

THE GORDON AND GERI MOULTON BELL TOWER

The Gordon and Geri Moulton Bell Tower is named in honor of the University of South Alabama's second president and his wife for "exceptional service to the University of South Alabama and the Mobile community" spanning more than four decades by unanimous resolution of the USA Board of Trustees on September 17, 2009. Gordon Moulton joined USA on June 1, 1966, and was appointed president on July 29, 1968.

2010



MITCHELL MAGAZINE





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No matter how
long the winter,
spring is sure
to follow.

—UNKNOWN

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ON THE COVER:

Mitchell College of Business Ambassadors, l-r, Michael McGowan, John MacLatchie and Andrea Prgomelja, are gearing up for their next chapter.

ALVIN WILLIAMS
Interim Dean

EMMY RIESKE
Associate Director of Marketing

DIANA NICHOLS
Director Creative Services

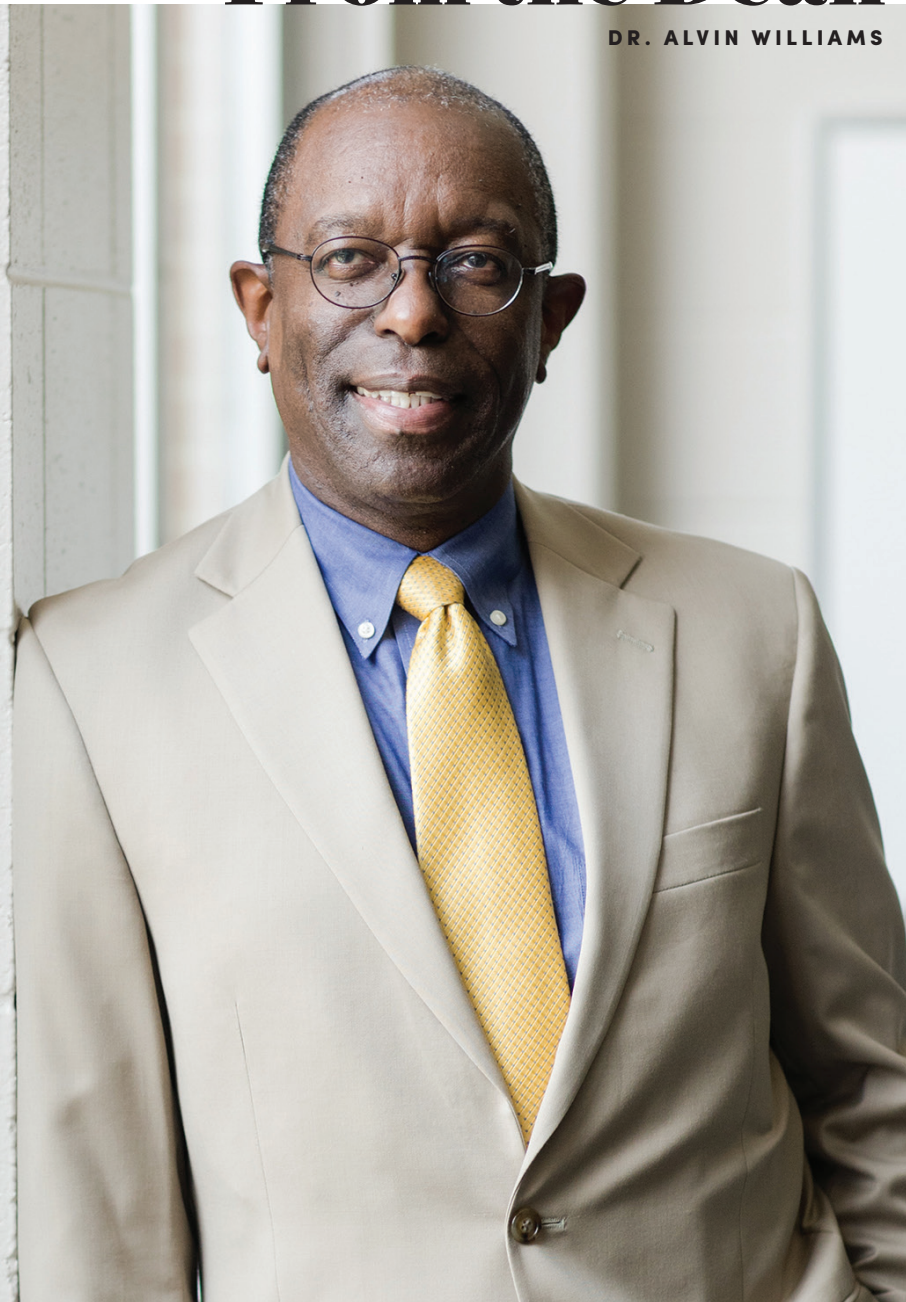
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MIKE KITTRELL
Photography

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VICTORIA POWER
Student Assistants

USA UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
MITCHELL COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS

From the Dean

DR. ALVIN WILLIAMS



EMAIL ME:

Alvin J. Williams
Interim Dean, Mitchell College
of Business
Chair and Distinguished
Professor of Marketing &
Quantitative Methods
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TO GET INVOLVED AND
STAY CONNECTED, FOLLOW
US ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND
AT [SOUTHALABAMA.EDU/
COLLEGES/MCOB](https://southalabama.edu/colleges/mcob)


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USA Mitchell College
of Business


@USA_MCOB


University of South Alabama
Mitchell College of Business

Branding the Mitchell College of Business is a journey in which all of us contribute. Branding conjures up myriad perspectives – a shared identity; a type of self-expression; a symbol of quality; a communications platform; a relationship-building foundation; brand recognition; and ultimately, brand loyalty. From a strategic planning angle, what do we want our brand to look and feel like five, 10, 20 years out? What must we do today to ensure the results we want tomorrow?

As a community of MCOB supporters and partners, our key charge is how to make our mission statement below come alive on a continuous basis. A solid branding strategy offers one pathway to actualizing our mission.

MISSION

THE MITCHELL COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS PRODUCES
INNOVATIVE, FUTURE
BUSINESS LEADERS THROUGH
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT WITH
INDUSTRY TO ADVANCE THE
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF
THE GULF COAST REGION.

A few key phrases radiate from our mission that help form the basis of our brand personality – (1) innovative future business leaders, (2) experiential learning, (3) global engagement, and (4) economic well-being. These four key elements of the ‘MCOB brand personality’ require the commitment and dedication of all of us. Which piece of the “brand personality puzzle” will you take ownership and help us accomplish? Wherever you fit in MCOB space (student, faculty, staff, donor, supporter, parent, advisory board member, employer, industry leader, governmental entity, etc.), we invite you to take an ownership role in helping us realize the ambitions of the Mitchell College of Business. We need you, your ideas, resources, creative and intellectual energies and support. I look forward to hearing from you soon about the part you want to play in shaping MCOB’s brand personality.

By the Numbers

FACULTY

Student-Faculty Ratio

22 : 1



STUDENTS



10 MCOB Student Organizations

994

Undergraduate Students



79% In-State

21% Out-Of-State

159

Graduate Students

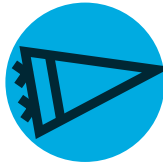


MCOB students are from **26** different states and



9 different countries

ALUMNI



11,917 total alumni

INTERNSHIPS

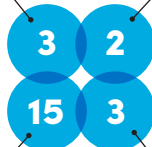


135

Internship credits awarded in the 2020-2021 academic year

Fall 2020: 23

Accounting Management



Marketing Finance

Spring 2021: 65

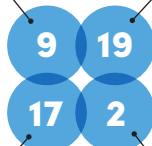
Accounting Management



Marketing Finance

Summer 2021: 47

Accounting Management



Marketing Finance

SCHOLARSHIPS



98 Endowed scholarships totaling over **\$354,000** awarded in 2021-2022 academic year

JAGUAR INVESTMENT FUND



The Jag Fund has performed **35.6%** ahead of the S&P 500 since inception

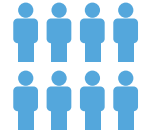


MCOB has **12** Bloomberg terminals. Over **200** students have been certified to use them.



The two funds under management total **\$1,840,000**

VITA



8

Students assisted in tax preparation for low income families



52

Returns were processed and accepted by the IRS



\$15,600

In tax preparation fees saved



\$70,000

In tax refunds processed



\$10,000

In earned income credit



Leading the Way

DEAN BENTON

MAJOR: General Management

UNIQUE FACT: Benton was severely allergic to peanuts until about three years ago. Now, peanut M&Ms are his favorite snack.

Over the last four years, Dean Benton has taken every opportunity to grow and explore interests within the USA community. "When I started taking classes at the Mitchell College, everything started making sense and I was engaged in what I was learning. Another confirmation for me was the community within the College; I got along well with students and the professors really cared about me on a personal level."

After graduation, Benton plans to call Mobile home with his new fiancé, Kinley, while continuing to explore careers in the business field. "Upon graduation, I want to gain experience in the management and leadership areas of a Mobile-based company. If I have learned anything in college, it is that no two firms are the same. I want to be able to work in different environments with a variety of people to see which field is the best fit for me."

ANTHONY COTICCHIO

MAJOR: General Management

UNIQUE FACT: Coticchio grew up with a mini pig. The pig was supposed to stay small, but actually grew into a full-size hog.

Anthony Coticchio landed far from his home in Belvidere, Illinois. Leary at first, he now looks back over the years with confidence in his decision. "I was unsure about my career path. I decided to declare a major in general management because I liked the broad aspects it represents. I really enjoyed all of my management classes and a lot of that is due to Professor Jay Hunt. I knew management was the right choice for me."

Coticchio also recognizes the importance of growing a network. "As a member of the Mitchell Ambassadors, I have been motivated to give back to the business college community. In addition, I have developed relationships with many of MCOB faculty and staff. Developing my professional network has always been a top priority."

Anthony plans to move closer to home in Illinois, where he will apply for a full-time marketing position, with hopes of becoming a leader in the industry.

NICK DAILEY

MAJOR: Economics and Finance

UNIQUE FACT: Dailey was one of 18 people in his graduating high-school class in Huntsville, Alabama.

Nick Dailey was recruited as a Mitchell Scholar and has since become a key member of organizations including Mortar Board, Alpha Tau Omega and Southerners USA Ambassadors (in addition to the Mitchell Ambassador program).

"I feel like being a Mitchell Ambassador has allowed me to interact with these people [professionals] in more of a real-world setting. I am deeply appreciative for the connections and insight I have garnered here. The opportunities it presented me with and the people it allowed me to meet, within the program, around the College, and throughout the community, have all been extraordinary."

Moving forward, Nick plans to use the hard skills he has accumulated through his degree in Economics and Finance while exploring the possibility of dental school or a career in the business sector.



DEAN BENTON



KELSEY EDWARDS



ANTHONY COTICCHIO



CASSIDY GEESLIN



NICK DAILEY



MACY GLISSON

KELSEY EDWARDS

MAJOR: Finance

UNIQUE FACT: Edwards has always had a fascination with collecting snow globes. She collects a new one from each place she visits and currently has 60 snowglobes in her collection.

Kelsey Edwards uncovered a strong aptitude for solving financial problems after participating in the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF). "I reached out to Dr. Chow, my freshman year, after he had encouraged his students to consider SURF. Ever since, he has helped guide me through my undergraduate journey and motivated me to accomplish my goals. Analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating numbers is like a puzzle to me and I find joy in solving the puzzle."

Kelsey capitalized on yet another opportunity to get involved through the Mitchell Ambassadors program. "After the process of being selected, I immediately felt welcomed by the other Ambassadors. It has also given me the opportunity to give back to MCOB and share, with current and prospective students, how my experience has been while helping them establish theirs."

Edwards, a graduating senior from Alabaster, Alabama, is looking forward to using her finance degree to pursue a master's degree in finance and a career in investments or actuarial science.

CASSIDY GEESLIN

MAJOR: Marketing

UNIQUE FACT: Geeslin has a YouTube channel and creates videos and memories she might look back on one day.

Cassidy credits time spent as a marketing intern and Ambassador as high points in her academic career. "The Internship Program was definitely my pivotal point that really solidified my desire for marketing management. While doing a marketing internship at MCOB, I knew instantly that I had picked the right career path. I would love to recognize Mrs. Megan Bennett for being the best support system over the past year and a half."

Geeslin joined the Mitchell Ambassadors and deepened her involvement at the College throughout her senior year. "My experience as an Ambassador has helped me grow further by expanding my skills, including leadership, communication, and involvement. Being a part



BRENDA LANDA-SILVA



REESE MORRIS



JOHN MACLATCHIE



ANDREA PRGOMLJAJ



MICHAEL MCGOWAN



COURTNEY WILLMINGTON

of the Ambassador program has been my biggest and most rewarding accomplishment."

Moving forward, Cassidy hopes to continue marketing work in Nashville, Tennessee.

MACY GLISSON

MAJOR: Accounting

UNIQUE FACT: Over the last year, Glisson has been running her own event planning business.

Ambassador Macy Glisson has leveraged her time at the Mitchell College of Business to get involved and connect with others. "I had an amazing experience and was able to build relationships with other Ambassadors. Prior to the program, I was very shy and stayed to myself; being an Ambassador pushed me out of my shell. As an Ambassador, people have asked me all about South and my personal experience. I enjoy sharing and visiting with others about my time at the University, as well as the Mitchell College community."

In the future, Glisson plans to receive a master's degree in accounting and sit for the CPA exam. She is confident that her experience and education will prove vital to her future.

BRENDA LANDA-SILVA

MAJOR: International Business

UNIQUE FACT: Landa-Silva hiked a volcano that once erupted and left a town in ruins.

Originally from Morelia, Michoacan, in Central Mexico, Brenda Landa-Silva grew up with a deep appreciation for different cultures, businesses and people. Reflecting on her time at the Mitchell College of Business, Brenda thought of those who guided and supported her interests. "There are multiple faculty and staff members who have made an impact on my experience at MCOB. They never failed to provide guidance from beginning to end."

As an Ambassador, Brenda didn't allow circumstances to prevent her from adapting and making the best of the opportunity to lead students through a challenging, COVID-restricted time. "This year's Ambassadors have had a unique experience; we have not done everything that past Ambassadors typically do. I am grateful for this opportunity because we have learned to adapt to things as a group. We have been alongside the College and its students adapting to the new 'normal'."

Following graduation, Brenda plans to relocate to a major U.S. city and begin working for a multinational company.

JOHN MACLATCHIE

MAJOR: Finance

UNIQUE FACT: MacLatchie is known for writing song lyrics and predicting the future. Today's prediction: "You're going to look back at bitcoin in 10 years and wish you didn't buy more!"

John M. MacLatchie's academic and professional journey at South Alabama has taken him far from home in Greenwood, California. MacLatchie had his sights set on politics until he realized change could come from other sources. "I woke up to the fact that real and lasting change in the world doesn't happen in politics. Advancements within the structure of our society come from individuals and organizations that create goods and services that fill a need within the market."

Reflecting on his time as an Ambassador, MacLatchie said, "So far, being an Ambassador has helped my peers and me open the door to reach the next level in our professional lives. I have grown close with several professors and have gotten to know some absolute rockstars in the business community here in Mobile."

"Going to a school far away from home can be intimidating. The faculty here at MCOB are extremely supportive and go the extra mile to ensure students have what they need to navigate successfully throughout their studies."

MICHAEL MCGOWAN

MAJOR: Supply Chain

UNIQUE FACT: When he has free time, McGowan enjoys playing the guitar.

Mobile native Michael McGowan's experience as an Ambassador reinforced his decision to study business. "Acceptance into the Mitchell Ambassador program solidified my decision regarding my major of study. It showed me that my hard work was not going unnoticed and that the goals I had set for myself were attainable and that there were people who would support me through the process."

McGowan credits Emmy Riese for such encouragement. "She was the reason I decided to take a chance to be a part of this amazing program. She also makes it a point to check on me academically and in my everyday life, which can be more important to a college student than some think. There are many I could thank for getting me to where I am today. I am forever grateful for those people and the opportunities I will have in the future because of them."

Filled with motivation, McGowan plans to start his own business after graduating from the College.

REESE MORRIS

MAJOR: Accounting

UNIQUE FACT: Growing up with a father in the military, Morris has lived in seven states and attended four high schools and three middle schools.

At South, Reese Morris used his ability to adapt in impressive ways throughout his four years as an accounting major and Mitchell Ambassador Co-Chair.

As Co-Chair of the Ambassadors during the COVID-19 pandemic, Morris led students through a very different year. He said, "Most of my experience has been during COVID; however, MCOB still makes me feel involved. I have been given the opportunity to interact with the administration of the College and feel I have a voice. I believe I am making an impact and am on the front lines. I have grown closer to my professors and look at the College in a different light."

Following graduation, Morris plans to continue his education with an MBA degree before sitting for the CPA exam. Following his schooling, he hopes to work as a public accountant.

ANDREA PRGOMELJA

MAJOR: Management

UNIQUE FACT: Andrea has worked for two non-profit organizations during her time at South.

Originally from Zagreb, Croatia, Andrea Prgomelja was involved in the USA and Mobile communities where she received performance awards as president of the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization.

Prgomelja's interest in management and entrepreneurship was fostered through her involvement in the College. "When I joined the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO), I began to make connections in the community and learn from various business owners. Hearing about their experiences and seeing how passionate they were about their businesses pushed me to further my own dreams of starting a business."

She credits Dr. Mosley, CEO advisor and Melton Center Director, as a core influence in her success. "He has helped me grow so much over the past several years at South. He has always pushed me to follow my dreams and go the extra mile. Without him, I would not have had the experiences and opportunities moving forward that I have today."

Following graduation, Prgomelja has plans to find a career in marketing and business management and later return to further her education.

COURTNEY WILLIAMS

MAJOR: HR Management

UNIQUE FACT: Williams has modeled professionally.

Courtney Williams, a native of Spanish Fort, Alabama, chose to attend the University of South Alabama after attending high school virtually. "My experience has been transformational. I have grown as a student and as an individual, made connections with business professionals, and formed relationships with my peers. I am so thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this program. I have loved every minute, and I have made memories that will last a lifetime."

MCOB faculty and staff shaped her career at South: "I would also like to thank all my management professors for showing up, answering questions, taking an interest in me, and being passionate about MCOB, their students, and the subject matter. Thank you for making my collegiate experience so great!"

Following graduation, Williams aspires to attend law school and pursue a career as a corporate lawyer.

A young woman with dark hair, smiling, is walking on a paved path outdoors. She is wearing a white long-sleeved button-down shirt with a small red polo player logo on the left chest, brown chinos, a brown leather belt, and white sneakers. The background is a blurred garden with green and yellow foliage. The text 'A DIFFERENT TYPE OF DRIVE' is overlaid on the left side of the image in large white letters.

A DIFFERENT TYPE OF DRIVE

BY JOSIE ALBIN



ACCOUNTING MAJOR ASHLEY WADE FINDS PURPOSE AND A SECOND FAMILY AT SOUTH.

Mitchell College of Business accounting major Ashley Wade is a first-generation college student, but she's not going to school just for herself.

"I have three beautiful little brothers," said Wade, a junior from Tuscaloosa, Alabama. "I want my brothers to know that they can do it, too. I want to set a good example for them. At the end of the day, I know what I have to do, and it's just up to me to execute."

Wade has found both purpose and a second family at South and continues to be fueled by her desire to be a role model. "I feel like I have a different type of drive than other students," she said "I want my brothers to come to South. I want them to come with purpose and drive like I did. I want them to excel like I have. I feel like some people come to college and forget the purpose of being there. We pay to be here — you might as well make the most of it."

Wade has excelled both inside and outside the classroom. Along with meeting the rigorous demands of her academic coursework and involvement, Wade is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success and Phi Beta Sigma. Her involvement in those organizations, she said, has helped her develop her interests and confidence. Wade also completed an internship with the Alabama Pipe Welders Academy. Throughout the experience, she helped company management complete budget analysis and planning as well as handling payroll duties.

This spring, Wade's dedication and hard work on a research

proposal with Dr. Al Chow, associate professor of marketing and quantitative methods, led to her acceptance into South Alabama's competitive Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program (SURF). This summer, Wade will complete 10 weeks of research under the mentorship of Chow. Her project, "A Comparison of Price Returns for Portfolios Based on Company Size and Value Before and During the First Year of the COVID-19 Pandemic," will explore the impact felt by the entire business community over the past year. "Our hypothesis is smaller companies were more severely impacted and less likely to have recovered from the pandemic in comparison to larger companies."

She said the helpful and engaging nature of the community within the Mitchell College of Business provided support after having moved far from her close-knit family. With the help of faculty members, including Ellen Madden, senior instructor of accounting, and Chow, Wade has thrived as she experiences first-hand the level of personal attention given to students at MCOB.

"To me, South means family," Wade said "I just really love how everyone is always so helpful. You know, sometimes you just need help and there is always someone here who can help — whether it's academics or I'm just dealing with something personal and I need to talk — everyone is so willing to help all the time. It's very warming and very welcoming."

Unwavering Excellence

BRIAN CUCCIAS

The President of Ingalls Shipbuilding, one of the largest private employers on the Gulf Coast, Brian Cuccias graduated from the University of South Alabama in 1979.

Cuccias, who studied accounting at South, started out as a financial analyst on Navy shipbuilding programs based in Pascagoula, Mississippi. He became a manager and executive who has led the construction of Coast Guard vessels, amphibious-assault ships and Kidd-class destroyers.

Under his leadership, Ingalls has been awarded ship contracts worth more than \$16 billion. It has invested more than \$3 million in facilities and equipment to train employees in Alabama and Mississippi.

The Governor of Mississippi, Phil Bryant, praised Cuccias as “a people-first leader fiercely loyal to his fellow shipbuilders and tirelessly supporting the communities in which those employees live, work and play. In doing so, Brian brings great honor and recognition to the State of Alabama and to his alma mater, the University of South Alabama.” In 2018, Cuccias was honored as one of the “Top CEOs in Mississippi” by The Mississippi Business Journal.

“The people of Ingalls are the reason for our success,” Cuccias told The Mississippi Business Journal. “I’m really fortunate to lead the finest workforce in the world that builds the best warships the world has ever known.”

Cuccias lives in Mobile with his wife, Helen, who graduated from South in 1982. She is a leader in the AGLOW ministry. He is a longtime supporter of the Salvation Army, Coastal Alabama and Camille’s Place (a shelter for young women).

WILLIAM “HAPPY” FULFORD

William “Happy” Fulford, the University of South Alabama’s longtime Executive Director of Governmental Relations, earned two degrees from South.

In 1972, the Mobile native graduated with a bachelor’s degree in marketing from the Mitchell College of Business. In 1993, he was awarded a master’s degree in educational leadership from the College of Education and Professional Studies. In 1981, he returned to South as Director of Alumni Affairs, then became Director of Development and Alumni Affairs and, finally, he was named Executive Director of Governmental Relations, a position he held until his retirement in 2019. That same year, the Alabama House and Senate passed a resolution recognizing Fulford as an exceptional administrator who served others and distinguished himself through his professional contributions. Fulford served in the Army Reserve for 30 years, commanding units at the company, battalion and group levels. He also served in the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm before retiring from the reserve in 2002 with the rank of colonel.

Fulford currently serves on the USS Alabama Battleship Commission and is a past-president of the USA National Alumni Association.

In 2019, Fulford spoke to more than 2,100 South graduates at the spring commencement ceremony. He challenged them to face challenges, embrace opportunities and protect their integrity.

“Integrity,” he said, “is the gateway to all other virtues, such as compassion, empathy and hard work.”

WILLIAM J. “BILL” HAYES, M.D.

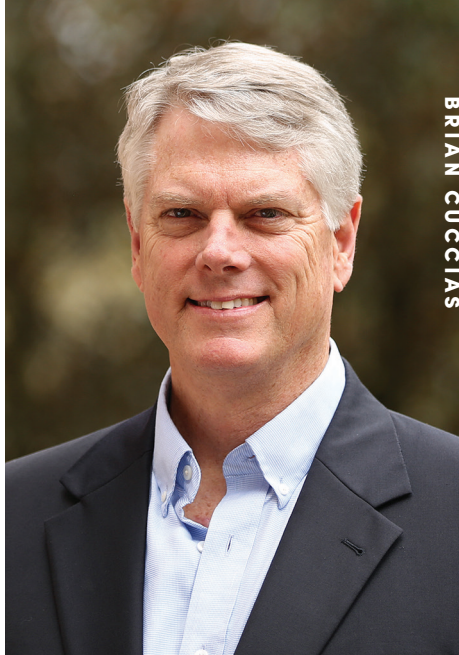
Dr. William J. “Bill” Hayes serves as Chief Medical Officer at CPSI, Inc., a leading provider of healthcare IT solutions and services. Prior to joining CPSI, he was Physician Executive with Cerner Corporation, served as Medical Director of Cardiovascular Diagnostic Services at the Internal Medical Center, and was in private clinical cardiology practice for many years.

An MBA alumnus of the Mitchell College, he earned his undergraduate degree, with honors, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his doctor of medicine at the Robert Johnson Medical School (Rutgers). He has been a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, the American Board of Cardiovascular Medicine and the American Board of Internal Medicine.

In his vision/mission to improve the quality and delivery of healthcare, he has used his experiences as an independent medical consultant, chief resident and fellow in areas such as: peer reviews, graduate medical education/state medical societies, university health curriculum committees, pharmaceutical R & D, scientific grants, and medical publications.

JANET HAYES

An Investment Counselor at Leavell Investment Management, Inc. (LIM), Hayes works closely with high-net-worth individuals to analyze needs, set objectives, develop investment strategies and manage their relationship with Leavell. She also serves as an advisor for company retirement plans, coordinating with plan sponsors and investment committees to provide education to their participants.



BRIAN CUCCIAS



HAPPY FULFORD

Community Bank Board of Directors and the University of South Alabama's Mitchell College of Business Executive Council. Hayes has served on the Board of Directors for the Junior League of Mobile, the American Heart Association, the Medical Alliance of Mobile County, the Development Committee of The Community Foundation of South Alabama and the Planned Giving Advisory Council for both Mercy Medical and Spring Hill College. Hayes is a graduate of Leadership Mobile.

Hayes enjoys playing golf and traveling internationally with her son, David, and her husband, Bill.

TOMMY ZOGHBY

Tommy Zoghby retired as CFO from Volkert Inc., where he was an integral part of the senior leadership during more than 30 years of company growth. Volkert is a \$150 million, 1,000-employee firm which ranks in the top one percent of all engineering firms in the United States and is headquartered in Mobile. He was involved in strategic planning, corporate acquisitions and mergers. During his tenure with Volkert, he had oversight responsibility for the financial, accounting, human resources, legal and IT functions.

Throughout his career, Zoghby served with numerous business, civic and charitable organizations such as the Mobile Chamber of Commerce, the Business Council of Alabama, American Red Cross, the Rotary Club, and Solid Waste Authority of Mobile. He currently serves on the Mobile Area Water and Sewer Board. He is a graduate of both Leadership Mobile and Leadership Alabama.

Maintaining involvement with the University, Zoghby currently serves on the Executive Advisory Council for the Mitchell College of Business. He has served as President of South's National Alumni Board of Directors and served on the Board of the University of South Alabama Foundation. Zoghby was a recipient of South's National Alumni Association's Distinguished Service award in 2013 and named one of the IMPACT award recipients for the Mitchell College of Business in 2017. Zoghby received both his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the Mitchell College of Business.

Zoghby and his wife, Kathy, spend time in Mobile, on the beaches of Florida and in the mountains of North Carolina. They most enjoy spending time with their three children and five granddaughters.



BILL HAYES



JANET HAYES

In addition, Hayes serves as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Marketing Officer for Leavell and is a shareholder and member of the firm's Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

Prior to joining LIM in 2004, Hayes served as Sr. Vice President and Regional Manager for Compass Bank's Private Client Services Group in Alabama and Florida. Janet served in a similar capacity with Bank of America in Nashville, Houston and Charlotte. She holds a B.S. in Business Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Hayes is the recent past President of the Ronald McDonald House and continues to serve on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors. She also serves on the national Charles Schwab Advisor Services Board, First



TOMMY ZOGHBY

SCHOLARSHIP AND AWARD RECOGNITIONS

EACH YEAR, THE MITCHELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS RECOGNIZES THE OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF ITS STUDENTS AT THE ANNUAL SCHOLARS' NIGHT BANQUET. EVEN THOUGH THIS EVENT WAS CANCELED, THE COLLEGE WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS OF ITS STUDENTS.



OUTSTANDING ACCOUNTING STUDENT

This award is given to a high performing student voted on by all Accounting faculty.

Jessica Fair

OUTSTANDING MANAGEMENT STUDENT

This award is given to a high performing student voted on by all Management faculty.

Andrea Prgomelja

OUTSTANDING MARKETING STUDENT

The Outstanding Marketing Student award recognizes a student with exemplary academic accomplishments who demonstrates consummate leadership talent. The individual is recognized by Marketing faculty and peers as someone who exemplifies the very best in marketing student talent.

Josie Albin

OUTSTANDING ECONOMICS STUDENT

The Outstanding Economics Student award goes to a senior who has demonstrated high academic achievement and who also has a passion for the subject evidenced by active participation in departmental activities such as student organizations.

Susan Mariel Chavez Buezo

OUTSTANDING FINANCE STUDENT

The Outstanding Finance Student award goes to a senior who has demonstrated high academic achievement and who also has a passion for the subject evidenced by active participation in departmental activities such as student organizations and/or the Jaguar Investment Fund.

Margaret Hails Burnette

OUTSTANDING REAL ESTATE STUDENT

The Outstanding Real Estate Student award goes to seniors who have demonstrated high academic achievement and who also have a passion for the subject evidenced by active participation in departmental activities such as student organizations.

Lajarvis M. Weed

Scholarships

The Mitchell College of Business understands the financial cost associated in obtaining an outstanding education, which is why the College places a priority on securing scholarship opportunities for business students. This year the College awarded over 98 scholarships to business students. The College is also home to the Mitchell Scholarship, one of the largest business scholarships offered in the state of Alabama. These scholarships are made possible through the support of our generous donors and friends of the College. The College would like to congratulate the 2021/2022 scholarship recipients.

Brian L. McGuire Endowed Scholarship in Accounting
Alyssa LaCoste

Putchka Family Outstanding Accounting Student Endowed Award
Savannah Stephens

Hardin-Eaves Endowed Accounting Scholarship
Maggie Short

Peggy and John Seibert Family Endowed Scholarship
Caleb Lambert
Qamya Richardson

Stimpson Brothers Leadership Scholarship in Business
James Muhammad
Melanie Watson

Chris and Elizabeth Melton Endowed Scholarship
William Bishop

Regions Bank Endowed Scholarship
Josie Albin
Ethan Flowers
Anna Henley
Tori McCurdy
Nupur Patel
Samuel Penque
Kevin Pham
Taylor Rogers

Christopher J. Weigel Finance Scholarship
Guadalupe Rios

Dr. Michelle L. Slagle Management Scholarship
Jensen Graddick

John R. Donovan Endowed Graduate Scholarship
Bangali Kone

Hollis and Carmel Shumock Endowed Scholarship in Business
Meagan Brenner

Mitchell Scholars Program for Transfer Students in the Mitchell College of Business
Caroline Schafer

Mitchell Scholars Program in the Mitchell College of Business
Macy Adams
Cambre Catherine Annulis
William Coleman
Kiera Earls
Garrett Epps
Stephanie Huynh
Bailey Jenkins
Jared Jones
Brice Knotts
Charbel Mawad
Cade Meyers
Ella Mims
Madeline Mitchell
Charlie Wine

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A Year that Won't Soon be Forgotten

BY THOMAS BECNEL

THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC FORCES
BUSINESSES TO
ADAPT, INNOVATE

The coronavirus pandemic silenced symphonies all across the country, but leaders of the Mobile Symphony Orchestra managed to salvage their 2020–21 season.

How?

They changed everything. Nothing was sacred.

Masks were required. Concerts were shortened and intermissions eliminated. Only 30 musicians were allowed on stage at one time, and only 400 audience members permitted in the 2,000-seat Saenger Theatre.

Grateful season ticket holders enjoyed programs such as “Festival for Strings,” “Beethoven in Blue Jeans” and “Bountiful Holiday.” In a time of crisis for classical music, the orchestra even managed to attract 500 new concertgoers.

“This is a year that won’t soon be forgotten,” said Celia Mann Baehr, president and CEO of the Mobile Symphony Orchestra. “At our first concert in October, people wept. We were overjoyed to continue bringing live music to the people of Mobile. It could have gone away — and it would have been very difficult to bring it back.”

Baehr, who earned a master’s degree

in business administration from the University of South Alabama in 1982, said the orchestra went through 10 different plans for that first concert.

“Being able to do scenario planning — we did that in graduate school — is important, especially when everything you’re doing has a giant question mark next to it,” she said. “We started with the idea that if there was any way to continue with live music, we should do it. That was the beginning. After that, we had to adjust continuously — and I mean continuously.”

In the Mitchell College of Business at South, professors teach the value of focusing on core markets and strategies. Students learn crisis management and how difficult times create opportunities for innovation.

It’s easier to focus when the alternative is going out of business.

“Entrepreneurs, typically, are very creative types who tend to be all over the map,” said Dr. Don Mosley, director of the Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. “They’re always coming up with great ideas and a lot of them are trying to pursue multiple paths. Well, in an extreme crisis like COVID, like the

pandemic, it forces you to narrow your scope. And I don’t necessarily think that’s a bad thing. You prioritize: What do I need to do to survive?”

Retailers that made early investments in technology have moved more easily into Internet business during the last few years. Expensive mistakes turned into valuable lessons and teachable moments.

“A few years ago, Target was one of the companies that my Principles of Management class analyzed for a semester,” Mosley said. “That was the semester they did a huge rollout of their e-commerce platform, and the site crashed and they had all these problems. It was a black eye for the company, but it may have been a blessing in disguise, because they were able to move forward in a better way.”

At the same time, there is a national trend toward customers making a greater effort to support local businesses. In a crisis, this can make a difference. During the early days of the pandemic, some customers bought gift certificates from neighborhood shops to help them make it through a trying time.



CELIA MANN BAEHR,
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF
THE MOBILE SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA, SAID
THE PANDEMIC MEANT
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OUR FIRST CONCERT IN
OCTOBER, PEOPLE WEPT,"
SHE SAID.



Photo: Walcott Adams Verneville Architecture | Interiors



REGULAR CUSTOMERS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Kenny Dumas, who earned a marketing degree at South, owns and runs Pour Baby, a gourmet food and wine bar in West Mobile. Small Business Administration loans have helped the business survive. So has a core group of devoted buyers and diners.

For Dumas, the lessons of the pandemic are less about innovation and more about loyalty.

"We struggled – we're still struggling – but our regular customers really came through for us," he said. "That's the silver lining for us in all of this. We kept the doors open, somehow, and our customers have supported us."

While restaurants across the U.S. lost customers, particularly early in the pandemic, Lorenzo Ferguson said his Fitkits Food Truck business found ways to grow. He added a second truck and opened a new revenue stream.

"When it first started, business was good, business was very good," said Ferguson, who graduated from South in 2015 with a degree in physical education. He began his business, focused on healthy to-go options, in Mobile before shifting to his hometown of Jacksonville, Florida.

"WHEN THINGS GOT SLOW, WE SAW AN OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD OUT FOOD TRUCKS FOR OTHERS. IT OPENED ANOTHER BUSINESS FOR US. WE TURNED NOTHING INTO SOMETHING." —LORENZO FERGUSON

"The market was wide open for us when the stay-at-home order came out. We were able to go into neighborhoods and serve a lot of families. When things got slow, we saw an opportunity to build out food trucks for others. It opened another business for us. We turned nothing into something."

With people looking for work and interested in the burgeoning mobile catering industry, Ferguson launched Fitkits Build Outs.

"It was more like, 'What's next for us?'" Ferguson said. "'We've got to keep this going. What else can we do?' We actually expanded our brand during COVID. Most people were going in the opposite direction, but we moved forward."

PLAYFUL PUPS AND A FAT GOOSE EGG

Bailey Duos, who graduated from South's entrepreneurship program last year, couldn't wait to start a doggie day care business in downtown Mobile. Port City Pups opened just a few months before the pandemic.

"It was scary – very scary," she said. "We were just reeling. You know, 'What can we do? How can we react? How can we still be there for our clients?' Boarding went way down, because no one was traveling, so that was a fat goose egg. The core of our business is day care, which took a dip right at the beginning. Then it was like a whole other surge of people."

Business is much better now and the future looks bright for Port City Pups. Duos is just 23 years old, but she had impressed advisors and investors with a 28-page business plan. There was nothing in those pages, though, about surviving a coronavirus pandemic. COVID-19 taught her that not all problems are so easily anticipated. "I definitely matured really fast," she said. "I'm a little more careful now."

VIRTUOSOS AND VARIATIONS

At the Mobile Symphony Orchestra, Baehr always looks for the bright side of problems faced by the arts group. Often, they're not hard to find.

Trouble finding guest performers, for example, meant that members of the symphony have had to take lead roles and offer solo performances.

"It gave us an opportunity to spotlight our own talented musicians," Baehr said. "A lot of people appreciated that." The orchestra youth program did everything it could do to continue lessons and recitals. That meant something to the families of children in the program.

"A more grateful group of parents I've never seen," Baehr said.

The orchestra remains a small organization with just 10 full-time employees and an annual budget of \$1.7 million. Support comes from ticket sales, grants and donations. The coronavirus pandemic forced some long-overdue changes.

The organization had saved money in the past by not going to a computerized scanning system for tickets. The need for contact-less operations made

that investment less of a luxury than a necessity.

Goodwill has not been a problem in the classical music community. Some season ticket-holders refused to be reimbursed for concerts they were unable to attend. They told the orchestra to consider that money a donation.

THE ORGANIZATION HAD SAVED MONEY IN THE PAST BY NOT GOING TO A COMPUTERIZED SCANNING SYSTEM FOR TICKETS. THE NEED FOR CONTACT-LESS OPERATIONS MADE THAT INVESTMENT LESS OF A LUXURY THAN A NECESSITY.

Supporters are already looking forward to a 2021-22 season with fewer restrictions and more concertgoers. Yet that is no sure thing. Several plans and many scenarios have to be considered.

"There are still going to be guest artists who might not be comfortable performing," Baehr said. "There are still going to be musicians who might want to wait for everyone to be vaccinated. There are still a lot of question marks."



1 MILLION REASONS TO BE BULLISH

BY THOMAS BECNEL

STUDENTS DOUBLE STAKE IN JAGUAR INVESTMENT FUND, SECURE ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

The Jaguar Investment Fund meets in the John B. Saint Financial Analysis Center, where students perched at Bloomberg Terminals face a wall of video screens with streaming stock quotes and breaking financial news.

This is where Wall Street meets the Mitchell College of Business at the University of South Alabama. Each Wednesday afternoon, the nine students who run the fund vote on pitches to buy and sell certain stocks.

The best part?

These students are investing real money for the Jaguar Investment Fund. They are making decisions worth thousands of dollars. Success is measured with each trade.

The very best part?

These students are making real money for the Jaguar Investment Fund. In 2020, they outperformed the S&P 500 stock market index by 9 percent. The fund is now worth more than \$1 million.

Hails Burnette, a finance senior from Chattanooga, Tennessee, is a risk analyst and operations manager for the student fund. Last semester, she and another student pitched a telecommunications company called Nextstar. The hundred shares of stock that the fund bought at \$86 are now trading for more than \$140. She enjoys following a satisfying investment.

"I have this little widget on my phone that I swipe every day," Burnette said. "It's like, 'Oh, look at that — we're still doing well with that stock!'"

The success of the Jaguar Investment Fund recently prompted the University to invest \$750,000 in a second student-run fund. It, too, will focus on long-term investments. Profits will go to scholarships.

Instead of pitching their classmates, students had to convince University leadership that their program was a sound investment. They made a formal proposal, and then waited.

"It was kind of nerve-wracking," said Christina Miles, a finance senior from Satsuma. "I've never asked people for a million-dollar investment before."

STUDENT-DRIVEN INVESTMENTS

Many of the top universities in the country have student investment funds. The South program began in 2015 with a \$250,000 donation. Three years later, there was another \$250,000 investment in the Jaguar Investment Fund.

Since then, it has grown in value. Buying stock in companies such as Amazon and PayPal has paid off. A diverse portfolio includes everything from manufacturing and agriculture to

media and entertainment.

Dr. Chris Lawrey, an assistant professor of economics and finance, became the adviser for the Jaguar Investment Fund last year. Students are excited about starting a second fund. Reinvestment is a vote of confidence for the program.

"This is a unique experience," Lawrey said. "We have some of our best students in here. This is totally driven by them. I sit back in the corner and let them do what they do."

His predecessor vetoed one trade in five years. He hasn't been tempted so far.

In the past, students would draw money from a mutual fund account for their stock purchases. Now that fund has been exhausted. This means students have to sell underperforming stocks to raise money for new purchases.

"It's getting more complex to manage," Lawrey said. "And, with the economy, it's getting harder to find stocks that are undervalued."

Students who apply for the Jaguar Investment Fund must maintain a 3.5 grade-point average, complete a senior-level investment class and become certified in use of the Bloomberg software system. The Wednesday classes count as an internship in the Mitchell College of Business.

Those accepted for the program are

expected to do research, write proposals and stand before the class when pitching a stock.

The rest of the class members sit in judgment at their computer stations in a classroom that replicates the trading floor at a brokerage house. An extraordinary amount of financial information is at their fingertips. Even if they like a proposal, students make a point to question stats, challenge arguments and force their classmates to justify their positions.

"It's a little stressful," Miles said. "You really have to know what you're talking about. If you don't, they're going to destroy you."

BUYING, SELLING, VOTING

On a recent Wednesday afternoon, the Jaguar Investment Fund considered several items.

John MacLatchie, a finance junior who grew up near Sacramento, California, led a few classmates in one proposal. They wanted to buy about \$10,000 worth of stock in KB Home, a real estate company.

"I'm pitching this in a little different light," he told the class. "I want you guys to look at this as more of a value-based stock. This is a good hedge against some of these high-risk growth stocks that we've had."

The class responded with a rapid-fire series of pointed questions:

What about inflation? What about interest rates? What about the housing market?

"THIS IS A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE. WE HAVE SOME OF OUR BEST STUDENTS IN HERE. THIS IS TOTALLY DRIVEN BY THEM. I SIT BACK IN THE CORNER AND LET THEM DO WHAT THEY DO." —DR. CHRIS LAWREY

How has KB Home done during the coronavirus pandemic? What about lumber prices? Why should they expect growth from an older, established company?

Why are its earnings per share lower than some competitors? Isn't this stock already listed near its 52-week high? What makes you think this is the right time to buy this stock?

MacLatchie scrambled to defend his pitch. He admitted when he didn't know the answer to some questions. He conceded that others raise legitimate concerns.

"I'll be the first to admit that with real estate, it's not going to be too glamorous," he said, "but I think this company will keep doing what works for them."

The students finally voted 7-2 to buy \$5,500 worth of KB Home stock. To pay for the trade, they discussed selling shares of Alibaba, the Chinese e-commerce giant, which hasn't done well for the fund.

Lawrey stepped in to suggest holding on to Alibaba and selling stock in American Tower, a communications company. The students discussed selling their stake in Verizon, the telecommunications company which has been underperforming for years.

The class noted that, since 2016, the Verizon stock has gone up — by a grand total of \$1.34. Students laughed and gave this number a round of sarcastic applause, but one wouldn't let the debate end there.

"I'll play devil's advocate," MacLatchie said, "just for the sake of it." After a brief debate, the students voted 9-0 to unload \$11,000 worth of Verizon. Soon, Lawrey told the class, they'll be investing \$750,000 from the University. These are exciting times for the Jaguar Investment Fund. The stakes keep going up.

"This is what we're going to be doing in the second half of the semester," Lawrey said. "We may have that money by the next time we meet."





Building Bridges and Breaking Boundaries

**2021 GRADUATE BRENDA LANDA-SILVA
HAS HAD A NOTEWORTHY COLLEGIATE
CAREER.**

Born in Mexico and raised in Mobile, Brenda Landa-Silva applied her love of different cultures, people and business to an impressive four years at the University of South Alabama. "I decided to study international business because I love how every country is different, how everyone is different, but yet we're all still so alike. I love how we can all come together in that."

Throughout Landa-Silva's childhood, she traveled back to Mexico to visit their family. "We would pass through cities when I was young," she said, "and I would point to the tops of skyscrapers and tell my family that I was going to work there one day." That dream developed further as she went through high school at Mary G. Montgomery, where she began to look into South's Mitchell College of Business as an option for continuing her education. After receiving the Presidential Scholarship, she decided to remain in Mobile for college as a commuter student, just 15 minutes from home.

At South, Landa-Silva worked to involve herself in organizations that combined her passion for people and unique aptitudes. As a volunteer with Passage USA, a program designed to assist students with disabilities through their college endeavors, she learned to communicate in an entirely new way. "I was matched with a student who was largely non-verbal," she said. "At first, I wondered, 'Goodness, how am I going to do this?'. I slowly learned

how to communicate with her; you have to make her laugh and she will answer. I learned so much from her." While also involved in CEO as the VP of Marketing and working as a server throughout her college career, Landa-Silva further expanded her ability to embrace and interact in diverse environments.

As a junior, she began to take advantage of experiential learning opportunities through the Mitchell College internship program. Austal, USA, is a leading corporate partner in the program and provides many students with internships every semester. Landa-Silva chose to pursue an opportunity in supply-chain management with the shipbuilding company and joined a team shortly after a successful interview process. The experience bridged the gap between the classroom and workplace. "When she was out for two weeks, my team leader gave me projects and trusted me with nearly all of her work. I've been given a lot of responsibility. My statistics and supply-chain management classes helped with those projects. I also learned to ask a lot of questions."

Since the completion of her internship with Austal, USA, Brenda has received a degree in international business and accepted a management internship with APM Terminals. She is studying for the LSAT and has plans of attending law school in the future. Following her schooling, Landa-Silva hopes to travel the world in her career.

BUSINESS ANALYTICS:

Getting Ahead of the Supergiant

BY ERMANNO AFFUSO

Geoffrey Moore stated that “...without big data analytics, companies are blind and deaf, wandering out onto the Web like deer on a freeway.” With the rise of the internet and wireless communication and the use of search engines, social media, online trading, cryptocurrencies, and internet streaming, our life and the way we do business have changed dramatically. Today, experts estimate almost 90 percent of the U.S. economy is digital. Every day the global economy produces 2.5 quintillion digital bytes per person. To give you an idea of how much digital data is available globally, think of an amount 57 times the number of grains of sand on all the beaches of the world. And, as one expert noted, there is no doubt that digital data is in the 21st century what petroleum was in the 20th century. In short, digital data is the energy that fuels organizations – businesses, government, NGOs and more. A major limitation of digital data, however, is that a massive amount of digital information is complex and difficult to analyze. This large amount of data, often referred to as Big Data, is a field of study that deals with extracting and analyzing valuable information from large, complex datasets. Among other tools, big data analytics often use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to support the tasks that data analysts face daily in extracting relevant information from large datasets.

Like industry, business analytics in academics is a fast-growing field.

According to the AACSB’s database of programs, more than 220 business schools worldwide offer over 400+ business analytics curricula. Unfortunately, few graduate programs are training educators to teach the core courses of Business Analytics. In short, a market disequilibrium exists between the rapid growth in demand for business analytics credentials and the supply of qualified instructors. With this in mind, the Mitchell College of Business professors decided to fill this vacuum by designing a rigorous Doctoral Program in Business Analytics that will train future educators in the field. This recently implemented Ph.D. program has a STEM-designated curriculum that also aims to train individuals interested in joining industry research and development divisions. The new Ph.D. program is aligned with the South Alabama Center for Business Analytics, Real Estate and Economic Development (SABRE).

One of the first major projects of the SABRE Center is creating a local big-data cluster supported by a synergic team of doctoral students in Business Analytics, as well as other University of South Alabama faculty experts in statistics and data science. The USA data cluster, under the auspices of the SABRE Center, will serve as a laboratory to engage our Ph.D. students in incubating innovative research ideas and producing thematic information to assist the decision-making process of business leaders and public officers in the state as well as nationally.





CUTTING-EDGE RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS BY LANCE CRAWFORD

Keeping pace with its expanding function, the Center for Real Estate and Economic Development at the University of South Alabama is evolving and with that evolution comes a name change. The department within the Mitchell College of Business has been rebranded the South Alabama Center for Business Analytics, Real Estate, and Economic Development, or SABRE.

Using its academic and technical resources, SABRE actively seeks to build strategic public and private partnerships to promote the growth and development of the coastal region by providing cutting-edge resources for businesses and institutions.

"We use multiple, industry-standard proprietary database and analytic platforms to deliver results that rely on the latest available information," said Dr. Reid Cummings, director of SABRE. "We also have access to more than 50 highly educated, well-trained faculty members whose expertise offers an unparalleled level of research and analytics capabilities."

"WE USE MULTIPLE INDUSTRY-STANDARD PROPRIETARY DATABASE AND ANALYTIC PLATFORMS TO DELIVER RESULTS THAT RELY ON THE LATEST AVAILABLE INFORMATION." —DR. REID CUMMINGS

Founded in 2006, the Center for Real Estate Studies produced real estate market transaction reports and supported the University's new real estate major. After the 2010 BP oil spill, the Center completed a series of economic impact analyses of large-scale projects planned in response to the disaster which

led to its first functional expansion and name change.

Over the last couple of years, the Center has expanded its work by presenting analyses of a wider range of issues by using "big data" that are so large traditional data processing software can't manage them. However, these massive volumes of data can be used to address business problems in a way not previously possible. SABRE Assistant Director, Jana Stupavsky and her team then simplify the data for clients by producing easy-to-read, interactive dashboards.

"AN INTERACTIVE DASHBOARD PROVIDES MAJOR BENEFITS FOR OUR CLIENTS. COMPARED TO A SPREADSHEET, IT PRESENTS DATA IN A MUCH MORE INTUITIVE, AND EASY-TO-DIGEST FORMAT." —JANA STUPAVSKY

"An interactive dashboard provides major benefits for our clients," Stupavsky said. "Compared to a spreadsheet, it presents data in a much more intuitive, and easy-to-digest format. It also enables the user to instantly customize scenarios. Because updates are automated, they save decision-makers and companies time."

Most recently, SABRE's efforts zeroed in on some of the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on residential and commercial real estate markets, airport activity, intermodal movements of people and freight, mortgage lending, economic development and COVID-related intensive care hospitalizations.

"While not abandoning our critically important real estate roots, over the last couple of years we have expanded our

work by presenting analyses of a wider range of issues," Cummings said.

SABRE also offers corporate partners training in Tableau, the data visualization software it uses. Data visualization classes are also available to students allowing them to gain these fundamental skills before leaving South.

The Mitchell College of Business is also expanding academically. Last year, Dr. Joe Hair, distinguished professor of marketing and director of the PhD in business administration program, successfully petitioned the Alabama Commission for Higher Education for the addition of business analytics to the University's current management and marketing doctoral tracks.

The PhD program and SABRE will work together to apply an analytical approach to completing projects relevant to understanding Alabama and national economic challenges.

"This partnership will leverage the increasing application of business analytics to create knowledge that improves business decisions and supports economic development," Hair said.

"THIS PARTNERSHIP WILL LEVERAGE THE INCREASING APPLICATION OF BUSINESS ANALYTICS TO CREATE KNOWLEDGE THAT IMPROVES BUSINESS DECISIONS AND SUPPORTS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT." —DR. JOE HAIR

The new business analytics PhD program's first cohort began May 2021.



HOW THE MELTON CENTER AIDED
TROY EPHRAIM'S SUCCESS

Minority Business Success

BY ZANE PATTERSON

Troy Ephriam knows his business, but he didn't know business development. "I knew I had the desire to build a company," he said, "but hadn't had the opportunity."

That opportunity came when he finished a four-year term as mayor of Prichard, a town north of Mobile. He took his part-time company, Ephriam and Associates Environmental Consulting LLC, full-time, and he also enrolled in the University of South Alabama's Minority Business Accelerator, an initiative that includes the Mitchell College of Business's Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

"The value of the program helped me realize it's not enough to say, 'I just want to do this and make money,'" said Ephriam. Instead, the program coaches business fundamentals and helps participants recognize next steps – "If you really want to know how to grow yourself into something productive, 'This is how you do it.'"

Since its inception in 2017, the nine-week Minority Business Accelerator has enrolled 15 participants. The entrepreneurial training series culminates in a pitch competition in which the winner receives a \$10,000 stipend to seed the growth of his or her business.

Ephriam was the pitch winner in his cohort and used the money for insurance needs which "allowed us to gain our first federal contract." Since then, Ephriam's business has expanded to a more permanent location with new hires.

"The Minority Business Accelerator program helped me to enhance my business plan by being able to identify the problems of my clients and strategize a means of adding value through solving their problems," he said. "I think this program supports minority businesses best by showing them how to become innovators, which is a real game-changer."

The Minority Business Accelerator is a joint effort between the Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Mitchell College of Business, USA Office of Research and Economic Development, USA Small Business Development Center, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, Innovation Portal and City of Mobile. It is sponsored by PNC Bank.

The program runs annually from August through October. For more information, visit the Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

PEACE LEADERSHIP

BY CHRISTINA WASSENAAR

Can leadership and, more specifically, responsible leadership result in more peace? The answer is maybe—sometimes. This can be a frustrating statement. Yes, of course we want to be able to point to something concrete and say, if we do this, that and the other thing, we will have more peace in our lives, communities and society. But, even with people from many important disciplines (e.g., political science, theology, sociology and economics) examining peace creation, we still have not cracked the ‘code’ to peace. Rarely do you hear these topics talked about in a business school; why would we? We are in the business of teaching people to be efficient with their resources and to manage people and processes effectively, and if we include in these discussions the topic of ethics, then all the better. Our business school does all of these things and does them quite well.

However, in the past few years, I’ve been concerned by the intensifying personal, social and political upheaval that has become more and more the norm rather than the exception. When I facilitate leadership discussions with my students, invariably they ask: What is the role of a leader in handling conflict? How do you motivate people for good? How can they create environments in their current or future organizations that allow the company to reach its goals and also do the right things?

And then it clicked—It’s the students who are asking the right questions and who are seeing the open space of possibility for a different way of

approaching the role and responsibility of organizations, as well as their leaders in society. So, let’s look at a few concepts and questions and then, perhaps, some of you might also be interested in contributing to this discussion and research with some of your own experiences and thoughts.

First, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is already a generally accepted, if not loved, aspect of organizational expectations in many regions of the world. Yet this question of peace and organizations goes further than the traditional expectations for organizational CSR, which essentially gets translated as: “Think about stakeholders and not just shareholders in some form or fashion and you are ‘good.’”

Second, rarely do we focus the discussion related to peace on organizational leaders—which is odd given that we also call for our leaders to be responsible and accountable for their actions and decisions.

So here is where this “Ask the Expert” is a little different this spring. I, as the expert who is leveraging her expertise into a new direction, am going to ask for your thoughts about leaders and organizations and their roles in creating environments that support peace. This is a new space in organizational research. Our school, university and community are uniquely positioned to be part of the conversation given our past, our evolving present and the future that we will still choose to create. Thus, I would ask that, if you have any ideas, thoughts or comments, you reach out to me. Thank you.



EMAIL ME:

cwassenaar@SouthAlabama.edu

“PEACE DOES NOT MEAN AN ABSENCE OF CONFLICTS; DIFFERENCES WILL ALWAYS BE THERE. PEACE MEANS SOLVING THESE DIFFERENCES THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS; THROUGH DIALOGUE, EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE; AND THROUGH HUMANE WAYS.” —DALAI LAMA XIV

“PEOPLE WILL FORGET WHAT YOU SAID, THEY WILL FORGET WHAT YOU DID, BUT THEY WILL NEVER FORGET HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.”

—MAYA ANGELOU

SWINGING THROUGH ADVERSITY

BY VICTORIA POWER

GRADUATING MBA STUDENT ATHLETES TAKE ADVANTAGE OF AN ADDITIONAL YEAR OF ELIGIBILITY ON THE FIELD AND IN THE CLASSROOM

Late nights, jam-packed schedules and bus-ride study sessions are not unfamiliar to student athletes. Whether it's reviewing stock options for finance or designing websites for marketing classes, Mitchell College of Business student athletes know how to get it done. After spending three years managing a full-time academic load and playing collegiate sports (whether it be baseball, softball, or tennis), Andy Arguelles, Abby Krzywiecki, Julien Evrad and Noah Michael decided to continue their educational journey at South after receiving an additional year of eligibility due to COVID-19.

Losing their senior seasons to a global pandemic was tough. In March, though, the NCAA Division I council voted to allow spring sport athletes an additional year of eligibility. Such a decision meant there was a possibility for these athletes to regain their "senior" season in an unconventional way.

Athletic Director Joel Erdmann confirmed that the University of South Alabama would be able to fund an additional year of scholarships for the eligible athletes, but it was ultimately up to the program's head coach to decide if these athletes would receive another year of scholarship. In accordance with the NCAA's eligibility requirements, Arguelles, Krzywiecki, Evrad and Michael were among those granted another year.

Evrad says, "When I found out that I was granted an extra year of eligibility by the NCAA, I right away thought that it was a perfect opportunity to get an MBA. For me, it was a way to expand on what I have learned as an undergrad and also set me apart from the competition when I start looking for a job." The Mitchell College of Business Master's of Business Administration was the perfect fit for these student-athletes and has prepared them for the next steps in their lives.



ANDY ARGUELLES

Hometown: Miami, Florida

Undergraduate major: Finance, University of South Alabama

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION?

My plans are to go back home after I graduate and, hopefully, pursue a career in corporate finance. Due to baseball and COVID, I have not been able to do summer internships. For now, I think corporate finance will be where I start. Personally, I'd like to start traveling to all of the cool places I want to see around the world.

HOW HAS BEING A STUDENT-ATHLETE IMPACTED YOUR MBA JOURNEY?

Being a student-athlete has impacted my life greatly. Baseball has given me so much throughout my life. I've made a ton of friends, made some pretty cool memories, and been able to help my parents with the financial burden of school. As a finance graduate, I recognize the importance of being a student-athlete while studying. It has allowed me to finish my schooling life without taking out any loans, which is something for which I am grateful. I will start my adult life debt-free and with a world of possibilities. That's all thanks to my life as a student-athlete.



ABBY KRZYWIECKI

NOAH MICHAEL

Hometown: Grand Bay, Alabama

Undergraduate major: Healthcare Management, University of South Alabama

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE AN MBA?

I decided to pursue an MBA because I knew it would help me prepare for the field that I want to go into after graduation. Also, I knew that South had a great business school, so I wanted to finish my degree here while I finished my last year of baseball.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION?

I plan on becoming a healthcare administrator and, hopefully, a top officer for a hospital system in the future.

HOW HAS BEING A STUDENT-ATHLETE IMPACTED YOUR MBA JOURNEY?

Our baseball schedule has been crazy, so I have had to learn time-management and communication skills. My fellow classmates, group members and professors have helped me immensely throughout my MBA journey. This has taught me how important it is to work as a team with my peers in order to achieve success.



JULIEN EVRARD

which I developed in my prior four years. I have met outstanding people both in softball and through the MBA program whom I hope to have in my life forever. The opportunity to play another year due to COVID-19 was such a blessing and I am so lucky to study at MCOB.

JULIEN EVRARD

Hometown: Lille, France

Undergraduate major: Finance, University of Nevada, Reno

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE AN MBA?

When I found out that I was granted an extra year of eligibility by the NCAA, I right away thought that it was a perfect opportunity to get an MBA, expand on what I learned as an undergrad and help me stand out from the competition when I start looking for a job.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION?

After graduating from South, I am planning on moving to Las Vegas and playing tennis professionally.

HOW HAS BEING A STUDENT-ATHLETE IMPACTED YOUR MBA JOURNEY?

Time-management has had the biggest impact on me as an athlete and an MBA student. As a student-athlete, you quickly realize that you have to be extremely organized if you want to be able to perform in your sport, succeed academically and have a social life. These four years of undergrad work definitely prepared me for my MBA journey, as it allowed me to develop good time-management and a sense of priorities (that I surely didn't have a few years ago). It has given me the desire to be professional, no matter the situation, and to perform the best that I can.

ABBY KRZYWIECKI

Hometown: Brighton, Michigan

Undergraduate major: Marketing, University of South Alabama

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION?

At the moment, I do not have any plans except to pursue a career for a big company. I am extremely creative and am passionate about the entertainment industry, so I will be searching for jobs to that extent. Also, I hope to end up in a big city because I love staying busy and exploring!

HOW HAS BEING A STUDENT-ATHLETE IMPACTED YOUR MBA JOURNEY?

Being a student-athlete has shaped me into the person that I am today. From time-management skills, team-building and leading, I have grown so much since my freshman year. As an athlete, the schedule is incredibly demanding and that has made me realize how important a routine is for daily life, which mimics the business world. My MBA journey is heavily influenced by my self-efficacy,

Adaptation and Innovation

BY CASSIDY GEESLIN

MCOB STUDENTS
MATTHEW AND KELSEY
ADAPT TO UNFORSEEN
CIRCUMSTANCES.



The Mitchell College of Business actively supports experiential learning through its internship program initiative. This program is made possible through partnerships between the College and businesses in the Gulf Coast region and enables students to receive professional experience in their fields of study prior to graduation. While working, students refine skill sets, earn college credit, and create connections to a vast network of successful professionals. To be eligible, students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 and be a junior or senior. Following the internship period, many students have received full-time employment offers at partnering firms such as Airbus, Austal, Ingalls, USA, ST Aerospace, and Wilkins-Miller.

The internship program was not immune to the changes and challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. "Many businesses shut down during COVID-19 and internships were canceled," said Internship Coordinator Megan Bennett. "Students had to come up with creative ways to get their internship requirements completed."

Students Kelsey Clark and Matthew Morris were two of the students who took innovative approaches to finding opportunities and adapting throughout their internships.

When Kelsey Clark's internship offer was rescinded due to COVID-19 restrictions, she proactively sought out Boy Scouts of America and the Mitchell Cancer Institute through South Serves, a University-community engagement and service initiative. After accepting offers with both organizations, Clark gained hands-on marketing experience by assisting with social media, design and marketing.

"The most challenging part was probably balancing the two organizations because I had to make sure I balanced the hours," she said. "Every day, I was either online trying to market, in a meeting with Boy Scouts or on my computer trying to find websites to help me design things. I had never

designed something on this level."

Clark assisted in the design of the 13th Annual Go Run T-shirt for MCI. Despite the non-traditional situation, Clark was grateful for both internships. "Cancer runs in my family," she said. "I lost my dad to cancer, so being able to give back to people and participate in an organization fighting cancer was the most rewarding experience."

Following graduation in May, Clark accepted a position as a recruiter at Insight Global in Birmingham, Alabama.

Matthew Morris had lined up his dream internship working in the music industry in Nashville, Tennessee. When COVID-19 forced businesses to shut down, his program was canceled. At the same time, his dad was laid off from his job at a charging station and advertising start-up. "We were all just kind of in this position 'What do we do now?' It just didn't seem like anything was going right," Morris said.

His dad decided to leverage their existing knowledge about the industry and launched their own charging station and advertising business. "It was a really interesting experience," he said. "I never thought of myself as a salesman, but it's a lot more than trying to sell the product. It's also about trying to sell how I believe in the product."

Morris was also tasked with conducting the market research needed to identify potentials for business growth. Following graduation, Morris is pursuing a career as a life and health insurance agent at Alliance Insurance Group, while his dad continues to grow their fledgling business by expanding into Georgia, Arkansas, Louisiana and Kentucky.

Businesses and organizations interested in partnering with the Mitchell College of Business to work with college talent can contact Megan Bennett at mebennett@southalabama.edu or (251) 460-7194.



**BRENDA
LANDA-SALVIA**



**CAROLINE
LONG**



**ETHAN
FLOWERS**



**CHRISTOPHER
RIDER**



**MAGGIE
OVERSTREET**



**ALYSSA
LACOSTE**



**KAITLYN
MAPLES**



**SAVANNAH
STEPHENS**

BEYOND THE BOOKS

“ALL HANDS ON DECK” IS THE UNOFFICIAL
MOTTO OF THE OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES.

The Mitchell College of Business takes pride in providing students with the resources needed to succeed. One of those resources is the college’s Office of Student Services. The Office of Student Services approaches academic advising as a collaborative process that empowers students to develop educational plans consistent with their values, interests and goals, and through which they become committed to their own success.

The vision of the Office of Student Services is to create an environment that fosters shared responsibility between the student and the advising center and faculty advisors.

“I strongly believe that the function of the office serves as a vehicle for promoting the students’ sense of responsibility, retention and personal and professional development, said Director David Potter, “and it plays a key role in issues that may arise from the students’ transition to their new academic environment for both incoming freshmen and transfer students.”

The team consists of Potter, Academic

Records Specialist Robin Hayes and several student assistants. Student assistants serve as peer advisors and assist in various day-to-day functions in the office.

“My favorite part of working in student services is when I get the opportunity to help someone who (like I once was) is confused or overwhelmed by all of the changes that entering college brings,” said student advisor Maggie Overstreet. “It’s very rewarding knowing that I may have eased their concerns and made their new journey more enjoyable.”

The student assistants play a vital role guiding and assisting other MCOB students. “While their office title is student assistant, they are trained to actually serve as peer advisors,” said Potter.

Potter said, “The most rewarding part of my job is very simple; I thrive on being able to personally watch a student’s growth both academically and personally. I can convey to students my sincerity in being actively engaged in the advising process. Most advising sessions have some element of life-skills development. I have the same passion for advising students due to

the knowledge that I am making a difference in their lives.”

In his 35 years of advising, Potter has seen many success stories. “It is important to provide positive reinforcement for even the smallest events, such as doing well on an assignment or exam as well as making sound personal decisions. I have seen long-term success after a student is in a meaningful and relevant internship and goes on to secure a permanent position.”

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the office remained fully operational and committed to MCOB students. “Our office remained open every day and, while I could not meet with students in-person, advising remained viable via emails, phone calls and Zoom,” said Potter.

The Office of Student Services is located on the first floor of the Mitchell College of Business and is open M-F from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Alternate appointment times can be arranged as needed to work around students’ schedules.

Step Up, Stand Out

GETTING TO KNOW

MCOB STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

ACCOUNTING CLUB

The Accounting Club gives students exposure to a myriad of career opportunities within the accounting profession. Accounting Club members not only gain experience in their field but also build professional networking contacts to aid in their future careers.

"The Accounting Club is one of the most beneficial clubs to be a part of (if someone is an accounting major). It allows students to listen to intriguing speakers in different fields of accounting and talk with professionals about how they got into that position or field. The Accounting Club also helps members find internship opportunities, enhance their résumé skills and interact and network with members of local firms."

— Sara Brewer, Club President

BETA ALPHA PSI

Starting in 1977, USA's Beta Alpha Psi chapter, Epsilon Beta, was formed to help accounting students network and recognize outstanding academic achievement in the accounting major. Beta Alpha Psi provides an environment where members can develop long-lasting connections and build their character through professional meetings, out-reach and volunteer activities.

"When I joined Beta Alpha Psi, it immediately had an impact on my passion for accounting. I was able to connect with and meet so many wonderful professionals through our meetings! I have learned so much from Beta Alpha Psi, like so many other members have. This knowledge will help me greatly in my future. I believe this honor society has helped to lay a foundation for my future just like it has done for past, current and future members."

— Katelyn Cowie, Club President

BETA GAMMA SIGMA

Beta Gamma Sigma is an International Business Honor Society. Since 1913, BGS has recognized and honored the top 10 percent of undergraduate students, top 20 percent of graduate students and all doctoral candidates from AACSB-accredited business schools worldwide. With 875,000 members, 31 alumni chapters and more than 600 chapters, BGS strives to provide life-long programs, connections and opportunities to members.

"Beta Gamma Sigma is more than an honor society. It provides the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with like-minded individuals and also provides exclusive resources for students. Whether it be future employers or graduate schools, being a member of BGS will differentiate you from others."

— Victoria Power, BGS Graduate

THE ECONOMICS SOCIETY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

The Economics Society of South Alabama hosts guest speakers and other various events. It is open to all majors; however, economics majors and minors are highly encouraged to join. The club provides students an opportunity to build a professional network, find out more about how economic training is applied in the real world, and get feedback on job interviews and graduate-school applications from their peer groups and faculty mentors.

"The Economics Society of South Alabama has truly been a wonderful opportunity. It has allowed me to grow as a leader in ways I didn't know were possible or could fully understand at the time. We plan on providing a way for economics majors to be able to reach out and connect with professionals in our area and act as a resource for those pursuing graduate school."

— Caroline Long, Club Member

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION STUDENT CHAPTER

The Financial Management Association offers a variety of programs and services to students interested in the field of finance. The club provides speaker programs with financial professionals, field trips to area businesses and the opportunity to participate in the annual FMA Leaders' Conference in New York City, compete in a quiz bowl against other universities and connect with other finance students and experts throughout the nation. Finally, FMA provides opportunities for students to enhance their résumés through the FMA National Honor Society and Collegiate Fellows Program, which honors outstanding students in terms of grades and service.

"Being a member of FMA allows students the opportunity to meet and hear from speakers who work in their field of interest. This grants students the opportunity to ask questions and get an idea of their future careers and how to pursue them. Being president, as well as being an honors society member, has allowed me to get more involved in the community at South and within MCOB and to hear from (and be introduced to) speakers that I wouldn't have had access to otherwise."

— Margaret "Hails" Burnette, Club President

JAGUAR INVESTMENT FUND

The Jaguar Investment Fund's purpose is to introduce and teach students how to actively manage a portfolio. The objective of the Jaguar Investment Fund (JIF) is to enrich student education through active participation in financial markets. Students perform stock selection and management of a real portfolio, gaining hands-on money-management experience. They learn to



SARAH BREWER



KATELYN COWIE



VICTORIA POWER



CAROLINE LONG



HAILS BURRELL



ETHAN FLOWERS



ANDREA PRGOMELJA



COURTNEY WILLIAMS



AIDAN OETKEN



deal with the uncertainty inherent in the process of estimating stock value and contrasting it to stock price. The process helps students to develop their intuition and provide a practical application for investment decisions.

"The Jaguar Investment Fund has been one of, if not the most, enriching and enjoyable organization I have participated in during my time in the Mitchell College of Business. The opportunity to give back to the University through actively investing \$1.75 million of its money with my fellow student-fund managers while utilizing the lessons, strategies and principles I have learned while earning my Finance degree has been professionally and personally enriching beyond all measure."

— Ethan Flowers, Organization Member

COLLEGIATE ENTREPRENEURS' ORGANIZATION (CEO)

CEO's mission is to inform, support and inspire college students to be entrepreneurial and seek opportunities through enterprise creation. With a diverse entrepreneurial community and global network, CEO provides student entrepreneurs with opportunities, events, chapter activities and conferences to help start businesses. Members can immerse themselves in different business practices and network with other students to build a strong support system

throughout their college career.

"When I joined CEO, I gained a new support system that would help me further my business career. The organization gave me the opportunity to meet with business professionals in our area, which led to many job opportunities. CEO has helped me expand my leadership, management and organizational skills."

— Andrea Prgomelja, Club President

SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The University of South Alabama Student Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) prepares students for careers in human resource management through networking, camaraderie, respect and mutual support among chapter members and through its affiliation with SHRM and Mobile SHRM. This organization is open to all students interested in HR.

"When I joined SHRM, I gained access to a network of professionals who wanted to invest in the next generation of HR professionals, confidence in my knowledge and capabilities, internship and educational opportunities and a great group of friends. SHRM has helped me to grow as a leader and as a young professional. I have learned valuable skills and knowledge in the student

chapter, and I will remain a member of my local chapter and the national chapter."

— Courtney Williams, Club President

AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION

The American Marketing Association (AMA) strives to provide students with real-world experience and opportunities to develop and expand their skills in specific areas of marketing. The AMA chapter has an overall goal of encouraging creativity, collaboration and innovation among its members and the community. AMA has bi-weekly meetings that include guest speakers, skill-development workshops and other engaging activities (as well as working with local businesses and participating in community-service projects). The chapter is open to USA students of all majors.

"In less than a year, AMA already taught me so many valuable lessons on leadership and how to be part of something bigger than myself. It has also connected me with like-minded individuals who genuinely want to make a difference in their community. I am extremely excited for what the next three years have in store for me in AMA."

— Aidan Oetken, Club President

Program Updates



ELLEN MADDEN

OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD

The College is proud to congratulate **Ellen Madden**, a senior instructor in Accounting, for being awarded the "Outstanding Educator Award" by the Alabama Society of Certified Public Accountants (ASCPA). The ASCPA is a society that enables public accountants in Alabama to advance their professional careers through advocacy, service and education.

Madden is a Certified Public Accountant and Management Accountant in the state of Alabama and has been teaching at the Mitchell College of Business, where she has mentored and influenced hundreds of students over the last 13 years.

"Ellen Madden's passion for teaching Accounting steered me down my career path. I might not be where I am today if I didn't learn how fun it was for things to balance in ACC 211. Well deserved!"

—Taylor Brown, Class of 2014

"Mrs. Madden is an amazing teacher and works to make sure students truly understand the material. It is evident by how she teaches that she cares about the students"

—Hailey Kerstiens, Class of 2023

MCOB-MOTOR BOARD TOP PROFS

Members of the Sally Steadman Azalea Chapter of Mortar Board Honor Society at the University of South Alabama have named their Top Professors, known as "Top Prof" for the 2020-2021 academic year, during a first-time virtual event.

Three Mitchell College of Business professors were recognized for their positive influence on the lives of students at South Alabama.

Jay Hunt- Management
Treena Finney- Management
Ermanno Affuso- Economics



JAY HUNT



TREENA FINNEY



ERMANN AFFUSO

MCOB-SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

Sustainability is more than just a nice corporate recycling program or a focus on the 'Green Economy,' it's a commitment of responsibility by the organization and the community to make smart decisions that use a long-term, inclusive lens. With this in mind, the College is taking a multi-step approach to evaluate our curriculum for strengths and opportunities for improvement. "Our school fits into the fabric of a bigger picture and it's our responsibility, as faculty, to make sure we are creating learning experiences for our students that prepare them to see that their decisions as organizational leaders matter, both to their organizational sustainability as well as their communities," said change leader **Dr. Christina Wassenaar**. "The conversations that our faculty have with our students really matter when helping our students understand their roles as future leaders who will inevitably drive change."

MCEI-PITCH COMPETITION

Congratulations to the winners of the 2021 Coastal Venture Competition. Winners won a range of \$500-\$4,000. Sentence about what the winning prizes were this year. Thomas Nelson, director of student competitions, said, "I am very proud of our students. They showed amazing perseverance, and the overall quality of the submissions was off the charts."

1st Aiden Oeken - Oaktree Media
2nd Kenneth Cotton - Unlimited Transportation
3rd Andrea Prgomelia - ExperienceFIT
4th Abigale McCormick - Green Bean Coffee Co.
5th Nena Kerrigan - Elsa Ann Boutique

NON-PROFIT INTERNSHIPS

Mitchell College of Business students worked to better the Gulf Coast community through the completion of internships with organizations such as: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mobile, Boys Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America (Mobile Chapter), United Way, and USA Health and Mitchell Cancer Institute.



MARCUS LEMONIS

MCOB-ELS MARCUS LEMONIS

Each semester, the Executive Leadership Series (ELS) provides students with the opportunity to learn firsthand from business leaders as they discuss their careers and leadership experiences. These experiences help students bridge the gap between the classroom and the corporate world.

This spring, the College opened the seminar to the Gulf Coast community, where more than 400 individuals connected via Zoom to hear from **Marcus Lemonis**, CEO of Gander RV & Outdoors and Camping World, as well as host of CNBC's "The Profit."

Lemonis gave insightful business advice such as: Striking a balance between being a successful capitalist while remaining a generous philanthropist; how to choose a business partner; and how to find quality mentors. To him, a good business partner is someone with clear motivations and who can "[acknowledge] up front that they don't have all the answers ... and they can do better."

Lemonis also encouraged listeners to "stop looking up," and to instead, "look left and right." Mentors don't need to be people deemed more successful than you—"being mentored is nothing more than learning from people."

SABRE

The Center for Real Estate and Economic Development is expanding. To read more on the new University of South Alabama Center for Business Analytics, Real Estate and Economic Development (**SABRE**), see page 25. SABRE recently leveraged expertise to further enhance the economic impact of the Gulf Coast:

Conducted an economic impact analysis for the Dauphin Island Sea Lab (DISL). The analysis determined that DISL generates an overall annual economic impact of \$56 million for the state of Alabama and \$54 million to the lower Alabama region.

Contracted with Coastal Conversations to develop a series of dashboards pertinent to Mobile and Baldwin Counties in Alabama to highlight trends and to increase understanding of the area's economic growth, educational systems, community health and civic life.

VITA (ACCOUNTING)

Each spring, the University of South Alabama Department of Accounting partners with the United Way of Southwest Alabama to prepare tax returns (free of charge) for those who qualify. The tax returns are prepared as part of the Internal Revenue Service's **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance** program. The primary target audience is the University community (including University Hospital employees, Women's and Children's Hospital employees and other medical staff employed by

the University of South Alabama). This year, eight MCOB students processed 52 different returns—saving the community \$15,600 in tax preparation fees, identifying \$10,000 in earned-income credit, and gaining taxpayers \$70,000 in refunds.

SERVING ABOVE AND BEYOND

Since 2018, the Office of Community Engagement has been home to the South Serves program, an initiative to increase opportunities for more students to shine through service, service learning and community engagement.

During his tenure as a student, **Logan Etheridge** dedicated more than 100 hours of community service and volunteered with agencies such as the American Heart Association, American Red Cross - South Chapter, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Dauphin Island Heritage and Arts Council, Save A Stray, and United Way of Southwest Alabama. Etheridge has served as a Gulf Seafood Gala Volunteer, Heart Walk event helper, dog washer, transporter of blood from donor centers to area hospitals and volunteer tax return preparer.

Shannon Shelley-Tremblay, Director of the Office of Community Engagement said, "We are so pleased to support students like Logan who so strongly embrace volunteerism as a part of their journey toward their academic and professional goals. Through this hard work and commitment to others, they are making an impact on our community and exemplifying the best of what it is to be a Jag."

To learn more about the Office of Community Engagement and South Serves, visit: southalabama.edu/departments/communityengagement.

3 People | 3 Questions



AL CHOW

Associate Professor, Marketing
and Quantitative Methods

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

I have read a lot of John Maxwell books. Maxwell is a great writer on leadership and self-improvement. I often go back and read small sections of his books from time to time. I also recommend to everyone a book called “*Success is not an accident*,” by Tommy Newberry.

WHO IS INSPIRING YOU?

I tend to be inspired a little bit each day by many people. People who go out of their way to make the world a little better inspire me. Last Saturday, I was downtown and a gentleman and his wife were in Bienville Square handing out water bottles, sandwiches and socks to those in need. If you look, you will find little pieces of inspiration all around you. I am often inspired by my students. I once had a student ask to take an exam early because she was having surgery. Turns out, she was donating a kidney to a stranger. It doesn't have to be the big things either. I am also inspired by the students who show up for class and do their work.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE DAY?

I enjoy lunch. It gives me a chance to share food with friends and catch up on our own pieces of the world. I often try to have lunches with former students whenever I can. I like to see what they are doing and how they are making their mark in the world.



ANDREW HII

Accounting Major

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Getting More: How You Can Negotiate To Succeed In Work and Life by Dr. Stuart Diamond. It is a book I highly recommend. It has completely changed my perspective of negotiations. It is an extremely well thought-out process. I read this book for MGT 462 with Dr. Maes at MCOB. It is one class that everyone should take.

WHO IS INSPIRING YOU?

My mother inspires and always encourages me. One question she frequently asks is, “What made you smile today?” I can share my high and low moments of the day with her. I appreciate all that she does for me and my siblings. I will take care of my siblings and the house when my parents leave for a couple of days. It is an eye-opener how much she does on a daily basis without complaining.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE DAY?

One of my favorite parts of the day is when I come home— My blue heeler puppy, Lizzy, is ecstatic because I am back. Regardless of how I feel or what happened, she runs towards me as fast as she can, sliding on the floor to stop and roll on her back so I can rub her stomach. She is full of energy and a larger-than-life personality. She puts a smile on my face and her reactions will probably never get old.



JANET AYERS

Assistant to the Dean

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

For the 20–30 minutes of free time I have at night, I try to read a few pages of anything by Catherine Coulter (and it's currently *Blind Side*). Reading helps me decompress by escaping the realities and responsibilities of life.

WHO IS INSPIRING YOU?

Many people inspire me, but my biggest inspiration will always be my parents. My Mother grew up in Chicago with very little during the Great Depression, but she taught me the value of faith, hard work, compassion for others, and budget management. For someone without a college degree, she was a financial genius! My Dad inspired me in another way — with perseverance. At the age of 12, he endured polio and suffered damage to his arms and legs, but it never stopped him from doing anything. I never thought of him as disabled. He graduated from Northwestern with a degree in Chemical Engineering and enjoyed bowling, canoeing, swimming, camping, etc.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE DAY?

The morning. Enjoying a cup of coffee in the solitude of the morning is the best!

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
DRAMATICALLY IMPACTS THE
LIVES OF THE STUDENTS IN
THE MITCHELL COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS. YOUR SUPPORT
MAKES US WHO WE ARE
TODAY AND DIRECTLY
AFFECTS TOMORROW'S
BUSINESS LEADERS.

THREE AREAS OF PRIORITY FOR THE COLLEGE INCLUDE:

STUDENTS

The enrollment, education and graduation of outstanding students is of paramount importance to the Mitchell College of Business. Employers and other external constituents benefit from inspired graduates entering the workforce. In order to attract these students, the Mitchell College must offer competitive scholarships. The Mitchell-Moulton Scholarship Initiative matches any endowed undergraduate scholarship gift dollar-for-dollar.

ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT

Advances in technology, changes in classroom design and active-learning teaching methods have drastically changed the educational environment. In order to maximize learning outcomes, the Mitchell College must incorporate these advances into the classroom. Join us as we embark on a campaign to update (classrooms and other) Mitchell College of Business learning environments.

THE INTERNATIONAL EMPHASIS PROJECT

Our students will enter an increasingly complex and competitive global economy. Research and experience show that students who participate in global immersion opportunities are better prepared for competition in the global economy. The goal of our international emphasis project is to ensure the affordability of study-abroad opportunities for all interested students.

INVEST IN THE COLLEGE



The Mitchell College of Business and its multiple scholarships have allowed me to pursue my bachelor's degree. By relieving a lot of the financial pressure to attend South, scholarships have allowed me to not only complete my degree but also focus more in the classroom and be more involved in MCOB and on campus. MCOB has provided me with opportunities I couldn't have imagined when I first started college through its PREP program, Retail Certification program, and various events throughout the semesters. The scholarships have allowed me to gain the skills and knowledge required to enter a career following graduation. —JONATHAN LAM



JONATHAN LAM

MARKETING MAJOR
CLASS OF 2021



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