel praised Texas A&M’s social media efforts. Diane McDonald, executive director of digital media at Texas A&M, commented on the unique collaboration enabled by the partnership between her team and the digital media group at Knights Apparel.

“We created an unprecedented digital program to announce this academic partnership to our Aggie fans,” she said. “Our social media posts had a high rate of engagement, including several positive comments about the extension of the Texas A&M brand to the third largest retailer in the nation.”

This unique project only scratched the surface in terms of the potential value that can be derived from partnerships between universities and industry. “We hope the Roadshow at Costco research partnership will develop a roadmap for how businesses can uniquely partner with university brand and academic researchers to drive retail sales and offer increased understanding of the financial value of social media engagement,” Hollinger said.
Alumni update

Mays Business School’s Office of Alumni Relations has a two-part mission:
1. To deliver lifelong value to alumni of our undergraduate and graduate programs.
2. To advance the school’s mission through alumni engagement and investment.

We deliver lifelong value to our graduates by providing them with professional networking opportunities, academic enrichment events and career services. By serving as guest speakers, corporate recruiters/partners, student mentors and advisory board members, our alumni play an important role in advancing the school’s mission. In addition, many of our graduates invest in the future of Mays Business School by making gifts that support student scholarships, faculty positions, research initiatives and academic programs.

The Office of Alumni Relations strives to fulfill our mission by engaging alumni across three dimensions: Informed. Involved. Invested. Simply put, we want you to stay informed, get involved and become invested in Mays Business School.

We welcome any suggestions you have to help us achieve our mission, as well as any feedback you would like to offer about our alumni communications, events or resources.

JOSH ELLISON
Alumni Relations Coordinator
alumni@mays.tamu.edu
979.845.5435

KEEP US UP TO DATE

Have you recently changed jobs, moved across town or relocated across the country? If so, please be sure to send us your latest contact information so we can stay in touch. Send us an email at alumni@mays.tamu.edu with Alumni Info Update in the subject line. Be sure to include your first and last names, graduation year and degree(s) along with your new contact information and any other news you’d like to share.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Following are upcoming events designed to foster your professional development.

Mays Spring Panel Discussion
CITYCENTRE Houston, February/March (TBD)

Women’s Leadership Initiative Spring Seminar
CITYCENTRE Houston, Wednesday, April 1

Mays Summer Learning Seminar
CITYCENTRE Houston, August (TBD)

Be sure to check the alumni website for updated event information in the new year! mays.tamu.edu/alumni
OUTSTANDING ALUMNI

Mays honors 2014 Outstanding Alumni for their impact

Mays Business School recognized three of its most prolific graduates during the 23rd annual Outstanding Alumni Banquet. Two of the honorees – Kevin McEvoy ‘79 and Robert Jordan ‘86 – received their MBAs from Mays, and Susan Reese McFarland ‘83 received a bachelor’s degree in accounting.

When introducing the outstanding alumni at the banquet at Traditions Country Club, former Mays Dean Jerry Strawser noted they all hold dear Texas A&M University’s Core Values. “These are the values they personify both in their personal lives and in their business lives,” he said. “They have all excelled in the business world and have given back mightily to their communities.” All three credited the business school with molding their characters.

McEvoysaid for every story about negative business practices, there are “scores more of good, decent people standing up for their values. Texas A&M teaches those values and carries them out every day,” he said. “Cynics say the American dream is dead. But I see the American dream alive and well, and I see it working for my children.”

McEovyis president and chief executive officer of Oceaneering International, Inc., an advanced applied technology company that focuses on deep water engineered products and services for the oil and gas industry. The Houston-based publicly traded company employs more than 12,500 employees worldwide.

McEvoy graduated from Brown University with a biology and geology degree, and his 40-year career in offshore-related endeavors began in June 1972 upon entering the U. S. Navy. On active duty for four years, he was engaged in diving, salvage and submarine rescue duties. After leaving active duty, he earned his MBA from Texas A&M University in 1979.

McFarland said the value of her education at Texas A&M has far exceeded her investment. The value comes not just from the academics, which are strong, but also from the opportunities offered to students. “The culture of involvement is what really propelled me and got me ready to work beyond college,” she said. “I had an opportunity to do so much — organizational skills, communications, problem solving and working with people. I entered the workforce prepared to approach anyone and do anything, with no hesitation.”

McFarland is a graduate of the Stanford Graduate School of Business Executive Program and is a certified public accountant. She started her career as a senior auditor at Deloitte & Touche, then worked for more than 15 years at Bank One Corporation. She was executive vice president and CFO of Fannie Mae. Now she serves on the board of Exeter Financial Corporation and chairs the Audit & Risk Committee.

Jordan received a bachelor’s in computer science and an MBA from Texas A&M. He began his career at Hewlett-Packard as a programmer and a financial analyst. Currently, he serves as Southwest Airlines’ executive vice president and chief commercial officer, and he serves as president of Southwest subsidiary AirTran Airways.

“I still remember your advice and counsel about having balance in my life and not getting too caught up in what my career would look like. I am glad you taught me that.”

-Robert Jordan MBA ‘86

Jordan recognized his family and friends at the banquet, then he thanked Marketing Professor Stephen McDaniel for his influence while Jordan was a student.
In March 2005, Kevin Fontenot witnessed one of the worst petrochemical incidents in history, the ISOM explosion at the BP Texas City Refinery that took 15 lives. Drawing upon his nearly 25 years of experience in the oil and gas industry at that time, Fontenot assisted in the incident investigation following the explosion. This experience gave him the desire to pursue a career in safety.

In 2006, Fontenot was promoted to Texas City Site Safety Superintendent at BP. In this role, he led a team of 30 proprietary safety professionals and approximately 100 contract safety professionals. The BP Texas City Refinery is a 470,000 barrel per day facility with 26 processing units and approximately 6,000 employees who accrue more than 17.5 million man-hours annually.

In April 2010, Fontenot was selected to participate in the official BP Horizon internal investigation as a master root cause analyst. This experience strengthened his desire to move into a senior leadership position within BP’s safety organization. Although he possessed vast field experience, he realized that this move would not be possible without the addition of a strong knowledge of business management.

To strengthen his academic resume, Fontenot returned to college and completed his undergraduate studies with a bachelor’s degree in business. Immediately following graduation, he began looking for an MBA program that would provide the additional business skills needed to lead a corporate safety organization. After completing a thorough evaluation of all the MBA programs in the Houston area, he selected the Mays Executive MBA (EMBA) program.

Fontenot’s decision was driven by the program’s high return on investment, competitive cost of entry, professors who are leaders in their field and the strong Aggie network and culture. Additionally, the program provided an opportunity for him to give back to the oil and gas industry through his capstone project. Fontenot’s capstone project evaluated the feasibility of establishing a centralized database to capture craft skill credentials for craftsmen working within onshore petrochemical facilities along the Gulf Coast. The project determined that the database had the potential to reduce the risk profile of these onshore petrochemical facilities through the reduction of process safety incidents.

“The knowledge I gained in the Mays EMBA program has been critical to my success in this senior-level position.”

- Kevin Fontenot, EMBA ’14

Following graduation from the EMBA program, Fontenot was promoted to director of Upstream Safety Performance, a senior-level leadership position within BP’s Upstream Safety and Operational Risk Organization. In 2013, BP’s upstream segment had activities in 27 countries, and the workforce accumulated 158 million man-hours. In this global role, Fontenot manages a team of employees in the United Kingdom and the United States, and he is accountable for the assimilation and assurance of upstream segment safety performance data reported to senior executives and external agencies.
In early 2003, just a few short months prior to graduation, members of the Full-Time MBA Class of 2003 took ambitious steps toward fulfilling what they believed to be a worthwhile endeavor: funding an endowed fellowship. Eleven years later, the action taken by the Class of 2003 is having a lasting impact on the lives of current students.

Led by John Landherr, Romney Stewart, Greg Moore, Jason Dyke, Steven Skiff and Brock Allen, members of the class pledged to contribute $75,000 during the five years following their graduation. Fellowship founding member Romney Stewart stated, “Our group originally met with Dean Strawser to share our vision with him of what we wanted to accomplish, and he completely bought into the concept and made it even better.” Strawser pledged additional matching funds from the Dean’s Development Council, and the Heep Foundation at Texas A&M University also pledged to match the gift. “Thanks to our generous classmates and some real sleuthing efforts to find some long lost classmates, we made the deadline date and got the fellowship funded by 2008,” Stewart explained. The $300,000 endowed fellowship provides more than $12,000 of assistance to a selected member of each Full-Time MBA class.

What prompted the Class of 2003 to initiate such a generous and forward-thinking project? According to Stewart, “The driving initiative for our class was always to create a fellowship that would impact a student at the individual level, and not have it lost in the shuffle of a research or enrichment program.”

Class members also wanted to ensure their project would contribute to the sense of Mays’ community. “Several of us noticed a lack of involvement and connection among current MBA students and the program’s MBA alumni,” Stewart said. “One of the reasons to get an MBA is to forge a common bond with other A&M MBA graduates and MBA faculty members down the road with whom you can network, learn from and possibly work with or work for. But there simply were not many ties that linked the groups together in a common fellowship effort. The Class of 2003 endowed fellowship helps to bridge this gap.”
Recent recipient Eli Erickson explained the impact that the Class of 2003 endowed fellowship made on his decision to pursue an MBA while considering his MBA options and his growing family. “My biggest concern was health care for my family,” he said. “Winning the fellowship meant a lot to me because it allowed me to pay for student health insurance without taking on further debt. With this peace of mind, I was able to focus on my studies and my experiences at Texas A&M.”

“For me personally, my experiences at Texas A&M have made me a better businessman, entrepreneur, community leader and human being,” Landherr said, “and I wanted to ensure others would have the opportunity for a similar experience. When I decided to leave behind a very successful U.S. Marine Corps Officer career, I looked at many high profile business schools. I chose Texas A&M for many reasons, and I can now look back and say with sincerity it was one of the best choices of my life. The knowledge, and more importantly, the relationships that have resulted from my experiences at Texas A&M, have been instrumental in my successes.”

The Class of 2003, in dreaming big and giving back, is sharing the opportunities they were given to attend a premier business school with a one-of-a-kind culture. Fellowship founding member Landherr said, “For me personally, I thought it was a great way for us to give back to the great education we received at Mays. The focus of the fellowship was to help Mays recruit outstanding candidates that might not select Texas A&M without some financial assistance.”

Currently, the fellowship is promoted during the Full-Time MBA program’s recruiting efforts. As part of the selection process, fellowship candidates meet with a committee consisting of MBA faculty members and two to three rotating alumni from the Class of 2003. Selections are based on demonstrated leadership, work experience, academic achievement and career aspirations.

When the fellowship was first established, Stewart and his peers had big dreams. “As the first MBA class to do this, we hope this is just the foundation and the beginning of a new Aggie tradition of classes giving back to the MBA program,” Stewart said. Now, as Stewart again looks ahead at the possibilities for the endowment, he dreams even bigger. “If additional donations were made to the fellowship over the next several years, we could potentially transform it into the largest award granted out of all scholarships/fellowships, possibly paying for each recipient’s entire MBA rather than [just] one year.”

Mays Business School would like to thank GoldStar Pharmacy (A.J. Oben, MBA ’10) and Austen Mohrfeld, MBA ’03, for their sponsorship of the 2014 MBA Alumni Tailgate.

If you are interested in sponsoring an upcoming alumni event, please contact Josh Ellison at alumni@mays.tamu.edu.
MIT SCHOLAR ASKS “CAN FINANCIAL ENGINEERING CURE CANCER?”

After several close friends were diagnosed with cancer, Andrew Lo began looking into cancer therapeutics. What he found was a weak pharmaceutical industry experiencing a decline in productivity and suffering from a lack of funding. However, he maintains that financial engineering has the potential to reshape the industry and enable the development of a cure for cancer, as well as other diseases.

Lo spoke to a packed audience of faculty and students at Ray Auditorium in October as part of the 2014 Dean’s Distinguished Scholar Lecture Series, a forum that presents distinguished scholars from an array of business disciplines.

Lo is currently the Charles E. and Susan T. Harris Professor of Finance and director of the MIT Laboratory for Finance Engineering at MIT’s Sloan School of Management. He holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from Yale University and an AM and PhD in economics from Harvard University.

Lo has published numerous articles in top finance and economics journals and has written several books, including “The Economics of Financial Markets, A Non-Random Walk Down Wall Street” and “Hedge Funds: An Analytic Perspective.” In 2012, Lo was included in Time magazine’s list of the “100 most influential people in the world” and has received awards for teaching from the University of Pennsylvania and MIT.

The lecture highlighted Lo’s research on how financial engineering can support translational medicine in cancer, orphan diseases and Alzheimer’s disease. Specifically, Lo has investigated a paradox in the pharmaceutical industry: even with many recent breakthroughs in biomedicine, pharmaceutical companies have continued to suffer from mediocre financial performance. “From January 2002 through January 2012, biopharmaceutical companies saw a -1.2 percent rate of return,” said Lo.

The number of biotech firms decreased from 201 in 2008 to just 136 in 2012, and public and private funding continues to decline, Lo said. He explained that the biotech “bubble” has burst due to increasing risk and uncertainty associated with these types of investments. In fact, there is a 95 percent chance of failure, or put differently, a mere 5 percent chance of payoff. “If you are investing, you don’t want to put your money into this,” said Lo. “It’s way too risky.” For long-term investments that range in the hundreds of millions of dollars, this is an especially bleak outlook.

However, according to Lo, financial engineering can help. Specifically, diversifying investments in multiple programs simultaneously would help reduce risks and would dramatically raise the probability of discovering at least one successful drug.

Reduced risk increases the feasibility of debt financing, which is a source of funding that has remained untapped. By offering “cancer bonds,” the biopharmaceutical industry would be able to grow without the need for public and private funding. “This is what we did in the ’90s for real estate,” Lo said.

He also emphasized the need to invest in early-stage research, especially for neurodegenerative diseases where the basic science is not as developed as in oncology. This is a need not currently being met by pharmaceutical companies. “The business of pharma is changing,” explained Lo. “These businesses are keeping cash so they can buy late-stage portfolios rather than investing in early-stage research.”

Lo said that with some imagination, the concept of debt financing is viable. In addition to creating a multibillion-dollar cancer mega fund, he discussed creating an advisory board of experts; one-time mutual funds offered to households across the nation; corporate pension funds, foundations and endowments; and governmental tax incentives.

Despite many challenges facing the biopharmaceutical industry, Lo maintains a positive outlook. “Don’t declare war on disease,” he said. “Instead, put a price tag on its head.” He explained that finance is a means to an end, not an end in itself. “With sufficient scale, we can do well by doing good.”
After more than 27 years of professional experience, Wayne Roberts ’85 hopes to “give back” at this point in his career. Drawing from his experiences, he spoke recently with a group of Mays Business Honors students about what he would tell a younger version of himself, if he could. Roberts offered tips on how to behave, operate and lead as future business professionals.

Roberts is chief operating officer and human resources director for Accruent, an Austin-based provider of real estate and facilities management software solutions.

He joined Accruent in April 2014 after serving in a variety of senior executive roles at Rackspace, Dell, Accenture and Trammell Crow Company. The Austin native earned a bachelor’s degree in business analysis and an MBA from Texas A&M University. He currently serves on the Development Council for Mays Business School.

Roberts gave the students several pieces of advice on how to conduct themselves in the working world. He spoke of the importance of accountability and reliability, which he described as important indicators of integrity. “Do what you say you’re going to do,” said Roberts. “Ask yourself if customers can rely on you to honor your commitments.”

He also advised the students to assume the best intent when negative situations arise, without ascribing motives. “A lot of times mistakes are not one person’s fault,” said Roberts. “Assuming the best intent completely changes how you view situations. You’ll be amazed by how much relationships improve when you do this.” Other behavioral qualities he emphasized were being humble, direct, willing to listen and quick to resolve conflicts.

In describing how business professionals should operate, Roberts stressed the need to stay focused on customer satisfaction. “Everything we do in our company is about delighting customers,” he said. Roberts referenced the Net Promoter System, which divides customers into three categories: promoters, passives and detractors. “Detractors are 10 times more influential than promoters,” explained Roberts. “However, if you can create customers as promoters of your company, you don’t even need advertising.”

Roberts also advised the students to have a strong bias for action, decentralize decisions where possible, make decisions methodically and enjoy the journey rather than just the destination. In his relationships with other Accruent employees, Roberts said he tries to adopt the mantra of “What can I do differently to make your job easier?”

One of the most important factors in being a successful leader, said Roberts, is being able to apply the concept of servant leadership. “Invert the organizational pyramid so that you work for your team,” he advised. “You need a chorus of support for you in the organization.” Other actions leaders should take, according to Roberts, are demonstrating stewardship, providing regular feedback to employees and helping to build champions within the organization.

Above all, Roberts encouraged the students to choose a career path they will enjoy. “The sooner in your life you can figure out what you’re good at and what you like, the happier you’ll be,” he said. “Don’t just take the job. Make sure it’s the right fit for you.”

AGGIE SHAREZ ZEAL FOR OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

The oil and gas industry is operating in “almost a boomtown environment” these days, Tony Best ’72 told a group of Mays Business Honors students recently. He predicts that trend will continue, with the U.S. gaining $3.8 billion in revenues and 300,000 jobs by 2020.

Best is CEO and president of SM Energy, which is based in Denver and has four regional offices around the country. “I love what I’m doing, but I really love the oil and gas industry,” said Best, who has been in the field for 35 years. “There is nothing like it. It is a noble profession to provide the nation’s energy supply.”

Best gave a brief history lesson about the industry and his company. He said there has been a 24-percent increase in America’s natural gas supply in the last two years, and that fossil fuels will remain a foundation for the U.S. energy supply. “There truly is an energy revolution going on in our country today,” he said. “We are reaching a point where we don’t have to depend on these pretty tough countries to provide our oil. That will help the U.S. in numerous ways.”

Best said he likes to stay involved with Texas A&M, where he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering. He has remained involved with the Dwight Look College of Engineering, the 12th Man Foundation and the
Corps of Cadets. “I love this place, but every time I come back I am surprised by how much it has grown,” he said.

After leaving Texas A&M, Best earned a master of science in engineering management from the University of Alaska, then served five years in the U.S. Air Force as an engineering officer.

Best revealed his savvy about students, offering a trivia contest at the end and awarding Starbucks gift cards as prizes. He told the students that their job searches should not be focused only on the money. “Focus on the culture and the values of that company,” he said. “Ask them some tough questions, too. It’s not just about the money, it’s about being proud of where you work.”

Best explained how his company practices responsible production – being a good neighbor, utilizing new technology and following laws and regulations.

Katie Morris ’16 said she and her 14 Business Honors classmates learned a lot about natural gas and how oil is captured. “Some of the main points of his talk included the company’s focus on capturing resource plays, and the importance the company places on ethics and the environment,” she said. “It was a great opportunity to be able to hear from such an esteemed professional.”

Whitney Brown ’16 said she enjoyed the opportunity to listen to Best. “He showed us the importance of looking beyond what a company does to see why they do it and the values that stand behind it,” she said. “I learned that the energy revolution is happening, and it is happening fast. We are lucky to be in the great state of Texas because Texas will see the most positive outcome of the energy revolution compared to any other state.”

**NEIMAN MARCUS GROUP CEO PONDS THE FUTURE “SHOPPING JOURNEY” FOR LUXURY CUSTOMERS**

At the 2014 M.B. Zale Visionary Merchant Lecture Series, Neiman Marcus Group President and CEO Karen Katz considered how the “shopping journey” for luxury customers could evolve in the next five years. Made possible by the M.B. & Edna Zale Foundation and hosted by the Center for Retailing Studies, the annual event seeks to connect Mays Business School students with retail leaders. This year’s event followed the format of a “fireside chat” in which Venkatesh Shankar, Katz and Coleman Chair Professor in Marketing, discussed a range of retail, marketing and leadership topics before a packed house of Mays students, faculty, staff and friends in Ray Auditorium. To kick off the event, Donald Zale ’55, the son of M.B. and Edna Zale and former president, chairman and CEO of Zale Corporation, presented Katz with the 2014 Visionary Merchant award.

During her remarks, Katz mentioned that she had learned a number of valuable leadership lessons from several of the company’s great leaders since joining Neiman Marcus as a merchandise manager in 1985. “Allen Questrom taught me how to be a great merchant by keeping the customer at the center of everything,” Katz said. “I also learned about how to build and lead great teams from Terry Lundgren, and Burt Tansky taught me to understand the luxury market and the mindset of the most affluent customers.” Katz also paid homage to the company’s iconic leader, Stanley Marcus, who was always mindful of burnishing the Neiman Marcus brand by keeping employees focused on the right things.

When asked about the impact of the global economic recession in 2008 and 2009, Katz noted that the downturn gave her leadership team an opportunity to think critically about the future of Neiman Marcus. Even though the company had historically underinvested in technology, Katz believed that technology would play an ever-more prominent role in shaping the shopping journey for her customers, particularly women. Recognizing that it was imperative to deliver a seamless shopping experience across the internet, mobile devices, social media and brick-and-mortar stores, she hired an IT expert from Silicon Valley to help lead the company’s online business into the brave new world of “omnichannel.”

Katz knew that communications—namely convincing Neiman Marcus’ 14,000 employees (called Associates) to embrace technology—would be critical to the company’s success. “Creating a vision for your company and then getting employees to understand, accept and fully embrace those new ideas… that is the essence of leadership,” she said.

Three years ago, Neiman Marcus bought 5,000 iPhones and gave them to their in-store associates at 40 stores. The company also provided extensive training on how to use the devices so Associates can stay in touch with their customers via texts, emails and phone calls. More recently, the company purchased 2,000 tablets and put them in stores for customers to use. “By introducing technology into the traditional retail environment,” Katz noted, “we are seeking to transform the in-store shopping experience for our customers.”
When asked what luxury retailing would look like in five years, Katz pointed to several trends that are likely to reshape the future of the industry. “Customers will expect their favorite brands to be present in every aspect of their lives,” she said. “So retailers will need to deliver their brands consistently across old and new channels in a way that gives their customers a seamless and memorable experience.” She also noted that the death knell announcing the end of brick-and-mortar retailers is premature. “The physical store will continue to be the best marketing tool available to luxury retailers,” she noted.

“Big data” will also figure prominently in the luxury customer’s future shopping experience, according to Katz. One of the keys for retailers will be integrating the internal information they maintain on their customers with data on those same customers available through external sources. Successful companies will then apply that information to deliver an ever-more-personalized shopping experience for customers, whether they’re in the store, on their home computers or on mobile phones somewhere in between.

“Neiman Marcus is looking at applications such as sort-and-rank technology that will enable us to offer personalized deals to our online shoppers as well as equip our Associates with the information they need to enrich the shopping experience for customers in our stores,” she said. “At the end of the day, we want our customers to think, ‘Neiman Marcus really gets me.’”

Katz also offered several words of advice for students aspiring to careers in retailing. “First of all, I would caution them to be careful of what they put on their own social media sites, like Facebook. That’s one of the first places we go when we’re considering job applicants. Second, I would recommend that they find something they’re passionate about, and then bring a positive, can-do attitude and be willing to work hard every day. Finally, I would remind them that they are ultimately the ones who are in charge of their careers.”

ROCKWELL LEADER LEARNED, SHARED LESSONS ALONG THE WAY

Throughout his career, Don H. Davis Jr. ’61 was intentional about noticing the lessons he was learning as he helped his company and his fellow employees succeed. Ten years after retiring as CEO and earning the title of chairman emeritus of Rockwell Automation, Davis shared those lessons with Business Honors students at Mays Business School.

Davis earned a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering and an MBA from Texas A&M University. He said the engineering background and his penchant for logic and order provided a good basis for a business career. He said it also taught him how to analyze situations and to refrain from jumping to conclusions.

Davis took his first job in 1963 in Milwaukee with Allen-Bradley. Then he and his family moved to Birmingham, Ala., in 1965—a place he said was not popular at the time because of Civil Rights unrest. But there he learned self-discipline, to take initiative and persevere. “When you really, really want something, you just don’t give up on it,” he said.

“My first job was the second-lowest job offer I got, financially, but I just knew that company was something I’d really enjoy working in,” he said. “That’s a lesson I’ll share with you—don’t always judge jobs by what everyone says you should consider. Go with your gut instinct.”

Davis became president of Allen-Bradley in 1989, after it was purchased by Rockwell International in 1985. Davis held a series of key corporate and business unit executive positions. In 1995 he was brought into Rockwell International as an executive vice president, then became president and chief executive officer in 1997.

As he was promoted and his responsibilities grew, he said, he learned about organizing things, became very decisive and learned the importance of candid, straightforward, non-ambiguous conversation.

Davis shared a set of lessons he had learned:

• Getting things done when you’re out of your comfort zone
• Even the leader is a part of the team.
• Being externally focused—especially on the customers.
• “Just plain common sense.” Common sense is not as common as it should be.
• Keeping a positive attitude regardless of terrible situations.
• The importance of getting the right people in the right jobs, including reassigning responsibilities as needed.
• Learn to operate with the resources you have, even if you have to reallocate some of them.
• Listening is a very important part of communications; you learn more when you are listening rather than talking.
• Throughout his career, Davis learned the importance of making timely decisions even if the risks seemed high.

“Through every step of my career, my goal was to create the brightest future a person or that business had ever had,” he said. “Trust is the basis of leadership. You develop a trust over time with your integrity and your demand for excellence. That runs both ways so you can create an open environment where every person feels valued.”
BANKING EXECUTIVE ENCOURAGES LIFELONG LEARNING AND GIVING BACK

Banking executive Jonathan Homeyer ’90 shared with Mays Business Honors students stories about his career path in banking and tips for success in the professional world.

He had two pieces of advice for the group: get involved and learn as much as possible. “I encourage you all to find something you’re passionate about and get involved,” he said.

Homeyer is executive vice president for Wells Fargo Commercial Banking based in Houston. He began his banking career upon graduating from Mays in 1993 with First Interstate Bank of Texas, Wells Fargo’s predecessor in the Houston market. A Houston native, Homeyer received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in finance from Texas A&M.

He told the students that what he appreciates most about banking is its inherent variety. “I was attracted to banking because of the diversity of what we do and the variety it offers,” he explained. “No two deals are alike, and you are exposed to many different industries.” Homeyer also noted the significant career potential for someone in the banking industry. “Banking is a great launching pad for your career,” he said.

“His career seemed incredibly interesting,” reflected Courtney Kiolbassa ’18. “He told us that there is no typical day for him, and that he’s exposed to many new people and companies on a day-to-day basis.”

Homeyer attributes Wells Fargo’s continued success to the fact that it is the best at taking complicated processes and making them simple. “We don’t do things we don’t understand,” he said. “We start every credit decision with understanding who people are and what we know about them.”

He listed the four main questions Wells Fargo asks when making credit decisions:

• Who are they?
• What do we know about them?
• Can we build a relationship?
• Does it make sense?

Unlike its more aggressive competitors, Wells Fargo focuses on growing its business steadily over time, with a commitment to its underlying foundation. “We won’t compromise our structure in order to gain more business,” he said. According to Homeyer, Wells Fargo is the most valuable bank in the world by market capitalization.

Despite facing a growing number of regulatory issues in an economy that remains tepid, Homeyer remains confident that Wells Fargo will be able to navigate these challenges as it has done before. “Sometimes challenges seem like a nightmare, but you can turn those challenges into opportunities,” he said.

“Mr. Homeyer told stories of how he turned rough patches into opportunities and how he built a legacy for himself in his community through his employment at Wells Fargo,” said Ashley Kolar ’17. “He discussed how banking can be a challenging, yet rewarding career.”

Homeyer spoke about Wells Fargo’s firm belief in giving back. “We can’t be successful in communities that aren’t successful,” he said. Along with volunteering for organizations within Wells Fargo, Homeyer also serves on the boards for Houston’s Society for the Performing Arts and the United Way of Greater Houston, among others. He currently serves as chairman of the board for Panther Creek Inspiration Ranch, a horse therapy program for children with special needs.

He also noted the importance of curiosity and a desire to learn, which are two important qualities of bankers. “Learn a lot about a lot of different things,” he said. He said he looks for people who have demonstrated an aptitude to learn. “Be flexible, open-minded and able to change and adapt without compromising your core values,” he advised.

“My main takeaway from the event was Mr. Homeyer’s advice for a successful career, which involves a combination of hard work and effort, a willingness to learn new information and the fortitude to power through troublesome times,” said Matthew Baldree ’15.
Business executive L.E. Simmons advised a group of Business Honors students not to forget that good people want to do business with good people. “We have two main priorities,” he said. “The first is to be a good partner, and the second is to be the best in our field. This means focusing on being the best versus being the largest.”

Simmons is founder and president of SCF Partners, a Houston-based private equity firm founded in 1989 to own and build companies in the energy services industry. Before founding SCF, he helped launch the corporate Finance Department at the First National Bank of Chicago and co-founded Simmons & Company International, an investment banking firm specializing in oilfield service companies.

Simmons received a bachelor’s degree in economics at the University of Utah and the London School of Economics and an MBA from Harvard University.

Over the last 25 years, SCF has raised 8 funds, built more than 61 platform companies and completed over 290 acquisitions. According to Simmons, SCF was able to achieve such high growth through a number of core strengths: a dedication to creating great companies; an ability to adapt to changing market dynamics; growth through strategic vision and outstanding execution; and empowerment of each entrepreneur.

“Strategy is nothing but a roadmap,” said Simmons. “Execution is how you get there.” He walked the students through case studies of actual companies and their financials to give them a better picture of SCF’s partner companies and how they have achieved success.

According to Simmons, there are three key attributes essential to building great businesses:

- Having the right people
- Intense focus and discipline
- Working as a team toward a common goal

Simmons discussed how SCF addresses the first attribute, having the right people, by creating a rewarding work environment with diverse people and skillsets. In fact, SCF is focused on recruiting young executives to work closely with more seasoned entrepreneurs. “A variety of backgrounds really leads to creativity,” he said. “Our employees stretch us, and we stretch them.”

Simmons also explained what it takes to make the most effective business decisions. “The key is to have a relatively small group of people with different backgrounds,” he explained. “It’s crucial to have an open and honest discussion when making decisions.”

Another piece of advice Simmons offered is to make sure to partner with the right entrepreneurs. “It’s really important who your partners are,” he said. “This is more important than the investments you’ll make.”

Going forward, SCF plans to focus on investing in larger, more diversified global companies. Although new ventures always create some risk, Simmons advised the students not to let this hold them back in their pursuits. “You can’t be so afraid that you’re unwilling to take risks,” he said.

Simmons left the students with one final piece of advice, saying it’s more important to know where you are headed than what will happen next. “If you know where you want to go, it’s okay if you don’t know exactly what the next step will be,” he said. “Just focus on doing things that are right every day.”
Business Research in Action

WHAT’S INSIDE
Balancing research and academic outreach ............ 42
Employee engagement ........................................ 45
Variance in equity lending fees ........................... 46
Regulatory pendulum ....................................... 47
Corporate brands and executive pay .................... 48
Venkatesh “Venky” Shankar is on a Top 10 list every academian dreams of—he has been recognized as one of the Top 10 experts worldwide on innovation management. He didn’t start out being an advocate of marketing, but now he has found his niche in the worlds of marketing and academics.

At Mays Business School, he is the Coleman Chair Professor in Marketing and director of research for the Center for Retailing Studies. He was director of the marketing PhD Program from 2006 to 2012.

Shankar received his PhD in marketing from Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University. However, his undergraduate studies focused on engineering. “Originally, I saw marketing as a way to advertise things. I thought of Super Bowl commercials, glitzy and glamorous campaigns selling insurance and whatnot, and used car salespeople,” he said. “Once I got in an MBA program to get into management, I realized the two main reasons companies exist are innovations and customers. Then I came to know what marketing really is: It’s about how we continuously create, communicate and deliver customer value through offerings, brands and channels. Then it came to mean something to me.”
Shankar’s areas of specialization include digital business, marketing strategy, innovation, retailing, international marketing, pricing, branding and mobile marketing. He has corporate experience in the areas of marketing and international business development in diverse countries.

Shankar spent two years in Hong Kong working with a bank, then he worked in the corporate environment. He quickly learned he preferred the marketing world. “In the corporate world, you can’t answer your own questions, you answer your boss’ questions,” he explained. “In marketing, you ask the questions, answer them and have fun with them.”

Shankar discovered his niche in the academic world, which his brother, then a finance professor, encouraged him to consider. “I had no idea what research would look like, but my eyes got opened to research,” he said. “I got to learn about methodologies. I found I really enjoyed it.”

He said he asked questions of everyone he encountered. “I was working on 10 to 12 projects at a time. That’s how my passion got kindled,” he recalled. “I was surrounded by good researchers who enrich your thinking and motivate you to look at things in a different way, a more rigorous way. They keep kicking it back, demanding it be real, relevant and bankable. It was a time of great learning.”

Shankar has supervised 11 doctoral students, something he enjoys immensely. “My first at Mays, Tarun Kushwaha, got a job at UNC Chapel Hill, and the most gratifying day for me was when he got tenure last year.” He said he feels fortunate to blend research and teaching, and that he roots all of his research in real problems. He often hears from former students, even students he meets during one-day sessions. “I wake up every morning eager to work, to make a difference,” he said. “It’s a noble profession. Not only am I teaching that one person, but it will also help the people they encounter.”

Mark B. Houston, the marketing department head and Blue Bell Creameries Chair in Business, said he admires Shankar’s passion for helping his PhD students get jobs at their target universities. “You can see that passion in how hard he works with them during the years of the PhD program on real research projects that are publishable in top-tier journals,” Houston said. “This is critical, because PhD candidates will not even get interviews with Doctoral Research Universities without papers that are published, or at least at advanced rounds of review, at top journals.”

Beyond helping his students prepare academically, Houston says Shankar pours enormous effort into personally reaching out to his extensive professional network at universities around the country to lobby for his students. “When a target school publicizes an opening, Venky is constantly on the phone, sending e-mails, talking to people at conferences, convincing them of the wisdom of interviewing his students,” Houston said. “His persistence almost always pays off – it is kind of like the old science fiction line, ‘Resistance is futile!’ I know a lot of really dedicated PhD advisors at a lot of universities, but I know no one who works harder at this than Venky Shankar.”

Shankar is also “a star in the classroom at all levels of programs,” Houston said, but particularly with the Executive MBAs. “He is smart, well-prepared, incredibly energetic, and thinks well on his feet – all attributes that lead to an engaging EMBA professor. His formal ratings and the informal feedback that I see from these students speak to his effectiveness. He changes the way that executives think about marketing.”

With that, Shankar’s path comes full circle from the days when his own opinion of marketing was changed.
VENKATESH SHANKAR

Shankar has consulting or executive training experience with organizations such as Allstate, Cap Gemini Ernst & Young, Colgate Palmolive, GlaxoSmithKline, Halliburton, Hewlett Packard, HSBC, IBM, Intel, Lockheed Martin, Lucent Technologies, Marriott International, Medtronic, Northrop Grumman, PepsiCo, Philips, and Volvo. He has made several appearances on CNN, C-SPAN, and Voice of America. He has been on many advisory boards and has served as an expert witness in legal cases.

ACCOLADES

- One of the World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds in the 21st Century
- 2013-2014 Retailing Lifetime Achievement Award
- 2013 Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta (IIMC) Distinguished Alumnus Award
- 2012 Vijay Mahajan Award for Lifetime Contributions to Marketing Strategy Research
- 2014 J. B. Steenkamp Long-term Impact Award from International Journal of Research in Marketing
- 2006 Robert Clarke Award for the Outstanding Direct and Interactive Marketing Educator
- 2001 IBM Faculty Partnership Award
- 1999 Paul Green Award for the Best Article in Journal of Marketing Research
- 2000 Don Lehmann Award for the Best Dissertation-based Article in an AMA journal
- Sheth Award for the best paper in the Journal of Academy of Marketing Science.

PUBLICATIONS


SERVICE TO THE ACADEMY AND MARKETING INDUSTRY


Shankar has been a keynote speaker in several conferences and has delivered over 250 presentations in diverse countries. He is a three-time winner of the Krowe Award for Teaching and has taught Marketing Management, Digital Business Strategy, Marketing Strategy, Marketing Research, and International Marketing. He was a visiting scholar at the Sloan School of Management, MIT. He has also been a visiting faculty at INSEAD, Singapore Management University, SDA Bocconi, the Chinese European International Business School at Shanghai, and the Indian School of Business.
Employee engagement is key to sound businesses

The bottom line is that engaged employees improve a company’s bottom line, and an organization possessing an entire workforce that is collectively engaged will exhibit higher levels of motivation. That’s according to research by a team of professors and graduate students from Mays Business School’s Department of Management, who determined that higher levels of collective engagement in an organization lead to higher level of motivation.

In a study of 83 small to mid-sized U.S. credit unions, the researchers concluded that engagement—defined as investing one’s cognitive, emotional and physical self into work performances, i.e., putting one’s head, heart and hands into work—leads to improved return on assets, a common financial indicator of organizational success.

“The word ‘engagement’ is sometimes used as a pop term,” said Stephen H. Courtright, an assistant professor of management who participated as a researcher in the project. “There is a lot of discussion anecdotally that engagement impacts organizational effectiveness, but we set out to test in an objective, scientific way whether an organization full of employees who see themselves and other organizational members as engaged improves the bottom line,” he said. “We concluded that yes, employee engagement impacts an organization and helps drive its competitive advantage. That means collective engagement matters for organizational effectiveness in a real and measurable way.”

However, beyond just showing the bottom-line impact of collective employee engagement, the researchers also sought to answer a question naturally brought up by organizational leaders and stakeholders: “What can organizations do to get their workforce engaged?” While some research has analyzed what immediate bosses can do to help a small group of employees become more engaged, what organizations can do from a strategic standpoint to influence their workforce to be collectively engaged as a whole is a deeper question.

Management Professor Murray Barrick, Courtright and graduate students Gary Thurgood and Troy Smith tested this question on the same sample of credit unions. Using this sample of similarly-sized organizations from the same industry helped to produce purer results.

To get a collective workforce engaged, “it starts at the top,” Courtright said. Specifically, the researchers found that the strongest predictor of collective employee engagement was the CEO’s “transformational leadership,” a leadership style in which the CEO (1) articulates a compelling vision that challenges the status quo, (2) serves as an inspirational and charismatic role model and (3) shows care and concern for members of the organization.

Next, the team found that company leaders need to establish and implement performance management systems that serve to identify and track high performers, reward high performers and then make high performers feel secure in their job.

Finally, companies can better facilitate collective employee engagement by designing jobs within the organization to be more motivating for their employees. This includes giving employees greater autonomy and ownership over tasks, allowing them to use a variety of skills on the job and helping them to see how their jobs make a significant difference to the company’s overall success.

According to the researchers, these three organizational-level factors, in combination, maximize the three underlying psychological conditions for full engagement from employees—psychological availability, safety and meaningfulness. “CEO transformational leadership helps employees be more willing to be engaged at work; effective performance management helps employees feel that they are rewarded for being engaged; and motivating job design helps employees sense that impact of their engagement on the organization,” said Courtright.

STEPHEN H. COURTRIGHT

“Collective Organizational Engagement: Linking Motivational Antecedents, Strategic Implementation, and Firm Level Performance” was accepted for publication in the Academy of Management Journal February 2014. Researchers are Murray R. Barrick, Stephen H. Courtright, Gary R. Thurgood and Troy A. Smith.
Research investigates the variance in equity lending fees

Buyers and sellers are equally important in the United States financial market. An influx of buyers causes stock prices to increase, which prevents stock undervaluation. Conversely, an increase in the number of sellers causes stock prices to decrease, which prevents stock overvaluation.

According to Adam C. Kolasinski, associate professor of finance, activity from both types of investors is critical to maintaining a balanced and accurate stock price.

“Speculation is important for the financial market because it leads to price discovery,” explained Kolasinski. “If nobody were betting on assets, we would have no way of discovering the right price.”

Even investors who do not own shares are able to bet down on stocks. This is accomplished through the process of short selling, in which investors temporarily borrow stock from lenders. The borrowers then resell the stock with the hope that the price will go down before they buy back the stock and return it to the lender. If the price decreases, the borrowers will be able to pocket the profit. Otherwise, they will be forced to buy back the shares at a higher price and, as a result, will lose money.

Short selling is not free for borrowers. Lenders charge fees to anyone wishing to borrow shares, and these lending fees vary widely across stocks.

Kolasinski and his colleagues studied the equity lending market to better understand why lending fees vary and the dynamics behind these fees. “High fees could be a barrier to negative speculation,” said Kolasinski. “They could discourage investment and end up causing stocks to be overvalued.”

The researchers investigated what determines lender fees and how they respond to demand shock, or a spike in the demand from borrowers. They found that for the most part, fees are actually very low and tend to be invariant to borrower demand. However, when demand shock is extreme, lending fees start to spike.

“We found evidence that the opacity of the market seems to be driving this occasional spike in fees,” said Kolasinski. “Unlike the stock market, which has a highly transparent centralized exchange, the equity lending market is very opaque and has no centralized exchange.” As a result, people wishing to borrow shares must reach out themselves and search for willing lenders.

“When borrower demand is slow to moderate, most lenders have shares available for loan, so competition among lenders keeps fees low,” elaborated Kolasinski. “However, for smaller stocks, a spike in borrower demand can exhaust the inventory of lendable shares at many of the better-known lenders with whom borrowers have established relationships.”

Since searching for new lenders is costly for borrowers, the few remaining lenders who have shares left in inventory will enjoy a local monopoly of sorts, allowing them to charge high fees. Thus, when search costs are higher, the average fee is higher, and fees tend to be more responsive to demand shocks.

“The bottom line is that the market for share loans would benefit from more transparency and a centralized exchange,” said Kolasinski.

ADAM C. KOLASINSKI

“A Multiple Lender Approach to Understanding Supply and Search in the Equity Lending Market” was published in Journal of Finance and is authored by Adam C. Kolasinski of Mays and the University of North Carolina’s Adam V. Reed and Matthew C. Ringgenberg.
In an economy that values financial success and high revenues, organizations of all types continually struggle to balance efficiency with production-constraining regulations.

“Organizations have two motivations: production and compliance,” explained Rogelio Oliva, associate professor of information and operations management at Mays and Ford Faculty Fellow. “They are trying to grow their businesses while, at the same time, knowing they must follow the rules.”

Oliva and his colleagues—Ignacio Martinez-Moyano from the University of Chicago and David McCaffrey from the University at Albany—have been conducting ongoing studies that model rule development and compliance in organizations. Their most recent study examines United States financial markets as a case area and suggests that recurring regulatory problems during the past 60 years are structurally similar.

“There are some structural reasons why we have a financial crisis every so often,” said Oliva. “The crises change in specifics, but they all have the same origin. The system is rigged so that the actors in a system become lax in compliance due to an enormous pressure to produce.”

Oliva and his colleagues propose a model of drift and adjustment in rule compliance. This model centers on the tension between production goals that focus on short-term benefits and required adherence to production-constraining rules that attempt to mitigate long-term risks.

“The pressure for companies to produce leads to one of two outcomes: working hard or cutting corners,” said Oliva. As organizations face high volume and time pressures, they may adopt a “Will we get caught?” decision-making mindset. In an attempt to evade controls and avoid delays, they will often commit a number of small infractions that will, for a while, remain undetected or tolerated. However, adopting this mentality can lead to a decrease in service quality and an accumulation of regulatory and criminal violations.

“Eventually the violations pile up so that people can see the evidence,” explained Oliva. “This leads to strong backlash from regulators and an increase in the number of regulations. After a while, there are too many regulations and they start to back off, leading to the same cycle all over again.” This “regulatory pendulum” can be applied to settings beyond financial markets as well, since this phenomenon occurs in virtually every industry.

One surprising discovery uncovered by the research is how fast-paced the evolution of new products and regulations is. “It reminded us of the evolutionary race between predators and prey,” said Oliva. “New products are designed to address customer needs and soon someone starts abusing the system with these new products.” Eventually, however, these new products lead to even more regulations, which causes the pendulum to swing again.

This study is one of the first attempts to bring all plausible explanations together to form an aggregated picture of what is occurring in the market. Oliva and his colleagues have received support and validation from industry partners for their research and are presently working to validate their theory by creating a detailed model capable of replicating these dynamics.

“Ultimately, we have analyzed the micro decisions that are made in the industry to identify a structure that is responsible for the behavior,” said Oliva.

“Regulatory pendulum” models the cyclical pattern of compliance rules

ROGELIO OLIVA

“Drift and Adjustment in Organizational Rule Compliance: Explaining the ‘Regulatory Pendulum’ in Financial Markets” was published in Organization Science and is authored by Rogelio Oliva of Mays, Ignacio J. Martinez-Moyano of the University of Chicago and David P. McCaffrey of the University at Albany, State University of New York.
Many research studies have analyzed customer-based brand equity, but researchers often fail to notice the impact of customer perceptions on executive pay. Alina Sorescu, associate professor of marketing at Mays Business School, saw a correlation between customers’ willingness to pay more for specific brands and top management of well-known brands’ willingness to work for less compensation.

Sorescu first saw patterns forming within academia when PhD candidates chose to study at more prestigious schools who offered them less scholarship money over lower-tier schools offering a much larger amount of scholarship money. She theorized the PhD candidates’ decisions were based on the opportunities created by attending a more prestigious school. In the long run, the benefits of taking the option that provided less funding would pay off because of the brand equity that accompanies a prestigious degree. Her findings were so consistent that she began applying this theory to other scenarios.

Sorescu and her colleagues, Nader Tavassoli and Rajesh Chandy — both from the London Business School — began looking for connections between brand equity and the salary of various companies’ top five executives. Sorescu wanted to know if top executives of companies with well-known brands received lower compensation.

She began her data collection with U.S. Young & Rubicam BAV metrics survey to obtain brand strength, executive level compensation data from ExecuComp, a Standard & Poor’s database and firm level data which yielded a sample of 10,107 observations for all executives and 1,869 observations for CEOs, across 393 firms.

Her findings were in line with the proposed theory. “For the subsample of CEOs we find that one standard deviation increase in brand strength is associated with a 12.13 percent decrease in pay, or $1,268,130 in savings for the average CEO compensation. For the subsample of non-CEOs we find a 2.42 percent decrease in pay for one standard deviation increase in brand strength, or $89,978 in savings for the average.”

In an effort to explain why strong brands should attract executives at lower levels of pay, Sorescu explains the definition of employee-based brand equity as “the value that a brand provides to a firm through its effects on the attitudes and behaviors of its employees.” This concept offers a new look at the returns on branding, by cutting costs instead of increasing revenue. “The payoff to brand investments largely exists in the revenue gains that they can yield. Our approach flips this notion by looking at the cost side of profits, an area rarely examined in marketing,” she explains.

“We suggest that a significant part of the returns to marketing investments in brands may be in reducing payroll costs.”

Taking a look at the psychological effects strong brands have on executive pay, Sorescu offers an identity-based framework. “The overarching theme underlying this effect is self-enhancement,” she said. “Strong brands offer greater possibilities for self-enhancement to the executives associated with them than do weak brands.” People choose to work for companies with strong brands because brands build reputation and those connections create future opportunities. “Self enhancement is seen as a substitute for pay,” she noted. Brands are seen as a signaling tool. Being associated with a strong brand says something about you; the long-term benefits outweigh the immediate salary cut one may be willing to take.

“The results found imply that researchers should take a broader view of the contributions that brands make to firms and the effect they have on the balance sheet,” Sorescu said of employee-based brand equity. “Moreover, they should make use of strong brands in executive pay negotiations that are typically viewed as being outside the realm of marketing.”
Mays Business School hosts a number of alumni events each year at our CITYCENTRE Houston facility, on our College Station campus, and at other locations throughout the world. These events provide opportunities to reconnect with classmates, expand your professional network and enhance your knowledge of business.

We hope you’ll be able to stay connected in the coming year.

For more information on upcoming alumni events and activities, visit us at mays.tamu.edu/alumni.
Mays Business School thanks Phillips 66 for sponsoring 15 Regents’ Scholars on a two-week trip to South Africa and Zambia this summer. Through global travel and study abroad programs, we broaden students’ perspectives on business and open their eyes to the many possibilities of making a positive impact on the world.

For more information, visit maysweb.tamu.edu/cibs.