

Whitman

CELEBRATES 20 YEARS



S Syracuse University
Whitman School
of Management





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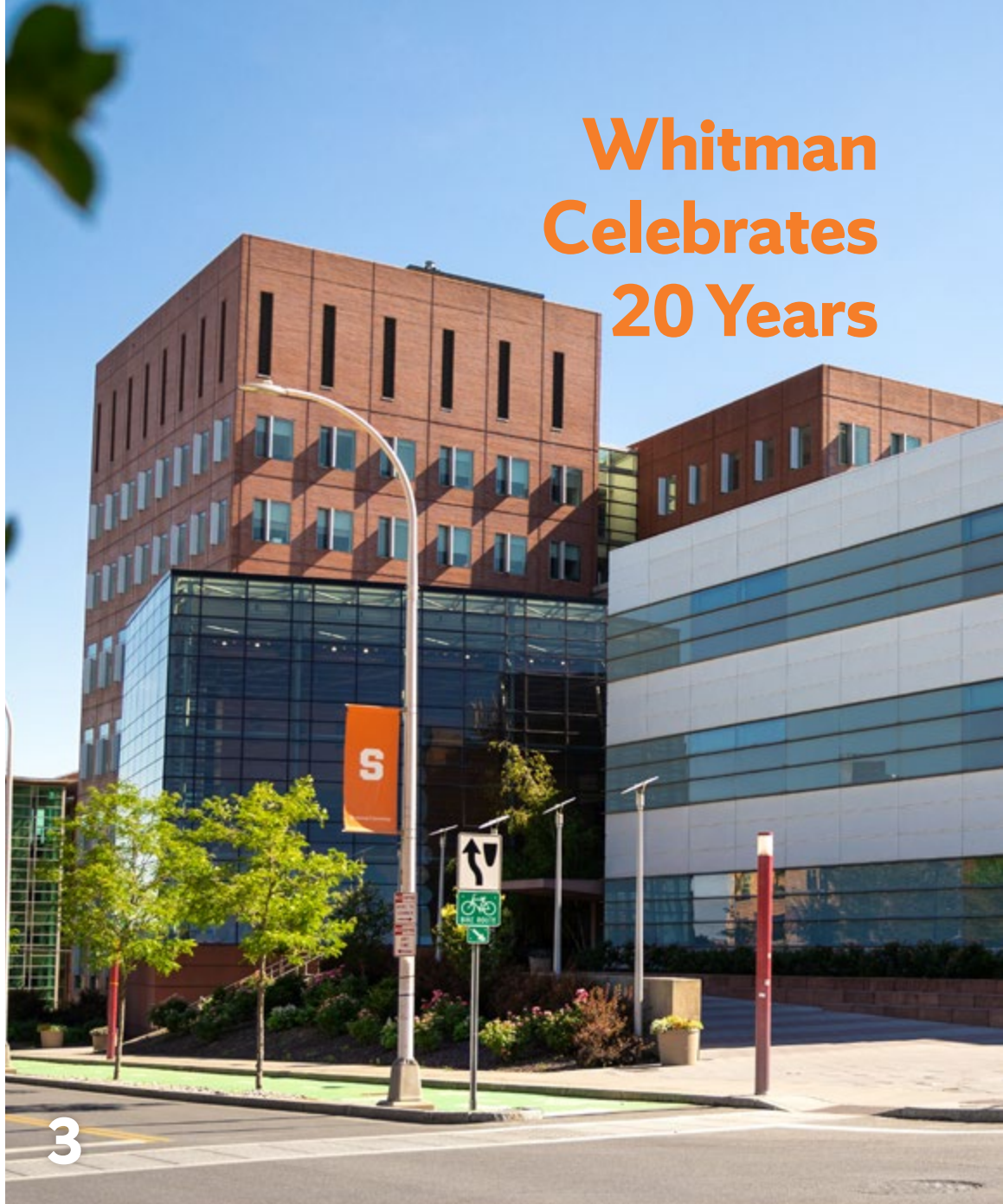
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LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Alex McKelvie

The Whitman School is bubbling with excitement again. As I write this, approximately 550 new first-year undergraduate students, 85 transfer students and about 100 graduate students are early into their fall semester. There is a lot of energy — from both new and returning students — as they adjust to a new learning environment, reconnect with classmates, ponder the next steps in their careers or simply enjoy the beauty of the Syracuse University campus.

The incoming undergraduate class is our second largest on record. Whitman continues to be in high demand, reflecting an increase in applications greater than 10% (to over 7,700) compared to last year. This places Whitman among the most in-demand schools on campus: Almost 20% of the incoming applications to Syracuse University are to the Whitman School. Our incoming class has maintained high academic credentials and shows strong diversity across a variety of areas as well. I view these results as reflecting that Whitman is on the right track.

In addition to the energy that comes from a strong and sizable incoming class, the excitement comes from the noticeable physical improvements we've made over the summer. While there are many renovations throughout the building, our emphasis has been to our main street, Whitman's first floor. Updates include the removal of the planters and light posts, installation of a new video board, new furniture and new layout of the Flaum Grand Hall. There are other renovations — such as new carpet, some office redesign, new TV displays and new paint elsewhere on that first floor and throughout the building. We are treating this as the first phase of our building modernization plan.

These updates to our building are the direct result of an investment into Whitman from senior Syracuse University leadership. We appreciate their support in elevating Whitman and the student experience within our school.

The renovations and strong numbers are a good reminder to think about how far the Whitman School has come. The school is over 100 years old. The building — now known with the Whitman name — is

in its 20th year. The Whitman programs, topics taught and student learning activities continue to adjust to the ever-changing business landscape. We continue to receive national and international accolades for our undergraduate and MBA programs — both online and residential — as well as key areas where Whitman plays a leading role nationally, such as in entrepreneurship and supply chain management. Among those accolades to celebrate this year are a No. 2 global ranking for entrepreneurship research by TCU and a No. 1 national ranking among U.S. private schools for return on investment on our MBA program. There is a lot to be proud of with our program quality.

After thinking back to how far we've come, the next step is to think about where we're heading. Our clear focus is on elevating the Whitman School to be a top 25 national program within the next five years. This bold goal reflects the promise of the school to achieve its potential. That goal will also help to drive many of our strategic investments in the foreseeable future.

In this issue of the *Whitman* magazine, we provide a summary of some of the key innovations that we've seen in recent years — in terms of providing a best-in-class student experience that includes robust experiential programs, success stories of our students and alumni, as well as some cutting-edge research from our faculty. I believe these should — just like our incoming class — have you excited about the years ahead.

As always, we have relied on the support of our alumni, corporate partners, donors and friends to help us on our continued ascent. I am appreciative of the variety of roles that you play to support the Whitman School and our students' success.

Best wishes,

Alex McKelvie
Interim Dean



As Whitman Celebrates 20 Years, Continuous Improvement Remains at the Center of School's Evolution and Upward Trajectory

By Caroline K. Reff

In 1919, the College of Business Administration started with a desk and a chair inside a storage room in Syracuse University's administration building, thanks to the innovative thinking of English Professor John Herman Wharton. Wharton had the foresight to convince Chancellor James Roscoe Day that the lure of business was growing in the U.S. as veterans returned from World War I. The School of Business Administration was one of the first 40 business schools in the U.S. and the 16th to be accredited. Soon, a four-year degree and a two-year certificate program were offered — but that was just the beginning.

Over the years, the college has evolved as it grew in its mission to fill the needs of those interested in being educated in the world of business. In 1948, after World War II ended, an MBA program was launched, and the Army Comptrollership Program was established in 1952. A Ph.D. program began in 1965, and a distance-learning MBA was established in 1983. That same year, a school was built on the center of campus and was called the Crouse-Hinds School of Management. In 2003, the University broke ground on the Martin J. Whitman School of Management, thanks to the generosity of Martin J. Whitman '49, H'08 and his wife, Lois. At the time, the newly named Whitman School was a modern, innovative building that was well on its way to establishing itself as a top-notch business school.

Twenty years after the new building opened, the Whitman School has come a long way from that desk and chair, making huge strides from what was in 2004 considered state-of-the-art, as a reflection of what is emerging in today's technology-driven business world. Over the past decade, the Whitman School has evolved in many areas, some of the most significant in innovation, research and career services. And, over the past year, through strategic decisions and data-driven choices, the Whitman School has updated its

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physical space. The investment in the school overall — which numbers in the millions of dollars thanks to the generosity of alumni and other donors and the work of leadership, faculty and other supporters — is designed to offer graduate and undergraduate students the skills and business acumen necessary to differentiate themselves in a highly competitive job market. At the same time, these efforts highlight how the Whitman School is working to be ranked in the top 25 of U.S. business schools in the near future.

MARTIN J. WHITMAN: AN INVESTMENT INDUSTRY VISIONARY WHOSE GENEROSITY FURTHERED NAMESAKE SCHOOL

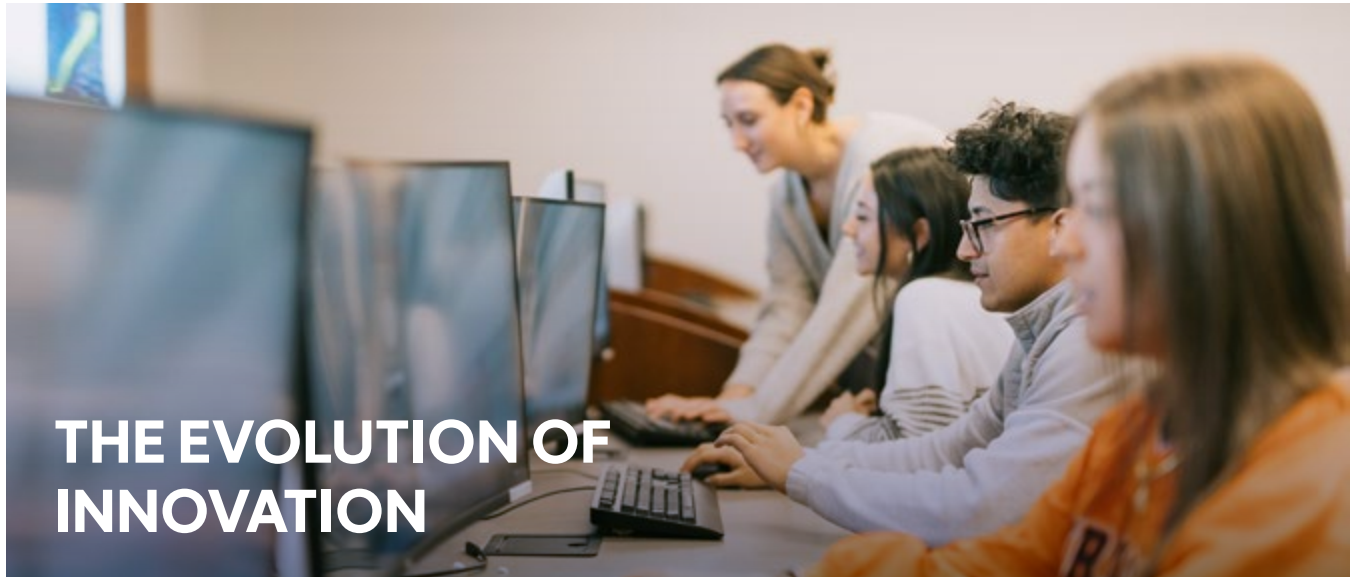
A Bronx, New York, native, Whitman was a World War II U.S. Navy veteran. After serving his country, he was grateful to be accepted into Syracuse University, where he graduated magna cum laude with a business management degree using the G.I. Bill. He went on to work for several investment firms and earned a master’s degree in economics from the New School for Social Research before founding M.J. Whitman & Co. in 1974. His first major success came in the 1970s through his shrewd investment in Penn Central Railway mortgage bonds. In 1986, he founded Third Avenue Management, which became a successful private investment firm. Throughout his career, he took the time to teach up-and-coming business students as an adjunct instructor at the Whitman School, Columbia University and the Yale School of Management. Whitman also authored four influential books on investing, served on a number of boards for charitable organizations and was a member of the Board of Trustees of Syracuse University.

In 2003, Martin Whitman and his wife, Lois, presented a \$23 million naming gift to the University to build a new home for the School. Groundbreaking for the new Martin J. Whitman School of Management began in 2004 — 20 years ago — as a contemporary building located at the corner of University Avenue and Marshall Street on the Syracuse University campus. He and his wife also gave generously to Whitman and the University through a variety of funds, supporting scholarships and other opportunities.

Whitman received an honorary degree in 2008 for his commitment to the University and his role as an “investment industry visionary.” Through the years, he came to campus frequently to attend events and mentor and speak to students. He retired in 2012 but continued his connection with the Whitman School and was named an honorary University trustee. Martin Whitman passed away in 2018 at 93, just a few weeks after visiting campus for the annual Whitman Day. At the time of his passing, Syracuse University Chancellor Kent Syverud said, “He was a role model for thousands of students here at Syracuse and elsewhere, and his legacy will live on through them.”

WHITMAN SCHOOL RISES IN THE RANKINGS

- #1** MBA for Private Schools in the U.S., *Bloomberg Business School ROI Calculator* 2024
- #2** TCU Global University Entrepreneurship Research Productivity Rankings 2024
- #8** *Fortune’s Best Online Master’s in Business Analytics* 2024
- #21** Online MBA Program, *The Princeton Review* 2024
- #36** *Poets&Quants* 2024 Best Undergraduate Program
- #40** U.S. News Best Undergraduate Program 2024



THE EVOLUTION OF INNOVATION

There is no shortage of innovation at the Whitman School. Its student entrepreneurs create new business ideas. It works with other schools and colleges across campus to create interdisciplinary educational options that merge business with other interests. It creates initiatives that serve new topics in business, like the importance of mental health. The Whitman School is always thinking, innovating and working to make sure its students are ready for the world beyond its doors.

According to Interim Dean Alex McKelvie, “Looking forward to seeing what can be added, improved or created in the face of driving change in the business world is always top of mind. Our emphasis on continuous improvement remains at the forefront and is critical to our success. Nothing is ever a done deal at Whitman when it comes to being innovative. We will never rest on our laurels because we know we can continue to get better at everything.”

One area that is essential to innovation is the Department of Entrepreneurship and Emerging Enterprises (EEE), established in 1994. According to Syracuse University Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation and Whitman Executive Dean J. Michael Haynie, Whitman had one of the first stand-alone entrepreneurship programs in the country in a field that was once not thought of as a business major.

“One of the reasons I came to the University and the Whitman School as an entrepreneurship professor in 2006 was because the school sold me on its demonstrated commitment to growing its EEE program,” says Haynie. “Looking back, it is incredible to see the strides we’ve made and how students seeking to study entrepreneurship today are increasingly looking to the Whitman School for the academic excellence it has built through this program.”

Current EEE majors can develop their own skills working with faculty, alumni and other partners, most of whom are also entrepreneurs with a rich list of businesses, patents, products and other innovations to their credit.

Many students who pursued entrepreneurship have walked away with both a degree and a business launched. Phoebe Gullingsrud ’24 (WSM/NEW) studied while also

running POV, a digital marketing agency, which she grew at Whitman and continues to expand today. Natasha Brao ’22 (VPA), ’23 M.S., ’24 MBA started selling her product, Shooka sauce, while working on her graduate degrees at Whitman, using some of the winnings from various entrepreneurial competitions at the school as start-up funds. Today, her creation, a Mediterranean meal starter, can be found online and on retail shelves, as she continues to expand her product line.

CAPSTONE COURSE DIFFERENTIATES WHITMAN EDUCATION

According to Haynie, a differentiator in innovation at the Whitman School is the required Capstone course for all seniors. While other business schools have a culminating experience, few have an interdisciplinary course like Whitman’s that brings together those from all majors to work together on realistic business ideas ready to be launched.

Through the Capstone course, EEE faculty challenge

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students to create a concept for an innovative product, service or business model and include a novel approach to the creation of its economic value. The concept must be scalable and have the potential to achieve \$3 million in gross revenue within five years and investments from outside sources that exceed \$100,000. At the end of the semester, all teams participate in the annual Capstone competition, where they present their business plans to various panels of entrepreneurs made up of alumni, faculty and other Whitman partners. Each group receives feedback on their business plan, and first-, second- and third-place winners are selected.

“Capstone provides an exciting, high-stakes opportunity to showcase student accomplishments while getting a taste of what it takes to transform an idea into reality,” says Erin Draper, director of experiential programs, who coordinates the Capstone competition with EEE faculty. “The students produce business plans for outstanding ideas that have the ability to become successful ventures, innovative products or impactful services.”

Students also take their ideas to other competitions held both at Whitman and through outside associations. Two of the most popular Whitman competitions are the Orange Tank business pitch competition, which celebrated 10 years this fall; and the Panasci Business Plan competition, dating back to 2000 through the generosity of Henry Panasci Jr. and his son, David Panasci '80. Both competitions have become popular, not only for the prize money that students can use to push their business plans further but also for the prestige that comes with winning these highly anticipated entrepreneurial events.

In addition, the inaugural Whitman Dean's SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Challenge was held at Whitman in spring 2024, coordinated by Draper. This experiential program inspired over 100 graduate and undergraduate students from across the University to think entrepreneurially about addressing key issues related to the United Nations sustainable development goals with real-world applications. Each team, which required at least one Whitman participant, chose one of the U.N. sustainability development goals and submitted a report from which judges named the “Elite Eight,” four undergraduate and four graduate teams. Faculty and alumni judges selected winners from both groups, who received cash prizes totaling \$25,000.

WHERE DOES AI FIT INTO INNOVATION?

What is the next innovation? The possibilities are endless, according to McKelvie. However, the next wave driving the continuous quest for innovation at the Whitman School is sure to involve artificial intelligence (AI).

“AI is already changing the world, but we are looking at it as an opportunity, not something to fear. The world of AI is going to affect everything we do in business, from the development of new and exciting professional roles to dramatic changes in established ways of doing business,” says McKelvie, who noted that over 70 faculty and staff members obtained Google AI certification this summer. “Whitman already has a large number of faculty who include AI tools and materials in their courses. As innovators, it is our job to prepare students, faculty and staff for this emerging technology by providing them with the most current information and skills possible. Our commitment to continuous learning will ensure that the Whitman School approaches AI with agility and the innovative mindset necessary to benefit our students both in the classroom and in their future careers.”

Whether it's developing an entrepreneurial mindset, offering the ability to work with diverse teams or interdisciplinary learning, or meeting the challenges of emerging technology, the Whitman School is committed staying a step ahead of the ever-evolving world of business.

“We want potential employers to know that when they hire one of our students, they are going to get a highly trained, well-balanced individual who has the education, skills and agility instilled in them to get things done today and well into the future,” says McKelvie. “For example, the accounting curriculum recently was upgraded to be much more technical, analytical and technology-driven to reflect upcoming changes to the CPA exam. I suspect our other majors will also formally include these types of tools into their curriculums soon, too, as AI and technology are not going away.”



“Our commitment to continuous learning will ensure that the Whitman School approaches AI with agility and the innovative mindset necessary to benefit our students both in the classroom and in their future careers.”

— Alex McKelvie, interim dean



Bauer, certified therapy dog.

MENTAL HEALTH PRIORITIZED IN BUSINESS SCHOOL EDUCATION

The Whitman School recently rolled out an innovative program that supports students personal and professional development at the intersection of business and mental health. Last year, David '91 and Dina Nass '91 (A&S) pledged \$500,000 to the Whitman School to create an initiative that would promote greater work-life balance by teaching students to identify red flags associated with mental health, while also helping to destigmatize mental health issues students may face in a competitive workforce.

“This kind of support for mental health-related issues is something we haven’t seen at many other business schools, despite it being increasingly important for young professionals to understand,” says McKelvie. “The programming we are creating through the generosity of the Nass family is forward thinking, innovative and rare, and we are grateful to them for helping Whitman make this possible.”

The program will bring resources to graduate and undergraduate students through classwork, guest speakers, symposiums, technology and other information to promote solid mental health practices and avenues to seek help.

As part of the Nass Mental Health Initiative, Whitman offered all students the option to participate in the 21-day Well-being Challenge, a mental health platform created by Olivia Bowser '16, CEO of Liberate. This was offered last semester during finals week, a hectic time for students. Another option is Tuesdays with Bauer, when students can visit with a certified therapy dog, whose friendly demeanor and wagging tail give them a few minutes away from the hustle and bustle of classes, deadlines and other obligations. Bauer is a Whitman favorite, often accompanying owner Assistant Teaching Professor Elizabeth Wimer to the school.

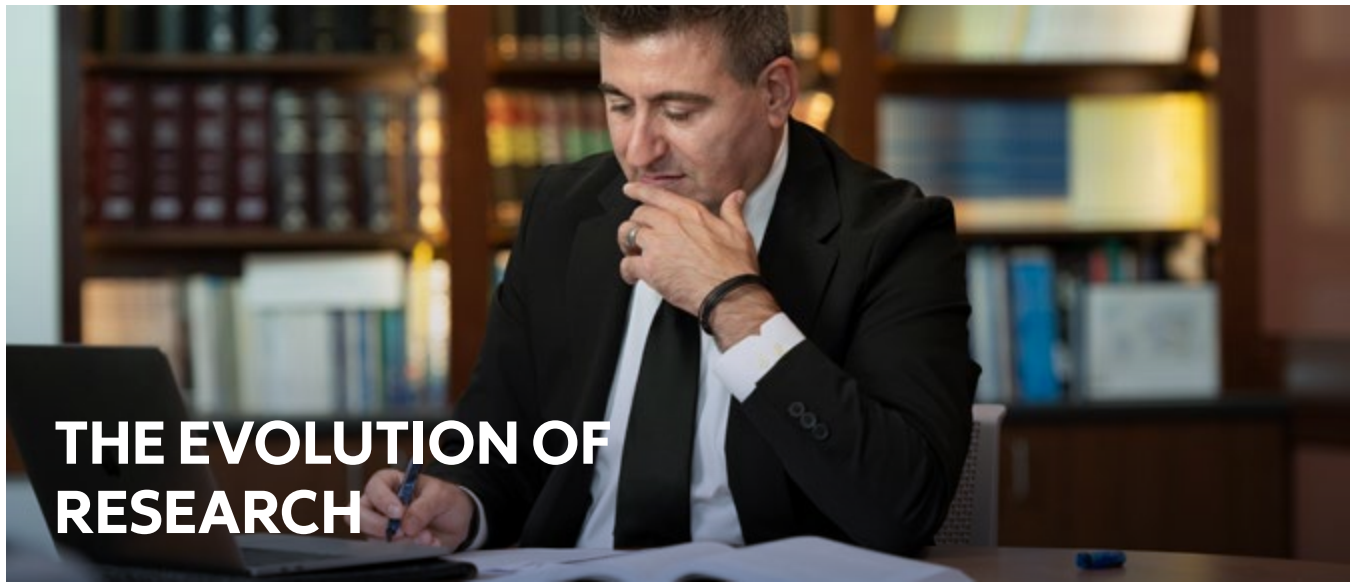
WHITMAN OFFERS EXTENSIVE LIST OF INTERDISCIPLINARY DEGREES

Interdisciplinary opportunities are another hallmark of the Whitman School, and the options for students to pursue business in concert with other interests continue to grow. Today, dozens of programs have been designed to allow Whitman students to earn two degrees either simultaneously or consecutively, depending on the requirements. This innovative approach doesn’t make students choose between business and another interest but instead works together across the colleges and schools on campus to give Whitman students a wider range of options at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

In the past year, the Whitman School announced several new signature options, including a master’s degree in sustainable organizations and policy with the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs; an undergraduate degree in the field of sport management/business, an undergraduate degree in public health/business, and a master’s degree in public health (M.P.H.)/MBA, all in conjunction with the David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics; and an M.S. in biotechnology/MBA program with the College of Arts and Sciences.

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THE EVOLUTION OF RESEARCH

Whitman’s research output and support have become comparable to top research schools over the past 10 years, according to Michel Benaroch, associate dean for research and Ph.D. programs and professor of management information systems. The school has covered a great distance through the leadership commitment to a culture that values, promotes and incentivizes faculty to produce research of the highest caliber. Leadership has committed significant financial resources to allow progress on multiple fronts, including hiring and retaining outstanding research faculty and providing them with the support necessary to excel, as well as the transfer of research outside of the Whitman School, which showcases thought leadership to numerous audiences.

Benaroch joined Whitman prior to 2000 and notes that, while a level of research took place at the time, it was not strong enough to compete with top research schools. Over the past two decades, he has been an active part of an effort that is generating growth that puts Whitman in the spotlight more often and exemplifies the school’s reputation for important business-related research. This latest level of success is due to improvements in the kind of faculty Whitman attracts by offering increased support for their professional development, providing additional research funding, flexibility of scheduling, public recognition of successful faculty and overall increased rankings of the Whitman School.

Over the past decade, Whitman has hired faculty already involved in valuable research. Two years ago, the school welcomed Si Cheng as an associate professor in the Department of Finance. Cheng’s research and publications on empirical asset pricing and delegated asset management appear in the topmost finance journals. This fall, Whitman welcomed Paul Momtaz as a visiting associate professor in the Department of Entrepreneurship and Emerging Enterprises. His research centers on entrepreneurial finance with a focus on sustainability and digital technologies. And, Ye Liu joined Whitman as an assistant professor of supply chain management after completing a Ph.D. at Washington University in St. Louis. As a Ph.D. student, Liu conducted extensive research in solving some of the operational issues of hog farming/pork production using foundations of supply chain management and has co-authored several papers on this topic.

According to Benaroch, key to Whitman’s success is recruiting faculty involved in quality research, as those who are doing valuable work are often highly sought after by other schools. To this end, Whitman has allocated significant funding over the past five years to faculty research, which can now be used over the summer months, too, while also giving them more autonomy over how they use the funds in their work.

“Fifteen years ago, the culture didn’t have the same level of trust that professional funds were being used responsibly,” Benaroch says. “But, since then, a dramatic change in culture and thinking is getting results. Faculty members no longer have to make a case for their research or ask to publish or attend conferences. This has given them the independence and acknowledgement that their work is appreciated, which has clearly been a factor in retention. In addition, the amount of funding today rivals some of the best research schools out there.”

Funding isn't the only measure of success, however, as today's Whitman faculty also need both time and flexibility to balance their teaching with their research interests. Whitman faculty understand that leadership and the workplace culture support their need for teaching flexibility to provide adequate time blocks for research, as well as see their work as valuable and essential to facilitating the growth and reputation of Whitman among other business schools and throughout the business arena.

Meaningful research is most impactful when it is shared through publication in respected journals, presentations at prestigious conferences, before policymakers

and business leadership, in the community and to the media.

Associate Professor of Management and department chair Lynne Vincent has been highlighted in the media about topics related to labor issues, strikes and four-day work weeks. Professor of Supply Chain Practice Patrick Penfield is a frequent face in the national media, including on outlets such as *Good Morning America*, discussing a variety of supply chain management issues like toilet paper shortages, the Baltimore bridge collapse, green energy, self-checkout policies and the semiconductor industry. Professor of Practice Kivanc Avrenli has been in the news speaking on his commercial aviation safety research in light of recent incidents with Boeing 737s and 787s.

"We are aiming for a culture of knowledge sharing that will benefit faculty members' own work, widen the educational

experience of our students, and shine a brighter light on the Whitman School as a place that is generating impactful thought leadership, while also raising our ranking to a top 25 business school with valuable research contributing not only to business but to making the world a better place," says Benaroch.

"Today's Whitman School has a much greater emphasis on sharing this information to our undergraduate students and getting them interested in participating in research

experiences that they can add to their resumes in order to make themselves more competitive when they enter the workforce," he adds. "We have been determined to evolve the culture of the school so that students who want the opportunity to work in research have access to faculty willing to take them on as part of their own research efforts, and this is a very big step in becoming a true research institution."

Says McKelvie, "Research is one of the major components by which business schools are judged and where peer assessment by other business schools matters to rankings. Publishing high-quality research makes our scholarship more influential and shows the level of thinking and depth our faculty are making in regard to societal issues. Being able to communicate that information is part of a growing culture at the Whitman School. We have committed more resources and a greater budget, as well as the tools, systems and mentoring that faculty members need to do quality research.

"The Whitman School has come a long way in its research output over the past 20 years, and that didn't happen by accident but was a result of the school's commitment and validation of talented people doing meaningful work," he adds. "We're excited to see a continuous output of research that will secure the Whitman School as one of the leading business schools in the country."

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"Fifteen years ago, the culture didn't have the same level of trust that professional funds were being used responsibly. But, since then, a dramatic change in culture and thinking is getting results."

— Michel Benaroch, associate dean for research and Ph.D. programs and professor of management information systems



ENTREPRENEURSHIP BOOTCAMP FOR VETERANS SPARKED UNIVERSITY-WIDE MILITARY PROGRAMS

Among Whitman's many firsts over the past 20 years is the creation of the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans (EBV) in 2007, which continues to grow and provide those who served in the U.S. armed forces after 9/11 the skills to build a successful future through entrepreneurship. The EBV program has expanded to other universities across the country. It offers three phases, which include business fundamentals and research; a residency experience at one of the eight EBV consortium schools; and/or a year of support to assist in the creation of growth of a small business. According to Haynie, the EBV program was the starting point for the many innovative educational programs offered to veterans that exist on the University campus today, including the D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF), which was born at Whitman in 2011 and now operates as a stand-alone entity.



Inaugural EBV Class



EBV Alumni Reunion 2022



EEE PROFESSOR SHARES RESEARCH IN CONGRESS AND IN CLASSROOM

David Lucas is the Edward Pettinella Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship and a research fellow with the Institute for an Entrepreneurial Society. He has done extensive research on how specific policies and political ideologies affect entrepreneurial activity.

"I see the opportunity to do research at the Whitman School as a blessing I greatly enjoy, but one that comes with a responsibility to steward my role by working on topics that matter outside academia and developing insights that point to what is true," he says.

Lucas has drawn on his academic articles about homelessness to share about the role of policy and entrepreneurial efforts to engage this immense social challenge. "These efforts opened the door for me to testify before Congress in a hearing on homelessness, and I continue to think and write about how we, as a society, can turn the tide on this problem," he says.

Lucas' research has also involved how legislation and private-sector certifications can interactively enable businesses to integrate values and benefit society. One such paper was recently named as a finalist for the 2024 Responsible Research in Management Award sponsored by the Academy of Management Fellows.

Lucas draws on this when teaching Introduction to Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurship. "It is very rewarding to equip students who already have a passion for real-world issues with the tools and a vision to see entrepreneurship as a meaningful vehicle for positive change," he says.



THE EVOLUTION OF PHYSICAL SPACE

When the Whitman School opened its doors for the first time 20 years ago, it was an example of the latest business education had to offer in the early 2000s, with computer labs that allowed all students to access desktop computers and faculty offices that relied solely on landlines. But, since 2005, the orange and blue has faded a bit due to wear and tear from thousands of eager business students and busy faculty who has used the building every day since. Technology has advanced at a rapid pace, and the way the original spaces were meant to be utilized have, in some cases, become outdated. While the school has made updates through the years, 2024 marked a time for a much needed refresh that reflects how far the Whitman School has come in its use of technology and efficiency of space.

“The decisions made for how the Whitman School looked 20 years ago were the right ones back then because they reflected the space and equipment that were used at that time. Two decades later a lot has changed. It is time to maximize our investment in the physical space in the most useful, efficient, secure and technologically advanced ways possible,” says McKelvie. “It’s not just about sprucing things up. It’s about making data-driven decisions about the best way to use our space to continue to exemplify how the Whitman School is on a trajectory to be one of the top business schools anywhere, and part of that is making an indelible first impression on students, parents, alumni, donors and other people who enter our first-class building.”

Today, the first impression most people who walk into Whitman see are the changes that have been made to Flaum Grand Hall, a magnificent gathering space just inside the front doors. The highlight of the renovation is a 28-foot by 7½-foot video wall that can’t be missed, showcasing digital images of a day in



the life at the Whitman School and other important communication. The video wall includes integrated microphones and speakers, making it not only a welcoming space for students to gather, study or socialize, but also a place reconfigured to serve as a venue for meetings, competitions or alumni events. New terrazzo tile, along with furniture that can be reconfigured in different ways depending on the needs of the space, add to the overall “Wow!” factor.

“It’s a terrific area that can’t help but welcome you to Whitman,” says McKelvie. “We are excited to make all kinds of use of the redesign in what has become the central

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living room at Whitman and a fine example of the kind of business education we offer here.”

According to John Reedy, executive director of information services and facilities, who oversaw the building’s recent refresh, the project’s priorities focused on aesthetics, security, functional improvement and technology.

With an emphasis on showcasing the Whitman School, the main floor has undergone some of the most significant upgrades. A major investment in new carpeting for nine office suites, three conference rooms and a few other highly visible areas, including the fourth-floor hallway, the Dean’s suite and the Lender Auditorium, makes an impactful impression. In addition, many areas have been repainted, including a four-story wall in the central stairwell, adding a touch of Syracuse University spirit.

The Couri Hatchery on Whitman’s main floor has been reimagined with improvements that make the space look and feel like a professional business incubator with a setup suitable for budding entrepreneurs to work together with additional office space for faculty advisors, mentors and entrepreneurs-in-residence.

Analog bulletin boards have been replaced by 10 86-inch digital signs in the hallways to streamline communication and direct people to the many events and activities happening inside the building.

One of the biggest improvements in technology, according to Reedy, is the use of an advanced Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) system. Numerous RFID locks have been installed throughout the building, as well as 12 high-definition security cameras. Students, faculty and staff can now swipe in to certain spaces, while allowing other areas to remain restricted, if necessary. And use of RDIF technology will provide data to continue to assess the efficiency of space within the Whitman School.

A new room reservation system allows students to reserve one of the 40-plus team rooms based on their program level and the time of the year. During the end of a semester, for example, the system allows access to rooms that were previously only reserved for graduate students. And the team room reservation system allows setup for recurring office hours for part-time faculty without assigned office space.

Other efficiencies have resulted in reconfiguring some classrooms to reflect current needs both recently and over the past couple of years. The number of computer labs has been downsized, as today almost all students bring their own laptops to class — and those without access have 100 laptops available on loan. Whitman has transitioned to Azure virtual desktop for its virtual lab infrastructure, which allows students to log in to a virtual lab machine that has access to the licensed software that they would normally have to access on a physical terminal. Now, they can log in from their personal devices. And two classrooms on the concourse level have been converted to 50-person flat classrooms in the past year, taking over some underutilized space and making them more disability friendly.

“The Whitman School of Management has been transformed into a place that is modern, functional, technologically savvy and, quite frankly, looks terrific,” says Reedy, noting that the undertaking was a team effort across the school and University. “Everything we’ve accomplished is in keeping with leadership’s efforts of continuous improvement and commitment to continuing to raise the profile of the Whitman School.”



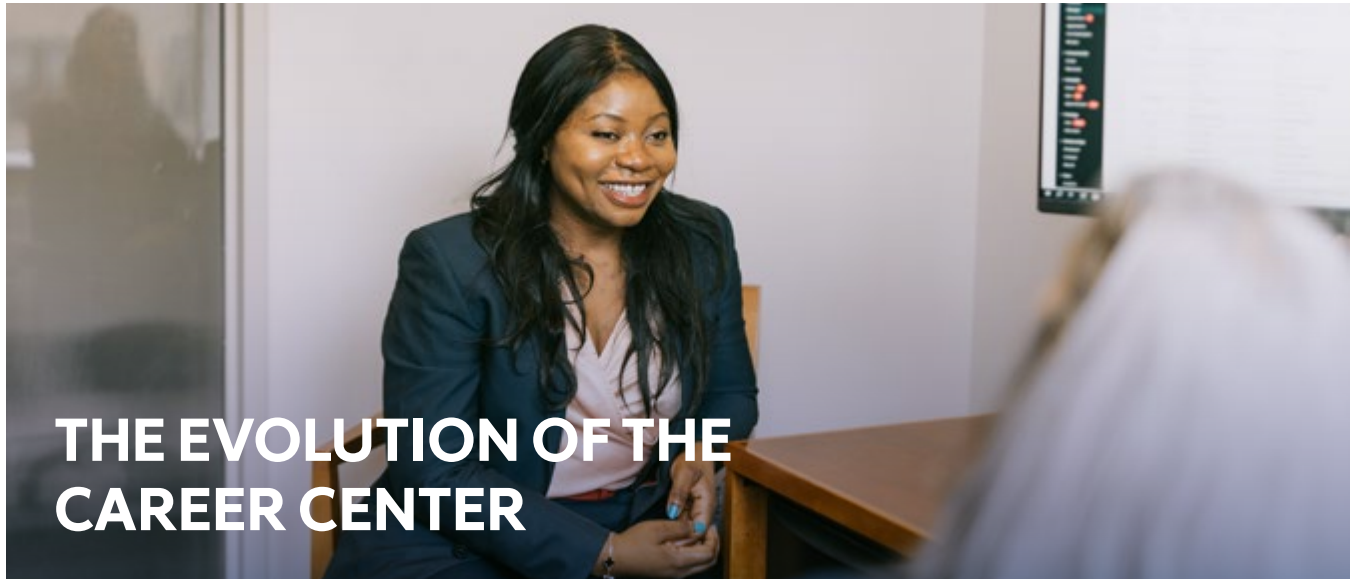
IMPRESS PROGRAM OFFERS LEADERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY AND SOFT SKILLS EMPLOYERS SEEK

Having a holistic learning experience at the Whitman School is much more than earning academic credits. So Whitman created a special experience through the Goodman IMPRESS Program to give students the soft skills and other attributes that employers are looking for in a job candidate.

“Employers want to see those who have confidence and leadership abilities, excellent business etiquette, certifications in things like LinkedIn Learning, great communication skills and more,” says Kari Morrow, program manager of the IMPRESS program.

The incoming Class of 2028, is the 11th cohort to participate in this program, which was developed based on feedback from alumni and employers on ways that Whitman graduates could be more prepared for the professional world. The program’s success led to the creation of the Whitman Industry Readiness & Excellence (WIRE) initiative in 2020, which funded industry-recognized certifications such as Microsoft Excel and Google Data Analytics for students. The Goodman Leadership Academy was established in 2022-23 for a select group of sophomores seeking to further their leadership skills and build confidence and strategic thinking.

Says Morrow, “The IMPRESS Program, Goodman Leadership Academy and WIRE not only enhance opportunities for our current students but also attract prospective students to the Whitman School, as well as catch the attention of potential employers looking for those who can bring these high-level skill sets to their companies.”



THE EVOLUTION OF THE CAREER CENTER

As the school celebrates 20 years as the Martin J. Whitman School of Management, it also marks the thousands of bright business minds it has sent into the world. And, while two decades ago, students had advisors to help them choose a major or prepare a paper resume for a job interview, the evolution of the Career Center has increased the success and recognition of Whitman and its students. The Career Center is a critical piece of the student experience at the Whitman School, and its success in guiding and placing students in the workplace has a great impact on business school rankings.

While career advising has always existed at the school, the current Career Center began in the mid-2000s with only one part-time and three full-time employees. The Career Center has expanded to seven full-time advisors, along with additional staff, who help students make the most of their Whitman education. Two employees are specifically dedicated to assisting graduate students.

According to Kara Primrose, director of the Career Services, “We build trust, respect and partnerships between students and advisors throughout their entire time at Whitman, not just when they are about to start their job search. Our primary purpose today is to future proof our students by guiding their choices of a major, a degree or career path and helping them understand all the options that are open to them, as well as introduce students to the continuously growing number of resources that can enhance their Whitman experience, and their resumes, to make them even more outstanding job candidates.”

Undergraduates are assigned an advisor when they enroll and are often in contact before the school year even begins. And, starting in their first year at Whitman, undergraduate students are typically matched with an advisor through their IMPRESS houses but can later switch to an advisor who has expertise in a specific major or career interest, making for a more specialized experience.

Some students enter Whitman not sure of what major to pursue, while others are focused on a certain area of business. Whatever the circumstances, the Career Center attempts to meet students where they are. Advisors lay out students’ options



“We build trust, respect and partnerships between students and advisors throughout their entire time at Whitman, not just when they are about to start their job search.”

— Kara Primrose, director of Career Services

Continued on page 14 >

— like how well-established majors, for example, accounting or finance, have expanded into new areas and offer opportunities that require special skill sets or technical knowledge that may not have even existed 20 years ago; or introduce them to some of the majors that Whitman has expanded on in recent years to reflect changes in the business world, like business analytics. Other opportunities include double majors (pursuing two majors simultaneously at the Whitman School) and dual majors (earning a degree from Whitman and another from one of the other colleges or schools on campus) which, are growing in popularity as the school embraces multi-disciplinary learning.

“Today, the process of finding the right fit for a student is much more innovative and nuanced,” says Primrose. “The jobs that an incoming first-year student in the Class of ’28 might have when he or she graduates may not even exist right now, so we encourage students to have a certain agility to take what they learn in the classroom and through various co-curricular experiences and apply that to new opportunities that will more than likely surface during their own careers. We want all of our students to prioritize curiosity and engagement both in and outside of the classroom.”

Unlike two decades ago, Whitman’s Career Center advisors now rely more heavily on data-driven information from expanded business-related resources, as well as information from recent Whitman graduates who are annually surveyed on their career plans, according to Primrose. This approach is vital to helping Whitman students fine-tune their expectations and understand what skills and experiences they need to stand out in a workforce that becomes more competitive with each passing year.

Alumni from every area of business are also an important resource for the Career Center, as they share their experience as mentors, speakers, advisors and thought leaders, while also opening doors to their own workplaces for Whitman students interested in internships or job opportunities.

“Our alumni are very generous with their time and access to knowledge,” says Primrose. “Orange blood runs deep around here, and our alumni want to keep Whitman students moving forward.”


EMPLOYER & INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

The school and its students also benefit from fostering corporate partnerships with major companies like the Big Four accounting firms and other blue-chip corporations. While this responsibility used to fall to the Career Center team, in 2019, a corporate relations role was created to grow existing connections and develop new ones between corporations and the Whitman School through mentoring, internships, experiential learning, career panels and job opportunities.

Sara Garvey, director of employer & industry partnerships, works with existing Whitman partners to seek areas of growth, employment trends, new skill set requirements and other ways to increase the educational value and reputation of the Whitman School. In addition, she looks to make inroads with new corporate partners, particularly large, national or international public companies that might not yet include Whitman in their recruitment cycles.

“This role has not only allowed the Career Center to focus more on our students but has shown a real commitment to fostering corporate partnerships that are mutually beneficial to companies and students. We have made progress through alumni and other Whitman supporters, and we’re looking to include more notable companies to the list in the future,” says Garvey. “Of course, companies want students from reputable, high-ranking business schools, but they also want well-rounded students who have both the academics and complementary skills that make them job ready on day one. We’re building a program so our corporate partners say, ‘I want a Whitman student.’”

“Candidly, I think we really are at an inflection point at the evolution of the Whitman School,” says Haynie. “We are working with the University to elevate our brand, reputation and student experience at Whitman with the goal of being in the top 25 undergraduate business schools. We’re investing millions of dollars into physical renovations, the introduction of new technology, strategic hiring of faculty, particularly those who are bringing innovative research to our school, and promoting innovation throughout everything we do at Whitman.”

“The future is very exciting for the Whitman School. We’ve had a record number of applications over the past four years, including almost 8,000 undergraduate applications for this year. This is a sure indication that students want what we have to offer. Clearly we’ve evolved, and I have such gratitude to every person connected to this school for making that happen, but it’s also important to note that this evolution is never ending,” Haynie adds. “Even as we celebrate 20 years of the Martin J. Whitman School and the many accomplishments we’ve had to date, we are continuing to lay out strategic plans to drive a continuous transformation plan that keeps us reaching for the next goal, the next need and the next evolution of the school. We have a bold vision for the future, and it is exciting to work toward what that will look like.” 



Inaugural Whitman Dean's Sustainable Development Goals Innovation Challenge Awards \$25,000 in Prizes

Bandages that monitor for diabetic foot ulcers and creating safe spaces for conversations about sexual wellness and self-love were just some of the winning innovations presented at the Whitman School Dean's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Innovation Challenge on April 18.

The challenge was a semester-long initiative that encouraged interdisciplinary collaboration as students honed their problem-solving and critical thinking skills around the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

An Elite Eight — the top four undergraduate and graduate submissions — thought to have the greatest potential to make an impact on sustainable development goals across disciplines were brought forward for final awards.

Round one of the Dean's Challenge was a comprehensive project report that was scored by alumni Jerome Ryan '99, '13 MBA, head of U.S. Operations at Carbonaires; and Karen Livingston '12 MBA, chief financial officer of CG Spectrum; as well as Professor of Finance Anna Chernobai and adjunct professor Mark Coleman. Scores in this round determined the Elite Eight.

On April 18, judges Mark Coleman, Anna Chernobai, Brian Macrae '01 MBA, managing partner, Synapse; Cary Mullin '08 MBA, vice president and general manager, broadband solutions, Belden Inc.; Megan Quill '05, vice president, finance, Smartest Energy; and Meg Tidd, CEO of VIP Structures; heard six-minute pitches from the Elite Eight vying for \$25,000 in cash prizes to help further their projects.

THE FOLLOWING AWARDS WERE PRESENTED AT THE EVENT:

The undergraduate Grand Prize of \$5,000

went to Moody Management LLC: The team of Jennie Bull '24, Julianna Hernandez '24 (FALK) and Emma Lueders '24 (VPA) created a sex-positivity community media platform with a safe space for conversations about sexual wellness and self-love. It addresses the SDG of good health, gender and reducing inequalities.

The graduate Grand Prize of \$5,000

went to DiabeTech, Tosin Alabi '25 M.S., Manjusha Baddipudi '25 M.S. (A&S) and Katayoon Faraji '25 MBA with an innovative "smart bandage" to prevent diabetic foot ulcers. DiabeTech addressed the SDG of good health, technology and reducing inequalities. [w](#)



Whitman's Panasci Business Competition Awards \$40,000 to Emerging Entrepreneurs

From delicious new food items to cloud management solutions and an innovative digital platform to connect local food producers and consumers, this year's Panasci Business Plan Competition showcased outstanding ideas from the most innovative, business-minded students across Syracuse University. This year's competition was held on April 5 and made possible by David Panasci '80, president of DHP Consulting, and sponsor of the first-, second- and third-place awards; Scott Friedberg '14, founder and CEO of Gilded Social, sponsor of the Gilded Social Rising Entrepreneur Award; and Nick Monzi '11, CEO and co-founder of Learn Fresh, sponsor of the Learn Fresh Award for Social Entrepreneurship, which was new this year.

The 2024 Panasci competition awarded a total of \$40,000 in prize money to the winning teams that demonstrated the best potential for growth and attracting outside financing.

First place and the Gilded Rising Social Entrepreneur Award went to Natasha Brao '22 (VPA), '23 M.S., '24 MBA, founder of Shooka. She received \$20,000 for the first place win and an additional \$5,000 for the Gilded Rising Social Entrepreneur Award. Brao's Shooka is a spiced tomato sauce based on the traditional Mediterranean dish shakshuka. She formalized her business in 2023 and started selling her product in March 2024.

Second place went to Waqar Hussain '25 MBA, Fulbright Scholar, founder of Iconnic.cloud, who was awarded \$7,500. Iconnic.cloud is a powerful cloud

management solution designed for small and mid-sized enterprises (SME) aiming to scale and grow.

Third place and \$2,500, along with the Learn Fresh Award for Social Entrepreneurship of \$5,000, went to Brielle Young '27 (IST), co-founder and CEO of Aggregate, a digital platform that aims to bridge the gap between producers and consumers in local communities. [w](#)



Inaugural Panasci Local Leadership Initiative

In an effort to better connect our Whitman students with the bounty of opportunities available here in Central New York, the inaugural Panasci Local Leadership Initiative was founded last fall. The program — offered in conjunction with Leadership Greater Syracuse — emphasized important economic growth and future-looking areas to raise students' awareness of what is available in Central New York. The longer-term impact of this program is to build community and have the students strongly consider launching their careers locally.

“It is my expectation that this initiative will not only give participants the chance to learn about leadership and the local community but will also help them recognize that Central New York can provide solid career opportunities along with an exceptional quality of life. I believe those who do stay and take leadership roles will have a profound impact on the future of the region,” says David Panasci.

This new initiative is made possible by Whitman supporter David Panasci '80. Students followed a program offered in collaboration with Leadership Greater Syracuse, an organization whose mission is to inspire current and future leaders to make a difference in the Syracuse community.

The launch of the program was very well received by students — among these was a surprisingly large number of international students, who saw the benefits of the

Syracuse area. The program began its second session in September 2024 with another great group of students. [w](#)



“I believe those who do stay and take leadership roles will have a profound impact on the future of the region.”

— David Panasci '80

Whitman's New Assistant Dean Works to Realign Alumni Engagement and Advancement to Improve Outreach

By Caroline K. Reff

In February, Michael Paulus joined the Whitman School as the assistant dean of advancement and external engagement. While he is new to Whitman, he is a familiar face, having worked at Syracuse Athletics for the past three years as senior associate athletic director, executive director of athletic development. As Paulus settles into his role at the Whitman School, he is focusing on realigning the structure of how Whitman communicates with its alumni, donors, parents and others as an essential part of the school's goal of becoming a top 25 undergraduate business school.

"The opportunity at Whitman was an attractive challenge, and I was eager to explore a unique growth opportunity on campus and broaden my experience in education," he explains of his new role. "And the chance to work with Vice Chancellor [J. Michael] Haynie and the leadership team at the Whitman School was very intriguing to me."

A Syracuse native, Paulus earned a bachelor's degree from the College of William & Mary, a master's of education in sports management from Virginia Commonwealth University, an MBA from Mount St. Mary's University and a Ph.D. in higher education administration from the University of Mississippi. He has built a career in the development and advancement space, having worked as the director of the Ram Athletic Fund, annual giving, at Virginia Commonwealth; senior director of athletic development at Mount St. Mary's; assistant athletic director, development, and director of development for major gifts at Ole Miss Athletics Foundation; and senior associate athletic director, development, at the United States Naval Academy.

In 2021, he joined Syracuse Athletics. During his time there, the athletics department marked its most successful fundraising in the University's history, raising nearly \$125 million. Paulus led the execution of the largest capital campaign in athletics, which resulted in the new Lally Athletics Complex. The development team doubled the fundraising average for Syracuse Athletics to more than \$40 million annually and recorded the two highest fundraising years on record.

Paulus hopes to use his experience to benefit the Whitman School. "We've been busy restructuring to be a better integrated and best-in-class alumni and advancement team that supports the student experience here at Whitman, assists with meeting faculty and staff needs, and invests in the physical space of the building to make certain it is a modern and welcoming place with the kind of upgrades and appeal necessary to reach our goal of becoming a top 25 business school," he says. "We're working together to build on the strong and positive alumni base that has long existed here by being more efficient in maximizing contact with those whose support we depend on to keep the trajectory of the Whitman School moving forward."

According to Paulus, the realignment is based on balancing internal support, acknowledgement of alumni and other stakeholders, and stewardship for the Whitman School. The team now has four staff members focused on traveling the country to gain support and educate alumni on the school's needs and priorities. Another addition to the team is a role dedicated to managing all internal operations and strategy to maximize communication and effectiveness. Lastly, Paulus created a stewardship role with a focus on recognizing donors and communicating more effectively with them to show the school's appreciation for their support.

"Working at Syracuse Athletics and now the Whitman School are two huge pride points for me," says Paulus, "and I'm fortunate to work with others who are equally committed to being more ambitious with our priorities to be integrated, dynamic and ever evolving. I am confident that we will make great strides forward in the coming years, which will truly benefit our entire Whitman family."



MEET THE ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT AND ADVANCEMENT TEAM

Michael Paulus, Assistant Dean for Advancement and External Engagement

Tyler Harding, Senior Director of Development

Alison Kessler, Director of Alumni Engagement

Elizabeth Holloway, Assistant Director, Events and Stewardship

Tatiana Motevalli-Oliner, Director of External Relations, Strategy and Operations

Tobi Joshuasville G'22, Coordinator, Advancement and External Engagement

Adrian Mitchell, Associate Director of Development

Skylar Pritchard, Associate Director of Development 



Being a Team Player Enhances Growth

By Renee Gearhart Levy

As a senior at New Trier High School outside of Chicago, Evan Kalish '25 set his sights on studying business in college. When he saw many of his classmates heading to different universities, he knew he wanted to chart his own path.

The Whitman School quickly rose to the top of his list. “I liked the way the core curriculum was organized and thought the Goodman IMPRESS Program was something unique,” he says.

His experience has been all he’d hoped for and more. Kalish has double majored in finance and business analytics with minors in economics and public health. Now heading into his senior year, he’s been selected as a Whitman Marshal for Commencement 2025. “I’m honored and super excited to represent our class and bring everyone together throughout this next year,” he says.

He’s had plenty of experience doing just that. This past year, Kalish co-chaired FreshFest, a three-day pre-orientation program for incoming Jewish students sponsored by Syracuse Hillel. “FreshFest is an awesome way to start the school year, packed with tons of activities and programming. It’s a great way for first-year students to acclimate to campus and for upperclassmen to give back,” he says.

In addition to leading FreshFest, Kalish is president of Hillel this year. “My goal is for Hillel to feel like home for the Jewish community on campus, a place where people feel welcomed, no matter what,” he says.


He’s also served as a tutor and is program coordinator for Balancing the Books, a financial literacy and life skills program offered at Syracuse City Public Schools, sponsored by both the Whitman School and the Shaw Center. “Last year we had around 60 tutors and are primed to expand to a fourth school, which is super exciting,” he says. “It’s probably my favorite activity I’ve been involved with on campus because it helped me realize how important community is and to give back to the communities I’m connected to.”

Clearly, Kalish likes working with teams toward a common goal. That’s one reason his summer internship at Deloitte Consulting in Chicago was such a good fit. “It was a great

“Last year we had around 60 tutors, [for Balancing the Books], and are primed to expand to a fourth school, which is super exciting. It’s probably my favorite activity I’ve been involved with on campus because it helped me realize how important community is...”

— Evan Kalish '25

experience because I was essentially doing the work of a first-year analyst,” he says. “My team was fantastic, and I am hoping to pivot into health care consulting.”

Kalish believes his experiences in and out of the classroom have laid the foundation for a successful career. “That’s exactly what I was looking for,” he says. “I wanted a degree that was flexible enough to support me down any career path I choose, and I’ve played into my strengths with the combination of business analytics and finance.” 



New Perspectives Bring Good Business

By Renee Gearhart Levy

Chidinma Chikwe '25 MBA aspires to be a business leader who not only drives profit but also prioritizes both the employees who power her company and the customers who trust her products.

“Coming into the business world, I observed that people who have always focused on data sometimes overlook the human perspective. I want to be the person who can bridge that gap, to say, ‘OK, the data looks good, but how about the people that this data represents?’”

Chikwe, a second-year MBA student from Nigeria, came to the Whitman School after earning a bachelor’s degree in international studies and diplomacy and a master’s degree in cultural studies, as well as several years working with international global advocacy and human rights organizations in Africa and Europe.

“My nontraditional business school background makes me stand out,” says Chikwe, who has gotten involved with Whitman Women in Business and the National Black MBA Association. “Having a multidisciplinary background that spans both the humanities and social sciences, and working in the nonprofit sector, I see things differently.”

Chikwe believes that’s a positive. She spent the summer as a product marketing intern at Microsoft in Seattle. “During my orientation, that was the first thing that my team said to me: ‘You bring such a unique perspective to the team. Do not hesitate to confidently share your thoughts and contribute your viewpoint,’” she says.


She chose to pursue a business degree because of her interest in technology. “I wanted to expand my horizons,” she says. “I have leadership and qualitative skills, and I was eager to enhance my quantitative abilities because I would like to be a well-rounded business leader.”

At Microsoft, Chikwe created messaging targeted at small- to medium-sized businesses for a new Microsoft product that reimagines the world of work. “It’s my first experience with corporate America and a huge shift from what I was doing

“My nontraditional business school background makes me stand out. Having a multidisciplinary background that spans both the humanities and social sciences, and working in the nonprofit sector, I see things differently.”

— Chidinma Chikwe '25 MBA

previously, but I loved it. Being involved with cross-functional collaboration with engineering and product was something I really enjoyed,” she says.

Chikwe, who chose the Whitman School on the recommendation of a friend, says the experience has exceeded her expectations. “I have felt so supported by faculty and staff and even my fellow students. I think the culture just rubs off such that everyone is looking to assist or direct you when they don’t know the answer,” she says. “It’s been a great year, and I’m looking forward to what the next year brings.” 



Cable Executive Is an Advocate of Lifelong Learning

By Renee Gearhart Levy

After three decades of leadership in the cable television industry, Nomi Bergman '24 MBA expanded her horizons by taking on the role of an adjunct professor at Syracuse University's iSchool, teaching Information Policy and Decision Making. Despite her extensive experience, she had reservations about not holding a master's degree.

At the same time, Bergman was increasingly hearing about online education in her role as a trustee of the University of Rochester, her undergraduate alma mater. That combination of factors sparked her to begin an online MBA program.

"Many of the world's challenges can be solved by broadening access to education, and I wanted to better understand the online experience, which can enable a greater reach," she says.

Bergman is completing the last three credits of an online MBA program at the Whitman School. "I took my time so that I could enjoy the experience and keep up with my job at the same time," she says. "I appreciate that Syracuse thoughtfully accommodated that."


She was pleasantly surprised by the robust educational experience her online courses provided. "There's a misconception that online learning lacks meaningful interactions with professors and peers, but that was not my experience," she says. "When you have exceptional professors like I experienced, the courses become truly engaging. And in an MBA program, the small cohort size and group projects foster strong connections among students."

Bergman admits she did not share the extent of her professional accomplishments with her classmates. She is a senior executive at Advance and president of Advance/Newhouse Investment Partnership, a subsidiary of Advance, and has served as president of its cable company, Bright House Networks, and CEO of 1010data. Over her career, she's been recognized with the National Cable & Telecommunications Association's Vanguard Award for Distinguished Leadership (2008), as Woman of the Year by Women in Cable Telecommunications (2011) and was inducted into the Broadcasting & Cable Hall of Fame (2022). She is also a longstanding member of the FCC Technological Advisory Council, serves on

"There's a misconception that online learning lacks meaningful interactions with professors and peers, but that was not my experience. When you have exceptional professors like I experienced, the courses become truly engaging."

— Nomi Bergman '24 MBA

the board of directors for HawkEye360, Visteon and Black & Veatch, and is a former Comcast board member. She joined the Syracuse University Board of Trustees in November.

Even with her distinguished career, Bergman found new skills to hone and develop. "I had a wonderful time taking the Negotiation course taught by Chancellor [Kent] Syverud and truly cherish how the course honed my perspective in negotiations," she says. "I take pride in officially joining the ranks of the Orange." 



Studying the Impact of Digital Technologies on Marketing Strategy and Influence

By Renee Gearhart Levy

As an undergraduate mechanical engineering student, Jaihyun Jeon '26 Ph.D. worked in a robotics laboratory that focused on developing walking-aid rehabilitation tools for patients with disabled legs. Although he received two patents for products he developed, the experience turned him in a new direction.

“I realized something crucial during that time,” Jeon says. “No matter how quality or innovative a product or technology is, it struggles to succeed without effective marketing strategies.”

Jeon followed his undergraduate degree with a master’s in marketing at Seoul National University with the goal of combining his engineering background with business and marketing insights. But, the master’s degree ignited a new passion.

Jeon is a fourth-year Ph.D. student in marketing at the Whitman School, where he is studying the impact of new digital technologies on marketing strategies and how these innovations influence market perceptions and firm performance.

In his first paper, “Marketing Innovations in Digital Technologies, a Systematic Review, Proposed Framework, and Future Research Agenda,” forthcoming in the *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, Jeon investigated how new digital technologies such as social media, artificial intelligence and virtual reality are used in market research and in developing marketing strategies.


Following his interest in new digital technologies, his subsequent paper focuses on social media. In his paper “Stock Market Responses to Negative Word of Mouth: Moderating Roles of Corporate Social Responsibility Reputation,” Jeon investigated whether corporate social responsibility reputation can mitigate the impact of negative word of mouth about the product on stock returns. He analyzed the data from South Korean firms listed in the KOSPI 200 index, which is similar to S&P 500 in the United States.

In July, Jeon traveled to Sydney to present the paper at the ISMS Marketing Science Conference. “It was an unforgettable experience,” he says. “The feedback I received was both insightful and invaluable, helping me to refine my research further. And one of the most rewarding aspects was engaging with Ph.D. students and professors from across the globe.”

“I realized something crucial during that time, no matter how quality or innovative a product or technology is, it struggles to succeed without effective marketing strategies.”

— Jaihyun Jeon '26 Ph.D.

Jeon came to Syracuse with his wife, Nalae Hong, who is a graduate student in media studies at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. The couple have 1-year-old identical twin daughters, born in Syracuse. “Aside from studying and caring for the girls, my wife and I are foodies and enjoy trying different restaurants and visiting wineries,” says Jeon.

He says the couple are open to career opportunities in both South Korea and the United States. “I aim to become a professor who is both an excellent teacher and a dedicated researcher,” says Jeon. “My goal is to inspire my students and make significant contributions to the field through my research.” 



MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DEAN OF ADVANCEMENT AND EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

In this issue of *Whitman* magazine, you have read about the evolution of our school — the many ways Whitman has continued to transform as a unit and enhance the experience for our students since our founding and especially in recent years.

To continue this trajectory and improve ever still, it is critical to have a supportive and engaged Orange community of alumni, parents and friends.

While we ask for the continued support of donors and alumni, we also acknowledge our need to support you in return.

Since I joined the Whitman team in February 2024, we have been working to evaluate and strategize how we as a team can better support not only our current students, faculty and staff but all Orange community members. As part of this plan, the newly formed Advancement and External Engagement team is committed to strengthening and rebuilding our connections with Whitman's greatest strength — donors, alumni and parents like you.

What does this mean for you? Through alumni and parent surveys, renewed relationships with our Whitman boards and conversations with donors, we have identified a number of new and exciting ways to generate more support and engage more effectively.

One of these new strategies is the creation of a Whitman Parents Advisory Council to give a voice to the parents of students as we elevate the experience for their loved ones. Another new opportunity is the introduction of a leadership giving society — the Whitman Leadership Circle — an exclusive group of alumni, parents and friends

who are committed to transforming the educational experience at Whitman through philanthropic leadership. Members of the Whitman Leadership Circle will receive year-round engagement and stewardship in recognition of their support, while having the ability to impact any area of their choice at the Whitman School through philanthropy.

As we continue to unveil and grow these new initiatives, I invite you to join us on our mission to elevate the position of Whitman as a global leader in contemporary business education and research.

Each member of our Whitman community plays an essential role in the future of our school, and our team is excited to offer a personalized engagement experience to all who would like to be a part of building this future.

Be Orange. Be Whitman.

Michael Paulus
Assistant Dean, Advancement and External Engagement

For the opportunities we create.
For the discoveries we support.
For the lives we change.
No matter your reason for giving,
every donation impacts future
generations of Orange.

Forever.



Jacquelyn '26 >



Our Young Alumni Profile is a Whitman graduate of the last five years. In this issue, meet Titilayo Otukoya '23, who earned an MBA with a concentration in finance and marketing. She previously earned a B.S. in international law and diplomacy from Babcock University in her home country of Nigeria. Today, Otukoya is an associate at Goldman Sachs Ayco, a leader in company-sponsored financial counseling programs for employees. Based in the Seattle office, Otukoya works on the executive financial planning team. Prior stops on Otukoya's career path include leadership roles at UC Digital Services, MyFarmbase Africa and AIESEC — which helps young people with leadership development and potential through cross-cultural exchanges as volunteers and interns — in Nigeria. She is a registered financial advisor with certifications in Series 7, SIE and Series 66 and has published research on the environmental impacts of war, securitization theory and its application in armed conflict in the *International Journal of Science and Research Archive*.

Q

Who is the most significant role model in your life?

A

My older sister has been the most significant role model in my life. Her disciplined and consistent approach to her academic endeavors inspired me from a young age. Watching her dedication and success in her studies made me love studying and strive for excellence in my own academic pursuits. Her example taught me the value of perseverance and strategic thinking, which has profoundly shaped my career aspirations.

Q

Was there an experience, class or project at Whitman that was especially impactful?

A

The Managerial Finance course with Assistant Teaching Professor in Finance Tianyue Zhao was the most transformative part of my MBA experience. Even though my focus was marketing, this course ignited a deep passion for finance and opened my eyes to new career possibilities. It reshaped my career trajectory and broadened my understanding of the financial world, ultimately guiding my decision to pursue a career in finance. Professor Tom Barkley was also a key part of my MBA. He really helped me understand complex finance concepts and made certain investment strategies much clearer. His strategic approach to using our class time to cover real-world finance applications was incredibly valuable and truly prepared us for the industry.

Q

How did Whitman prepare you for career success?

A

I decided to pursue an MBA in the United States to equip myself with the essential skills for career advancement. After exploring several options, I was drawn to Syracuse University's Whitman School, thanks to the sincere care and interest demonstrated by graduate recruitment officer Shri Ramakrishnan. The commitment of Whitman's staff and faculty to understanding and supporting my goals made me feel welcomed and confident in my decision. Syracuse University was the ideal choice.

Q

What factored into your decision to pursue an MBA at Whitman?


A

Whitman equipped me with a robust blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills essential for my role at Goldman Sachs. The diverse coursework, hands-on projects and strong emphasis on real-world applications honed my analytical and strategic thinking abilities. Furthermore, Whitman's supportive faculty and extensive alumni network provided invaluable mentorship and networking opportunities, which have been instrumental in advancing my career at Goldman Sachs.

Q

What was your fondest memory during your time at Syracuse University in the MBA program?

A

My fondest memory from my MBA program was working on team projects, especially during a second-year entrepreneurship course. We brainstormed, refined ideas and developed a prototype of our idea. I enjoyed the dynamic collaboration and creative energy. Although it was challenging, the experience was rewarding, as it highlighted the importance of diverse perspectives and teamwork in entrepreneurship, enhancing my practical skills and appreciation for innovative thinking. 



Putting People First on Every Team: Former Orange Soccer Player Sean Boyle '01 Leads Through Relationships

By Suzi Morales

Sean Boyle's life revolves around relationships. Whether he's talking about work, family or mentoring Syracuse student-athletes, it's clear that he thrives on human connection.

"People are first in everything I've ever done," says Boyle, who graduated in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in marketing management from the Whitman School, played defense on the Syracuse men's soccer team and today is vice president and general manager of global oncology at medical device giant BD.

With his orientation toward relationships, it is no surprise that Boyle particularly enjoyed group projects that allowed him to work with other students and apply what they were learning in class. "I remember working through case studies and dissecting how businesses function, why they fail or how they win, putting together portfolio strategies. Those are the things that I remember the most," he says.

After graduation, Boyle wasn't interested in simply having a job. He wanted a company that would support his growth. He started out in the leadership development program at Phillip Morris, at the time the parent company of Nabisco and Kraft Foods. The program invested in young leaders, teaching them skills from negotiation to professionalism.

After a few years, Boyle transitioned to pharmaceutical sales for Johnson & Johnson. In 2005, he started at C.R. Bard. There, he sold medical devices for the surgical setting and says he was fascinated with the work of the surgeons he met. He recalls thinking, "This is so cool that I get to work with these really smart people and see our products help people on the spot."

CULTURE AT THE CORE

Although he did not have a medical background, Boyle quickly adapted to the setting.

"You learn through the training that they provide, you learn disease states, you learn products and so on," he says. "The foundation of any industry, it's about people ... whether it's a solution or a service, you can learn the market, the product and value proposition, but at the core, it's about creating an accountable, resilient and winning culture to drive results."

Boyle held roles in sales and management at C.R. Bard. In 2017, it was acquired by BD. Although it was challenging to combine two companies with different

philosophies and cultures, Boyle says he approached the transition with a “curious, learning mindset” and a focus on serving customers and impacting patients throughout the world.

Boyle has been in BD’s oncology division since 2021, where he says he enjoys being in a business unit that is close to the patient, where he can see the products in the care pathway. Boyle makes time at least once a week to talk directly to customers, often the doctors and health care executives who see the products in action. He says he asks them, “If you lose sleep at night what is it about?”



“In every chapter of my life, whether it was Syracuse, business school, the organization or soccer team, it’s always been about the people and relationships and being able to align on that common goal.”

— Sean Boyle '01

SUPPORT ON AND OFF THE FIELD

Boyle credits his own support system, now and in the past, with his success. He grew up near the Syracuse campus and wanted to study business at a school near home. “The Whitman School was definitely a big driver for my decision when I was looking at schools,” he says.


During his time as a student-athlete, he would periodically bring his soccer teammates to his parents’ house in Manlius. “I could bring 20-plus hungry soccer players over there on a Sunday night, and my mom would make us food,” he recalls. His younger brother, Kevin Boyle, was also a member of the Orange soccer team; they played together for two years. Today, Boyle’s support system includes his wife, Julie, and three children, ages 6 to 11.

In addition to leading BD’s \$1 billion business providing devices from diagnosis to treatment for patients, Boyle has found the time to co-found SUccess, a new program started in 2023 to pair Syracuse soccer players with mentors and job opportunities.

Perhaps remembering those who supported him as an athlete and young professional, Boyle created SUccess together with Syracuse

soccer teammate Neeraj Chopra '00, who also was a classmate in the MBA program at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management.

According to Boyle, the SUccess program draws upon the expansive global network of Syracuse soccer alumni, many of whom came through the Whitman School, to help the team prepare for a professional life off the field. Boyle says it is one of only a few programs of its kind for collegiate soccer teams in the U.S. “We are grateful to have the opportunity to give back and make a positive impact on the program, student athletes and Syracuse University,” he says.

Looking back over all the phases of his education and career, Boyle says, “In every chapter of my life, whether it was Syracuse, business school, the organization or soccer team, it’s always been about the people and relationships and being able to align on that common goal. I am incredibly grateful for the many talented people I’ve had the privilege to work with, learn from and lead.” 





Father and son photos

Orange in the Family: Two Generations of Whitman Alumni Lead Family-Owned Business

By Suzi Morales

For David Gelles '76 and Matthew Gelles '10, business is in their blood and so is Syracuse Orange. The father/son duo leads NEFCO, the construction supply company that David founded in 1981. And while they have much in common — like growing up in an entrepreneurial family with strong Syracuse connections — they each bring a different approach that has enabled their family-owned business to thrive over decades.

David's mother, Phyllis Silver, and her brothers all graduated from Syracuse University in the 1950s. Her family owned a liquor distribution business. David's father's family also was in the distribution business, but they handled plumbing supplies. Growing up, David worked in various capacities in both family enterprises.

David majored in accounting at what was then the College of Business Administration. He also played freshman basketball and enjoyed attending numerous Syracuse sporting events during college and after, especially the Big East basketball tournament. A few years after graduation, David and his father began looking for a new opportunity. They bought a small industrial fastener business. That business became NEFCO.

“AN EASY CHOICE”

When it came time to develop the company branding, David says, “It was an easy choice. When I started the company back in 1981, we picked blue and orange, [with] orange as the predominant color. It was just a natural thing. The loyalty to

Syracuse is based around the friendships that I built when I was at school, and that grew throughout the years.”

That loyalty is hereditary. As a child, Matthew enjoyed going to Syracuse sporting events and meeting his father's friends. David says he attended almost every Big East men's basketball tournament, except one year when the championship was on the day Matthew was born. The team won it all that year, and David jokes that he was happy Matthew held off coming into the world until after the game.

What Matthew was less sure of, however, was whether he would follow in his father's footsteps to NEFCO. Like his father, he'd grown up working in the business, but he says, “Growing up, you dream of becoming an

NBA player or an astronaut, so as a young kid, I would ask myself, 'Is going into the construction supply industry for me?'"

As Matthew got closer to college, he realized that going into the family business at NEFCO was an amazing opportunity. To that end, he double majored in supply chain management, and entrepreneurship and emerging enterprises at the Whitman School with the idea that he could apply what he was learning to the family business.

"Focusing my education around NEFCO's industry gave me the chance to decide if joining the family business was the right thing for me. And then it just made all the sense in the world," Matthew says.

While David took basic business classes like accounting, marketing and logistics, he remarks that when Matthew was at Whitman more than 30 years later, the offerings were more specialized. Matthew recalls having conversations with his dad and grandfather over holiday dinners about how to apply what he was learning in his classes.

DREAMING AND PLANNING

When Matthew arrived on campus in 2006, NEFCO had grown steadily with three locations and a fourth about to open. There were around 50 employees. In 2010, he joined NEFCO full time, with plans for the next phase of the company. He created an ambitious

strategic plan to double the business every five years with the hopes of building a \$1 billion business.

"I thought he always was a dreamer," David says, "but it turned out he had a real plan, and his business acumen is way above mine." Today, NEFCO has more than a thousand employees with 41 locations across the United States. In 2023, Matthew was awarded the 'CUSE50 award, which recognizes the 50 fastest-growing businesses owned or run by Syracuse alumni.

What hasn't changed is the company's focus. David says, "We've stuck with what we're really good at, as opposed to being a very broad-based construction supply company. We've stayed in our lane, and that's something that I grew up on: Do what you do best, and be the best at it."

In 2022, David stepped down as president and CEO, and Matthew took over, along with David's son-in-law Ron Cipriano as executive vice president and chief operating officer. David's current role is executive chairman ("DG the EC," he quips). David remains deeply involved in the company's day-to-day operations, while Matthew directs the strategy.

As the company grows, they both are working to keep the atmosphere of a family-owned business. Matthew's older sister, Stefanie Gelles Ochs, who graduated from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications in 2006, has worked at NEFCO throughout the years. Now her husband, David Ochs, works in the business, helping lead NEFCO's e-commerce strategy.

David Gelles has seven grandchildren, at least one of whom is interested in carrying on the tradition. "I'm hoping that they'll be the next generation that comes into the business and keeps building it," he says. "I think there'll be a substantial nationwide business here for them when they're ready." 🍷

"It was an easy choice. When I started the company back in 1981, we picked blue and orange, [with] orange as the predominant color. It was just a natural thing."

— David Gelles '76



"Focusing my education around NEFCO's industry gave me the chance to decide if joining the family business was the right thing for me. And then it just made all the sense in the world."

— Matthew Gelles '10



From Track Star to Trash Entrepreneur: Former Orange Athlete Gregory Lettieri '04 Runs Fast-Growing Waste Management Tech Company

By Suzi Morales

As a Syracuse student, Gregory Lettieri '04 was a member of the track team. The consumer studies major and retail management minor in the Whitman School ran the 200-meter dash.

Twice as long as the all-out sprint of the 100 meters, the 200-meter dash requires a combination of speed, strategy and discipline. It was the perfect event for Lettieri.

Today, Lettieri is the co-founder and CEO of Recycle Track Systems (RTS), a waste management and recycling company that uses technology to provide efficient services and increase sustainability. The former runner combines the work ethic from his days as an athlete with the lessons in business strategy he learned in the Whitman School to building novel solutions for an antiquated industry.

GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH BEING UNCOMFORTABLE

"I always had a business mindset," Lettieri says. "I saw myself as being an entrepreneur." As a Whitman student, he built his class schedule around this interest.

As a new graduate, Lettieri wouldn't have pictured himself as a waste management entrepreneur. He started out in the telecommunications industry, quickly rising to

management positions with Sprint (now T-Mobile) and Asia-based global telecom company Pacnet.

"I always put myself in rooms that I probably didn't belong in, meaning I would ask the VPs or directors or SVPs if I could sit in one of their strategy sessions or if I could present," Lettieri says. "And sometimes they said no, but a lot of the times they said yes... I always put myself in uncomfortable situations. Fast forward to where I am today; I'm not uncomfortable anymore."

In 2015, Lettieri started RTS with a neighbor, a fourth-generation member of a family in waste management. By 2017, the company had its first investment of \$11.7

million from Volition Capital and was providing waste services for around 500 clients, including three major hospitals and the Barclays Center in Brooklyn. Currently, he says, RTS has 250 employees, close to \$200 million in revenue and roughly \$150 million of venture capital investment money.



“I always put myself in rooms that I probably didn’t belong in, meaning I would ask the VPs or directors or SVPs if I could sit in one of their strategy sessions or if I could present.”

— Gregory Lettieri '04

When Lettieri founded RTS, he says his Whitman education had set him up to be able to build solid business strategies. “It was really the studying of storytelling when it comes from a marketing perspective and how to shape data to achieve sales and marketing,” he says. “Those were always really fascinating for me, and when I launched RTS, that was a very easy part of building the strategy.”

RTS’ tracking platform coordinates waste and recycling pickups for customers like stadiums, convention centers, restaurant groups and municipalities. The company also developed a system

called Pello that uses sensors and cameras to prepare sustainability reports about the contents of a customer’s waste.

GOING FAST AND GETTING IT RIGHT

In his days as a student-athlete, Lettieri kept a rigorous schedule of training and studies that set him up for the discipline required as an entrepreneur. Now, he says, “My typical day allows me to experience a whole different plethora of activities.”

According to Lettieri, his Whitman education helps him with these daily activities ...“public speaking skills from the business perspective; understanding economics, micro and macro; understanding math and statistics, as well as marketing and how to build a product; how to market a product; how to sell a product; how to manage a P&L from a finance perspective. I used the classes to really train myself,” he says.

Lettieri’s Whitman connections remain strong. He has judged entrepreneurship competitions and hired current and former Whitman students. He appreciates the pool of vetted candidates available through the Syracuse network. “Plus, it doesn’t hurt to have someone to chat with about Orange basketball,” he says.

In 2023, Lettieri was one of the inaugural winners of the ‘CUSE50 award, given to the 50 fastest-growing businesses owned or led by Syracuse alumni. “Maybe it’s the track and field piece in me to run fast, but I like to try to do things as fast as we can do,” he says. “Obviously they need to be done right, but to do them right and do them fast is what separated us from being a successful business and company now to where we are today, which is one of the leading providers of waste services across North America.”



Unlike the 100-meter dash, the 200-meter race doesn’t follow a straight line. Rather, runners wind their way around the corner of the track. Lettieri encourages current students to make their own way, even if it sometimes seems winding. “Each person has their own path,” he advises aspiring entrepreneurs, “and it’s not a straight line.” ^W



Five Honored With Annual Awards for Outstanding Commitment to Whitman

On June 13, the Whitman School hosted its annual evening of appreciation and recognition for engaged alumni, corporate partners and friends at The Westin New York Grand Central in New York City. The event is held to show gratitude for those who directly contribute to Whitman’s success each academic year. A highlight of the evening is the awards ceremony during which a select few of Whitman’s most dedicated alumni and friends are honored. This year, five outstanding alumni were recognized for their commitment to the school and its students.

THE JONATHAN J. HOLTZ ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR AWARD

This award recognizes an outstanding alumna or alumnus for professional accomplishments and service to the University. Established in 1986 by Jonathan J. Holtz ’78, it is the highest honor given by the Whitman School. This year’s recipient is **David Nass ’91**, managing director and head of real estate finance at UBS Investment Bank.

Nass is a member of Whitman’s Real Estate Board and has been highly engaged in real estate and finance career programming through career exploration trip visits at UBS, panel discussions and networking events. Nass’ commitment to Whitman and Syracuse University also includes significant philanthropic support. The recent launch of the Nass Mental Health Initiative was made possible through the generous financial support of his family, including wife Dina ’91 (A&S), and children Sophie ’24 (Falk), Tyler and Abigail ’26 (VPA). This initiative equips students with the tools to identify mental health issues, while also destigmatizing



David Nass

concepts related to mental health in business settings. The Nass family gift provides students with guidance and priorities to help them be successful in both business and life.



Jasmine Bellamy

THE WHITMAN DEAN'S CITATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

This award recognizes Syracuse University alumni, corporate partners and friends who exemplify a significant commitment to help the school prepare and place future business leaders. This year's honorees are **Jasmine Bellamy '92** and **Steve Kron '95**.

Bellamy is the founder and spiritual director of Love 101 Ministries. She previously served as vice president of merchandising, planning and allocations at Reebok. Through her position at Reebok, Bellamy partnered with Associate Professor of Accounting Willie Reddic G'12, Ph.D. '13, who serves as associate dean for business education, to provide accounting students with real-life business analytics data from Reebok for project work to enhance the learning experience. She has also hosted MBA students at the Reebok headquarters in Boston, lectured in Syracuse University classes, mentored students and provided financial support for student organizations on campus.



Steve Kron

Kron, who serves as director of Americas equity research at Goldman Sachs, has been a foundational pillar for the school's partnership with the firm. He has been instrumental in taking on student interns and opening doors for more Whitman students, which has resulted in an increased number of direct placements at Goldman Sachs. Kron has sponsored student group visits to the firm during New York City career exploration trips, participated in on-campus student programming and provided philanthropic support for Whitman students.



Catherine Cummings

THE ORANGE OVATION AWARD

This award is given to highly engaged young alumni who have graduated within the last 15 years, representing Whitman's influential future alumni leaders through their professional success and service to the school and University. This year, Orange Ovation awards were presented to **Catherine Cummings '18 (WSM/MAX/NEW)** and **Bryan Samimi '16**.

Cummings is the manager of allocations at Saks Off Fifth and a member of the Young Whitman Advisory Council, on which she was recently named the membership committee chair. She was selected for the Orange Ovation award for her consistent participation in student programming and alumni engagement events, as well as her efforts in making career connections and mentoring students.



Bryan Samimi

Samimi, who serves as vice president of investment banking at Lincoln Financial, was honored for his exemplary commitment to students through his engagement with Whitman's Career Center. He has been actively involved in recruiting six students to date and substantially growing the Orange alumni base at Lincoln International, while also providing students with the resources and information to break into investment banking.

"At Whitman, we are preparing students for future careers, and that means having the skills, abilities, attitudes and networks to navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead," says Interim Dean Alex McKelvie, who presented the awards. "To do so, we rely on the generosity of time, treasure and talent from the greater Orange family. These award winners represent the strength of education and overall quality and reputation of the Whitman School and Syracuse University, and we are proud to recognize them." 

Whitman Advisory Council's Evolution to Bring Renewed Opportunities to Whitman and its Students

Since the Whitman Advisory Council (WAC) was established 50 years ago, its respected members and business leaders have been an instrumental resource to the Whitman School and its students. In response to a continuously competitive business world, the WAC is evolving the way it assists Whitman in achieving its mission.

“Our veteran board members have helped build a strong foundation that has set Whitman up for success through philanthropy, mentoring and knowledge. But we are now at an inflection point where the business, analytical and technology skills our students need are changing quickly, and their interpersonal and leadership skills need to be honed to successfully operate in different environments. In response, our council needs to be agile to ensure we are advising Whitman leadership in the most effective way possible,” says WAC Chair Tracy Barash ’89.

Principal of her strategic advisory firm Cut-Thru Consulting, Barash is a senior-level executive with extensive experience in brand management and strategic planning, including 19 years in various roles with Warner Bros. Discovery. She is in her second year as the chair of the WAC and her fifth year as a member. Barash is a previous president of the Syracuse University National Alumni Board, serving as a member of the University’s Board of Trustees during her tenure. She was honored by the Whitman School in 2019 with the Dean’s Citation for Exceptional Service.

“When I was asked to take on the position of chair, my goal was to maximize the talents of the Advisory Council and increase its interaction with students to ensure they are holistically prepared to meet the challenges of the business world when they graduate. We’re all busy people, but we are willing to spend our time to help Whitman continue its upward trajectory toward becoming a top 25 business school. To do so, we needed more structure to leverage the expertise and advice of our WAC members,” she says.

Therefore, five new committees were formed to provide WAC members with defined opportunities aligned with Whitman’s broader goals. These committees include

WAC THREEFOLD MISSION:


- ◆ to provide guidance, counsel, financial support and assistance to the Whitman School and its leadership
- ◆ to promote the objectives and strategic goals of the school, its students, faculty and alumni
- ◆ to provide a link to the business community.

Experiential Learning; Nominating and Membership; Career Exploration and Opportunities; Giving and Stewardship; and Strategic Initiatives, and they will allow the council to be flexible in addressing business trends and topics as they arise. The committee structure allows council members to participate in initiatives that will have direct impact on students, as well as alumni.

“Today’s Whitman community exhibits a diversity of backgrounds and experiences that we hope to mirror in our own membership,” she says. “This will allow the council to better assist the school and reflect the diverse workforce that awaits our Whitman graduates.”

Barash and the WAC membership will continue to work with Vice Chancellor of Strategic Initiatives and Innovation and Whitman Executive Dean J. Michael Haynie and Interim Dean Alex McKelvie to fine-tune the council’s role and continue to prioritize its efforts.

“We are grateful for the commitment of the members of the Whitman Advisory Council — past and present — and we are equally excited to see how the WAC’s evolution will further benefit the Whitman School under Tracy’s leadership,” says McKelvie. “We rely on the Advisory Council’s advice and support on many levels that result in our ability to give our students opportunities that will set them up for a lifetime of success in a very competitive business arena.”

Barash is certain that the new structure is a positive step in the trajectory of the Whitman School. “We are proud to be a part of this new, exciting chapter in the school’s history,” she says. “It’s challenging, yet essential to show the next generation of Whitman students how much we are dedicated to their success.” 

In Memoriam

The Whitman family remembers three Whitman Advisory Council (WAC) members who passed away earlier this year: Michael J. Falcone '57, Bernie Kossar '53, L'55 and H. John Riley Jr. '61 (ESC).



MICHAEL J. "MIKE" FALCONE '57

An entrepreneur and commercial real estate expert, Michael Falcone earned a bachelor's degree in real estate from Whitman. He was the youngest licensed real estate salesperson in New York state at the age of 16 and built a career in real estate development. In 1969, he co-founded the Pyramid Companies and, a decade later, his own property management and development company, the Pioneer Group, known today as the Pioneer Companies.

Falcone received the Whitman School's Jonathan J. Holtz Alumnus of the Year award in 1992. He and his late wife, Noreen, helped establish the Entrepreneurship and Emerging Enterprises program and the Michael J. Falcone Endowment Fund for Entrepreneurship and were early supporters of the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities program. The couple also created the Falcone Chair in Real Estate. Falcone served on the University's Board of Trustees and was named a Life Trustee.



BERNARD "BERNIE" KOSSAR '53, L'55

Bernie Kossar earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Whitman and a law degree from Syracuse University College of Law. He started his career with a law firm in New York City, eventually joining Franklin Store Corp., where he became president and chief operating officer. He held various corporate leadership roles before joining W.B. Grace & Co. as senior vice president of seven retail companies. He also founded OW Office Warehouse Inc., eventually selling to OfficeMax. Later, Kossar founded Millennium Partners LLP and Kossar Family LLLP, both of which he ran with grandson Michael Kossar '13.

Kossar served as the chair of the WAC for 13 years. In his honor, Whitman's fourth level is officially called the Kossar Executive Floor. He also served on the University's Board of Trustees Advancement and External Affairs, and Finance committees and was named a Life Trustee. Kossar was a member of Syracuse Law's board of advisors and a member of the Society of Fellows. Whitman honored Kossar with the Jonathan J. Holtz Alumnus of the Year award in 1996, and the University honored him with the Outstanding Alumni Award in the same year.

Kossar and wife, Carol Karetzky Kossar '53 (A&S), established the University's Bernard R. Kossar Endowed Scholarship, as well as other initiatives benefitting Whitman, Syracuse Law and other schools and colleges across campus.



H. JOHN RILEY JR. '61 (ECS)

John Riley graduated from the University with a degree in engineering. He began his career in the mailroom at manufacturer Crouse-Hinds, eventually working his way to company CEO and later led the parent company, Cooper Industries.

A lifetime member of the WAC, Riley also served on the University's Board of Trustees and was named a Life Trustee. A 2017 endowed gift from Riley and his wife, Diane, established the H. John Riley Dual Degree Engineering/MBA Program. The couple also supported a number of University initiatives to ensure meaningful experiences were accessible to all students.

In 2019, he was the recipient of the Dritz Life Trustee Award. At the time of his death, Riley was serving as one of the chairs of the University's National Campaign Executive Committee for the Forever Orange Campaign. 🍊

1970-1989

NEW POSITIONS AND PROMOTIONS:



Michael Plaksin '78, president and CEO of Alchera X, was featured in the 2024 C-Suite Magazine, produced by Los Angeles Times' B2B Publishing, as one of the issue's CEO Visionaries. Alchera X is an AI tech company engaging in the development and distribution of products involving visual AI, AI data, facial recognition, augmented reality, wildfire detection and health care solutions.

Jeffrey Jurick '76: Associate Broker, AdvisoRE LLC

Christopher H. DeVoe '79: Treasurer, Onondaga Chapter, Adirondack Mountain Club

Earl Evens Jr. '79: Executive in Residence, Culverhouse College of Business at the University of Alabama

Jeffrey Eades '85: Partner, GEL Partners

Richard Buckanavage '88 MBA: Managing Director, Reinsurance Group of America Inc.

Michele Simons '88: Managing Director, 5C Investment Partners

Lee Zaretsky '89: Member, Board of Directors, Steel Framing Industry Association



Gisele Marcus '89, a member of the Syracuse University Board of Trustees, has been named vice dean, office of equity, diversity and inclusion at Washington University in St. Louis. Marcus was also recognized by CIO Views as one of the Top 10 Women Leaders in DEI. An author and frequent contributor to industry and academic publications, Marcus recently authored the Entrepreneur.

com article "How to Lead a Multigenerational Workforce to Success" and provided perspectives in the BBC.com article "DEI is a lightning rod for controversy — but the practice isn't dead."

KEEPING IN TOUCH:

Doric Earle '81 is a professor of practice at Southern Methodist University and co-founder of Restorative Farms. He mentors individuals from underserved communities to become entrepreneurs. Earle shares about his endeavors on his podcast, Reinvent4good.

1990-1999

NEW POSITIONS AND PROMOTIONS:

Matt Prohaska '92: Advisory Board Member, Sustainable Media Center

Marc Berman '93: Regional Sales Manager, Luminys Systems Corp.

Evan Aronowitz '94: Director, Supply Strategy, Intel Corp.

Mike Jones '95 MBA: Senior Director HR Service Center, Technology and Analytics, UCLA Health

Melanie Littlejohn '97 MBA: President and CEO, Central New York Community Foundation

Aisha Thomas-Petit '98: Chief Human Resources Officer, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:



Jennifer S. Wilkov '90 (WSM/NEW), president of Your Book Is Your Hook, business consultant, TED/keynote speaker, No. 1 best-selling author, podcast host and executive producer, was selected by the International Association of Top Professionals as the Top Motivational Speaker, Business Consultant and Best-Selling Author of 2024.

2000-2009

NEW POSITIONS AND PROMOTIONS:

Jay Mandel '00: Founder, Marketing Accountability Council

Stephen Wilkinson '00 MBA: Director, National Accounts, Aveo Oncology

John G. Dean '04 MBA/M.P.A.: Associate Director, Defense Programs, Whitman School of Management, lieutenant colonel (retired)

Chad Wainman '04: Team Lead, Gallagher Basset

Jessica Costner '07: Global Procurement, Head of Raw Materials and Manufacturing Services and Capex, Diageo

Jamie Lawrence '07: Director, Government Affairs and Public Policy, Adobe

Andrew Miller '07: Partner, Landing Point

Harshal Shah '07 MBA: Global Head of Device Strategy and Innovation, Sanofi

Eric Steckelman '07: Executive Vice President of Business Development, Deerfield Agency of Brand

Rick Strasser '07 MBA: Managing Director, Grant Thornton (US)

David Brian Cook '08 MBA: Financial Management Instructor, Management Concepts

Samantha O'Connell '09: Controller, Carrols Corp.

2010-2019

NEW POSITIONS AND PROMOTIONS:

Zachary Pienowski '10: Lead Project Manager, National Grid

Jason Ross '10: Managing Director, Cresset Partners

Daryl Cheung '11: Supply Chain Manager, Samsung Semiconductor

David Seon '11: National Account Manager, Constellation Brands - Circle K

Maple Chen '12: Principal, Accord Group Holdings LLC

Nicole Darland '12: Account Executive, Cole Haan

Nicole Lavon '12: AVP, Data & Analytics, AdTheorent

Jeff Rickert '12: Head of Commercial Mortgage-Backed Securities Underwriting, Real Estate Finance, UBS

Jordan Fox '13: Partner & Executive Producer, Par 3 Podcast

Davis Hull '13 MBA: Regional Advisor Consultant, MainStay Investments

Samantha Raguso '13: Product Development and Sourcing Manager, Women's Elevated Apparel Brands, Walmart

Elizabeth Lafontaine '14: Director of Research, Placer.ai

Alex Schwartz '14: Project Manager, MRK Partners

Charlene Bozzi '15: Senior Director, Human Resources, Novanta Inc.'s Precision Medicine Business Unit

Prat Dasari '15 MBA: Channel Manager, Meta

Margot Dileno '15: Ads Marketing, Go-To-Market/Digital Strategy, Netflix

Michael George Jr. '15: Manager, Sales Strategy, Salesforce

Rennie Rechel '15 MBA: Chief, Budget Operations Resolving Funds, United States Air Force

Ivan Robles '15: Director, Global Strategic Planning, Salesforce

Jordan Arzi '16: Director, Credit, Peachtree Group

Devin Carbaugh '16 MBA: Chief Product Officer, Swiminsta

Emily Goodman '16: Technical Trainer, BlackLine

Michelle Hockett '16: Director of Marketing, Epic Records

Jake Horowitz '16: Vice President, Retail Leasing, Colliers

Gary Knapick '16 MBA: Associate Vice President, Global Asset Management and Reliability, Sanofi

Bryan Samimi '16: Investment Banking Vice President, Lincoln International

David H. Baker Jr. '17: Supervisor, Finance Transformation, Arthrex

Ian Brown '17: Manager, KPMG

Adrianna Carello '17: Senior Marketing Manager, Roth's

William Carew '17: Business Consultant, OneDigital

Adelina Colucci '17: Buyer, Brunello Cucinelli

Patrick Condy '17: Vice President, Evercore

Reza Daneshmand '17: Vice President Finance, HUDDL3 Group

Nicholas Demmel '17: Senior Manager, Customer Marketing, FanDuel

Jamie Gelberg '17: Manager, Analytics and Metrics, Mastercard

Robert Hall '17: Senior Manager, Finance, Fidelity Investments

Nicholas Hodge '17: Tax Supervisor, WilkinGuttenplan

Anila John '17 MBA: Associate Director, Insights and Search Engine Optimization, Publicis Canada

Viraj Khanna '17: Investment Banking Vice President, Barclays Investment Bank

Christopher Lill '17 MBA: Senior Group Manager, Hyundai Motor America

Javaughn Loftman '17: Brand Partnerships Manager, TikTok

Taylor Motta '17: Tax Manager, RenaissanceRe

Eva Narun '17: Internal PR and Marketing Manager, MoroccanOil

Caroline Pusak '17: Merchandise Planner, Beall's Outlet

Evan Ronan '17: Finance Manager, Brookfield Properties

Sam Sirota '17: Vice President, Greystone Monticello LLC

Angela Anastasi '18: Business and Legal Affairs, RWS Global

Eli Carter '18: Senior Account Executive Small and Medium-Sized Business, Attentive

Conor Chase '18: SMB Account Executive, Emerging Markets, Okta

Angelo Damiano '18: Co-Founder, Chief Product Officer, Scrollmark

Matt Dumont '18: Vice President of Finance, Elevate Entertainment Group

Phil Fasano '18 MBA: Director Strategic Sourcing, Food and Beverage, Supply Chain, Carnival Corp.

Greg Fligor '18: Senior Associate, Nautic Partners LLC

Max Gerstman '18 M.S.: Director, Client Solutions and Analytics, Initiative

Ana Gomes '18: Senior Associate, Investment Banking, G2 Capital Advisors

Andrew Litman '18: Associate, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

Refjola Malushi '18: Associate Director, Barings

Robert Melamed '18: Corporate Finance Manager, Coty

Angela Montague '18: Supply Planning Manager, Shark Beauty, SharkNinja

Richard Nigro '18: Deputy Project Manager, Health Communications, ICF Next

Sally Phelps '18: Associate Director of Influencer and Celebrity Marketing, Free People

Jack Reardon '18: Vice President, Data Analytics, Havas Media Network

Mike Schiavone '18 MBA: Vice President, General Manager, Terma Inc.

Jason Shaiman '18: Senior Associate, K2 HealthVentures

Aaliyah Smith '18: Senior Customer Success Manager, Amazon Web Services

Robinson Torres '18: Senior Strategist, Learner Experience at Everfi

Daniel Wolff '18: Vice President, HSBC

Rebecca Blekht '19: Vice President, Product Manager, Synchrony

Anna Bupp '19: Supervisor, Investment Management, Publicis Health Media

Emily Dann '19: Technical SEO Lead, Terakeet

Philippe Daou Neto '19: Director of New Business, Amazon Business

Prachi Dedhia '19: Manager, Genpact

Esther Jo '19: UX Designer II, BetMGM

Daniel Lehrman '19: Inside Sales Representative, CaptivateIQ

Zachary Levine '19: Senior Sales Executive, athenahealth

Xi (Angela) Liu '19: Chief of Staff, Beyond Robotics

Nick Morelli '19: Principal Strategic Analyst, Pacific Gas and Electric Company

David Nam '19: Manager, PwC

Luke Rinaldi '19: Associate, Real Estate Finance, First Citizens Bank

Connor Rotenberg '19: Account Supervisor, BGB Group

Erin Sciortino '19: Finance and Strategy Manager, Liftoff Mobile

Lauren Sorrells '19 MBA: Director of Operations, IATSE Local 695

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:

Ron Arana '19 MBA, managing partner of the Arana Group, a construction company based in San Francisco, was one of 35 individuals selected from a pool of 900 applicants for the Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur Access Network, a business accelerator program for minority CEOs and founders. Additionally, Arana Group was featured in a video produced by the Golden State Warriors and United Airlines in partnership with the Western Regional Minority Supplier Development Council. The video spotlighted Arana's entrepreneurial success story as part of the Franchise Fund program, which sponsors minority-owned businesses to join WRMSDC's Corporate Ready Program.



Olivia Bowser '16, founder and CEO of Liberate and mindfulness expert, entrepreneur and speaker, recently launched Mentally Fit podcast.

2020-2024

NEW POSITIONS AND PROMOTIONS:

Davis Blum '20: Investment Banking Associate, Piper Sandler

Cole Charney '20: Research Associate, Axiom Investors

Kristen Corrigan '20: Account Executive, Growth Business, Salesforce

Parker Finestone '20 MBA: Manager, Technical Accounting Advisory Group, EY

Claire (Huang) Hollasch '20 MBA: Senior Product Manager, CoorsTek Inc.

John Jaroslowski '20: Territory Manager, JSS GC, Milwaukee Tool

Cat Jordan '20: Director of Investments, Lead Sports and Health Tech Partners

James Kang '20: Senior Financial Analyst, Warner Music Group

Sydney Levy '20: Portfolio Financing Analyst, Viking Global Investors

Quetzal Martinez '20: Board Member, Social Media Club Global

Liam McGhee '20: Senior Associate, Sourcing and Production, Boll & Branch

Jason Ohlstein '20: Director of Business Administration, All American Assisted Living

Luz Perez '20: Culture Strategist, Monks

Brendan Phair '20: Audit Supervisor, Gray, Gray & Gray

Rachel Pinkel '20: Associate Account Manager, Beautiful Destinations

Dustin Pruett '20 MBA: Account Executive, Solberg Financial

Mitch Rudish '20: Associate, IR, Levine Leichtman Capital Partners LLC

Nicholas Seis '20: Portfolio Management Associate, Evensky & Katz / Foldes Wealth Management

Sam Turecamo '20: Finance Business Partner, New England Gas, National Grid

Perri Vimadatal '20: Revenue Finance Manager, X

Dominique Visser '20 MBA: Program Analyst, U.S. Department of State

Kyle Alvarado '21: Audit Senior, Deloitte

Domenic Biamonte '21: Investment Portfolio Associate, Raymond James & Associates Inc.

Devon Canora '21: Account Executive, Benchmark IT - Technology Talent

Jermaine Coles '21: Portfolio Management Associate, Hall Capital Partners LLC

Michelle DeMaria '21: Assistant Vice President, HSBC Innovation Banking

Lauren Fish '21: Public Relations Executive, Guzman y Gomez Mexican Kitchen

Caroline Mazza '21 M.S.: Account Executive, MMGYNJF

William Mellusi '21: Associate, Greystone

Emmanuel Ogando '21: Project Accountant, Turner Construction Company

Shantal Risk '21: Human Resources Executive Assistant, LionsPride Assistant LLC

Roxanne Rosenberg '21: Supply Chain and Procurement Manager, La Fermière US

Todd Roshong '21: Marketing Analyst, AQR Capital Management

Jon Russ '21 MBA: Special Project Lead, Dandy

James Smyth '21: Consultant, Financial and Strategic Solutions, Public Consulting Group

Russell Walker '21: Sales Associate, Men's Specialty, Ralph Lauren

Joshua Zymet '21: Financial Analyst, Cord Meyer Development Company

William Cyrus Garrett '22 MBA: Senior Vice President, Spero Studio

Hilli Goldhar '22: Investment Banking Analyst, RBC Capital Markets

Melissa Gwilt '15 (FALK), '18 M.S., G'21 (MAX), '22 MBA: Director of Budget and Administration, Syracuse University Libraries

Jeff Hingst '22 MBA: Senior Analyst, Debt and Structured Finance Multifamily Capital Markets, Newmark

Alexander Jebaily '22: Junior Equity Derivates Broker, TP ICAP

Vanessa Laungaphay '22: Assistant Video Editor, RF Studio53

Jonathan Leibowitz '22 MBA: Associate Product Manager, Kensho Technologies

Lauren Levin '22: Associate Consultant, Cicero

Cecilia Marchini '22 M.S.: Business Analyst, Gupta Media

Amit Mizrahy '22 MBA: Senior Assurance Associate, ChonReznick LLP

Jenna Smooke '22: Junior Sales Manager, Happier

Wilyanet Contreras '23: Resident Service Manager, Willow Garden Memory Care

Tyler Fleischer '23 MBA: Director of Marketing, The Tie

Sophie Green '23: Business Technology Solutions Analyst, Deloitte

Danielle Kolodkin '23 MBA: Manager, Brand Partnerships and Consumer Engagement, Abrams

Reid Ploshnick '23: Business Development Representative, Vcheck

Evi Susilowati '23 MBA: Production Manager, Frazer & Jones LLC

Jake Bard '24: Capital Markets Associate, Lantern Real Estate Advisors + Partners

Kristyn Kleinhenz '24: Information Technology Analyst, Jeffries



FORMER PROFESSOR ALEJANDRO S. AMEZCUA

Alejandro S. Amezcua G'05 (MAX), '10 Ph.D. (MAX) worked at the Whitman School from 2010 to 2020. He joined as a post-doctoral researcher and later served as an assistant professor of entrepreneurship until he left to join the IÉSEG School of Management in France. His work on the effectiveness of incubators to support new venture development, published in *Academy of Management Journal* in 2013, is perhaps still the leading study in that area. He received the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) award for best dissertation in the field of entrepreneurship in 2011, among other accolades and accomplishments.

Amezcua received a bachelor of arts in anthropology and comparative studies in race and ethnicity from Stanford University and before joining Whitman he completed an M.P.A. in public administration and Ph.D. at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. Earlier in his career, Amezcua researched entrepreneurship policy at the Max Planck Institute and worked for the National Council of Nonprofit Associations as associate director for communications and outreach, where he improved public understanding of the nonprofit sector and forged stronger alliances with government, corporations and foundations. He also worked for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, where he supported grant-making that addressed race relations and the management capacity of the nonprofit sector. He was a former Jane Addams Fellow in Philanthropy, where he studied nonprofit management and fundraising at Indiana University's Center on Philanthropy.

His expert opinion has been included on NPR, in *Bloomberg Businessweek* and *The New York Times*. Amezcua passed away in Paris on July 25, 2024. [W](#)

Barnes Award Acknowledges First-Year Student Excellence, Promotes Future of the Whitman School

By Caroline K. Reff



Fifty first-year students from the Whitman School's Class of 2027 received a surprise over the 2023-24 winter break when they were notified that they had been selected for a \$5,000 Barnes Award for Academic Excellence, a scholarship to be used toward their sophomore year tuition in 2024-25. This award was not something any of them applied for or expected, but it was an acknowledgement based on merit and the overall excellence they showed during their first semester (fall) at the Whitman School.

This was the first time these scholarships were given, thanks to the generosity of long-time University and Whitman supporter Steven Barnes '82, H'19, who, along with his wife, Deborah, pledged \$500,000 to reward and retain outstanding students.

"It is my hope that the award will not only help retain some of our most exceptional students but also ensure that these students know the school recognizes their accomplishments and the potential they have shown in just a short time on campus," says Barnes. "When I was putting myself through school, I, too, received an academic scholarship. The scholarship not only helped me financially; it also made me feel rewarded for my accomplishments and provided me with the confidence that I could excel at Whitman."

Jake Cohen '27 is a finance major at Whitman and a recipient of the Barnes Award. "I was thrilled to be one of the first students to receive the award, which acknowledged the effort I put into my first year at Whitman," Cohen says. "It means so much that administrators and faculty recognize my leadership qualities, and this award provides me with the confidence and inspiration to continue achieving success at the Whitman School."

Lindsay Quilty, assistant dean for undergraduate programs, coordinated much of the award distribution. "It's not just about the money," she says. "It's about being valued and recognized as a high achiever and knowing that the Whitman School stands behind you and wants to see you succeed. When we identify students like these outstanding achievers, we want to make sure they stay at Whitman and use those talents far into their careers."

The Whitman School looks forward to identifying students in the Class of 2028 who stand out among what is an academically competitive group. Later this year, a new group will be recognized with the Barnes Award for Academic Excellence.

BARNES' GENEROSITY HAS SUPPORTED MANY UNIVERSITY/WHITMAN INITIATIVES

A graduate of the School of Management who majored in accounting, Barnes was the former chairman of Bain Capital's Global Private Equity Business. He has been an active alumnus for years, previously serving as chairman of the Syracuse University Board of Trustees. Barnes has served on the board's executive, and investment and endowment committees. Barnes is a longtime member of the Whitman Advisory Council and a founding investor in the Orange Value Fund. He also served as the founding co-chair of the D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families Advisory Board.


Barnes and his wife are established donors, having endowed the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities and the Barnes Professorship in Entrepreneurship, both at the Whitman School. They also gave the lead gift for the University's Barnes Center at The Arch, a health, wellness and recreation center; and made a challenge gift in 2017 for the University's Invest Syracuse initiative to match new and increased gifts to support promising students. The couple have also supported the University's Office



of Disability Services, Syracuse University Athletics, Remembrance Scholars and other efforts across campus.

Barnes was recognized with an honorary degree from Syracuse University in 2019, the University's Dritz Trustee of the Year Award in 2014 and the Whitman School's Jonathan J. Holtz Alumnus of the Year Award in 2011.

"We consider every student at the Whitman School to have great potential. At the same time, through their generosity, Steve and Deborah Barnes made it possible for us to recognize and support those students who, early in their academic journey, have

demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to their field of study and are advancing our shared goal of positioning Whitman as one of the top undergraduate business schools in the country. I'm excited for the opportunity to see the many ways that our inaugural Barnes scholars will make their mark on the Whitman School in the future," says University Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Innovation and Whitman Executive Dean J. Michael Haynie. "I cannot express strongly enough my gratitude for what the Barnes family has done to advance countless critical initiatives, on behalf of students, at the University and within the Whitman School." 



Newly Chaired Professor's Teaching and Research on How Business Creates Value Positively Impacts the Whitman School

By Caroline K. Reff

After earning a Ph.D. from UCLA, Professor of Management Natarajan Balasubramanian joined the faculty at the Whitman School in 2009. Since then, he has contributed not only to educating Whitman students interested in the field of management but also in the ongoing effort to raise the profile of the school through his research, published works, awards, grants, presentations and service.

His most recent accomplishment is being named the inaugural Albert & Betty Hill Professor of Management at the Whitman School, endowed through a \$1 million bequest from the late Robert S. Hill '69, in memory of his parents. "It's quite rare that a school installs a new endowed professorship, but, when we do, it's to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of our best scholars and world-class thinkers who are significantly influencing their field," says Whitman's Interim Dean

Alex McKelvie. "Professor Balasubramanian is very deserving of this achievement, and this professorship will provide him with additional resources to further his research and positively impact the reputation of the Whitman School".

Balasubramanian's research in the field of management focuses on two main areas where business creates value: entrepreneurship, innovation and human capital; and learning and productivity.

"My research is aimed at understanding what drives the tremendous variation in value creation, which I believe is the key to economic growth and



"My teaching is built on developing the ability to solve unstructured problems and the ability to bear quantitative analysis to decision making, along with the ability to persuade a diverse audience about one's viewpoint, as those qualities are such critical assets for business professionals."

— Natarajan Balasubramanian, the Albert & Betty Hill Professor of Management

prosperity," he says. "Broadly, I view innovation as finding new ways to create economic value, and entrepreneurship as embodying innovation in a new company, which is often through the movement of individuals — human capital — from

an existing company to someplace new. As for learning and productivity, I think of productivity broadly as the ability of a business to create economic value and learning as a key way to increase the business' ability to create economic value."

His work has been recognized widely throughout his career, published in *Management Science*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *Academy of Management Review* and *Strategic Management Journal*, where he was recently named an associate editor. He has also received a number of awards, including the Kauffman Junior Faculty Fellowship from the Kauffman Foundation, as well as several from the Whitman School, including the Edward Pettinella Associate Professorship of Business and a Whitman Research Fellowship.

Research is not Balasubramanian's only contribution to the Whitman School, however. He enjoys sharing his knowledge and inspiring students in the classroom, as well, teaching strategic management to both graduate and undergraduate students.


"I believe in learning by doing, and I'm continuously reflecting on new ways to improve my teaching while also encouraging students to think critically about the fundamental aspects of business," he says.

"My teaching is built on developing the ability to solve unstructured problems and the ability to bear quantitative analysis to decision making, along with the ability to persuade a diverse audience about one's viewpoint, as those qualities are such critical assets for business professionals. I consider myself an active learner, and seeing students figure out answers to challenging problems gives me a lot of satisfaction. And often the questions they pose give me ideas to explore in my own research."

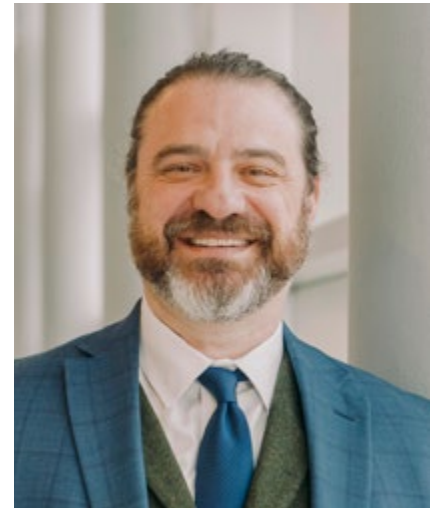
Balasubramanian is happy to have established himself at the Whitman School, noting the welcoming culture and collegiality he felt from the start. Syracuse University and the Whitman School have been a good fit for him, as he and his wife, a physician at nearby Upstate University Hospital, are a dual-career family who were looking for a place where both could thrive, along with their two children. Today, after 15 years, he and his family consider the Syracuse community home.

As he takes on the responsibility of his new chaired professorship and continues both his research and teaching, Balasubramanian looks forward to the possibilities ahead.

"Over the long term, I plan to continue working on my primary areas of research interest, while occasionally indulging in other topics that may interest me," he says.

"I intend to see my future work be well recognized and published in high-impact journals in management and economics. And, at a broader level, my hope is that my research can contribute to the field. With the support of the resources, colleagues and students at the Whitman School, I think that can certainly be accomplished." 

WHITMAN WELCOMES FOUR NEW FACULTY IN 2024-25 ACADEMIC YEAR



ADAM FUMAROLA Professor of Real Estate Practice

Adam Fumarola has previously worked as an adjunct instructor at Whitman and the Syracuse University College of Law. In the Department of Finance, he is teaching Real Estate Principles and is in charge of the James D. Kuhn Real Estate Center, while also running Hanover Real Estate Development, which he founded in 2021. Prior to that, Fumarola worked for the University as senior associate vice president, real estate services and asset management, and was senior director of real estate development at Raymour & Flanigan Furniture and Mattresses, assistant counsel at American Financial Realty Trust and an attorney at K&L Gates. Fumarola has a bachelor's degree in environmental public policy and environmental science from Binghamton University and a law degree from the University of Buffalo School of Law.



YE LIU
Assistant Professor
of Supply Chain
Management

While pursuing a Ph.D., Ye Liu co-published research on an unusual topic: hog farming — solving some of the operational issues using foundations of supply chain management. She will continue this research at Whitman, as well as other interests related to AI, risk management, commodity markets and supply chain finance with analytical and data-driven methodologies, such as stochastic optimization, machine learning and deep reinforcement learning. Liu says one of the reasons she was drawn to Whitman was because of the number of women on the faculty who lead research, something she intends to do herself. Liu has a Ph.D. in supply chain, operations and technology from Washington University in St. Louis and holds a bachelor's degree in supply chain management from Central University of Finance and Economics in Beijing.



PAUL MOMTAZ
Visiting Associate
Professor of
Entrepreneurship

Paul Momtaz is head of the Certificate of Advanced Studies in Sustainable Enterprise (CASSE) program for graduate students. His research centers on entrepreneurial finance with a focus on sustainability and digital technologies. Momtaz holds the DSS Endowed Professorship at Technical University of Munich School of Management in Germany and was a visiting professor at The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania; and held the Endowed Chair of Private Equity at the House of Finance in Germany. He has been published in a number of journals and serves as editor at *Small Business Economics*. Momtaz has a Ph.D. in finance from UCLA and another Ph.D. and a habilitation in economics from the University of Hamburg, Germany, as well as an M. Phil. from Cambridge University in the U.K.



STEVEN SAVINO
Assistant Teaching
Professor of Marketing

A non-tenure track assistant teaching professor, Steven Savino is teaching Principles of Marketing and Essentials of Marketing. After a 20-year career as a senior executive and marketing consultant working on brands across a variety of industries — including wine and spirits, consumer packaged goods and food, residential real estate and the entertainment industry — Savino made a career change into academia. Prior to joining Whitman, he was a professor of practice and assistant dean for graduate business programs at Lehigh University for 15 years. Savino has a bachelor's degree in economics from Villanova University and an MBA from Wake Forest University. He and his wife are pleased to relocate to Central New York to be closer to their daughter and grandchildren. [w](#)



New research by Assistant Professor of Finance Candace Jens and several colleagues set out to empirically test an old theory by Hyman Minsky. In 1957 the economist posited that recessions were, in part, driven by firms overborrowing and overinvesting, which created not only their own subsequent fragility but that of the overall economy.

For the article, forthcoming in the *Review of Financial Studies*, the researchers looked at measures from reports written by equity analysts and correlated them to firms borrowing and investing. Over the short term, they found a positive correlation between analyst errors and investments, while over three to five years, they saw a reversal, a rapid pullback from borrowing and investing — consistent with the cycles Minsky had described.

Both financially constrained and unconstrained firms followed the same cycle. “This suggests that everybody is overexcited at the same time, regardless of credit market conditions,” Jens says. The study also found that firms that borrowed and invested more at peaks saw greater reversals three years out, on average.

“These findings imply that the market is not self-regulating,” she says. “Our paper suggests that Federal Reserve action may also be needed to tamp down investment and borrowing at the peaks if firms are planting the seeds of fragility that then bring about a recession.”

Jens, C.E. (2024), Credit Cycles, Expectations, and Corporate Investment (with Gulen, H., Ion, M. and Rossi, S.) *Review of Financial Studies*.



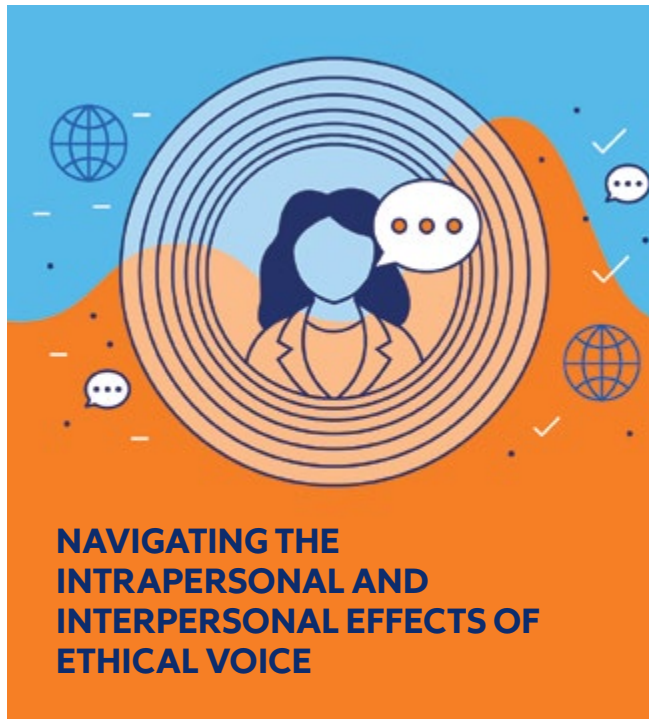
David Lucas, assistant professor of entrepreneurship and research fellow at the Institute for an Entrepreneurial Society, tackles this question in a recent article in the *Journal of Business Venturing*.

He looked at new monthly business applications to the federal government as real-time indicators of early-stage business activity around the time of U.S. gubernatorial elections from 2004 to 2022. To establish regime change as a cause and rule out other outside factors, Lucas compared elections in which results were close and in which power either did or did not change hands. The use of this method, regression discontinuity, is relatively new in entrepreneurship research.

Lucas found support for predictions he had made based on real options theory, which tries to understand choices over time. First, less entrepreneurial activity occurred in the month after an election, as entrepreneurs likely waited to make moves in the face of uncertainty. Second, he interprets a rebound effect a few months later as some ventures moving forward once the new policy environment was clearer. Third, this effect was greatest for growth-oriented ventures looking to hire for which policy changes would be most salient.

“From a policy standpoint, this research supports the value of a free, stable and predictable political environment for entrepreneurship,” Lucas concludes.

Lucas, D.S. (2024), The Effect of Regime Change on Entrepreneurship: A Real Options Approach with Evidence from U.S. Governor Elections, *Journal of Business Venturing*, 29(4).



Approaching a supervisor with ethical concerns about the company and recommendations for possible improvements — a behavior called ethical voice — can feel risky. “You don’t know how this is going to be received,” says Joel Carnevale, associate professor of management and one of the authors of a new study forthcoming in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. How such voicers manage the aftershocks of their action is at the center of the paper co-written with colleagues at Auburn University, Oregon State University and Nanjing University.

Drawing on two studies conducted at a social media consulting company and the branch of a large retail supermarket chain in China, the researchers largely found their predictions supported.

On the one hand, ethical voicers may experience heightened moral ownership, a sense of responsibility for ethical behavior in the workplace, leading them to disengage from unethical acts in their personal lives.

On the other hand, the researchers identified a moral burdening effect. Wanting to uphold a favorable social image of themselves as a moral model, ethical voicers may engage in largely symbolic ethical behaviors. This second effect was more pronounced among women.

Carnevale, J.B. (2024), Fulfilling Moral Duty or Prioritizing Moral Image? The Moral Self-Regulatory Consequences of Ethical Voice (with Huang, L., Paterson, T.A., Mackey, J., Xiaolu, L. and Yang, D.) *Journal of Applied Psychology*.




Many existing health care solutions do not always reach those who most need them in low- and middle-income countries, which cannot afford to pay full price.

In an article recently published in *Production and Operations Management*, Burak Kazaz, Steven R. Becker Professor of Supply Chain Management, and two colleagues from Arizona State University and INSEAD examined techniques for addressing this problem through financial incentives.

The authors’ model explored how four different financing schemes would perform under various conditions: An input subsidy (also known as capacity subsidy) pays a pharmaceutical company to build capacity to manufacture the product. An output subsidy (also referred to as sales subsidy), on the other hand, pays the manufacturer an amount for each unit sold. With a concessional loan, donors provide the capital for pharmaceutical companies to invest in manufacturing capability but charge a low, or even no, interest rate. Finally, philanthropic organizations and governments of developed nations may use volume guarantees, committing to purchasing a minimum amount of the health product.

“These financing schemes are important because without them, the pharmaceutical company will determine a capacity to build that’s typically smaller than the socially optimal amount of products,” Kazaz says.

Kazaz, B. (2023), Increasing the Supply of Health Products in Underserved Regions (with Webster, S. and Yadav, P.) *Production and Operations Management*. 



Partnership with NASA Brings Technology, Innovation, Creativity to Help Develop Tomorrow's Thought Leaders at the Whitman School

By Ken Walsleben '83 (A&S)

Much is said about preparing today's students for the continuously changing business world that awaits them. These next few decades will surely demand new thinking around innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship, ideation and value creation. Thought leaders will need to be prepared to face new pressing problems and challenges head on. We expect that graduates of the Whitman School will be among these thought leaders, and it is our commitment to make sure they are prepared through industry skills and resources. One such resource that we are proud to share with our students is access to patented innovation from NASA.

To be sure, our Whitman students are technology capable. Yet, that capability is just the starting point in today's fast-paced economy. But what about innovation and creativity? In large measure, being able to innovate to creatively solve problems will prove critical in separating tomorrow's winners from others in the race.

Whitman's undergraduate Capstone course is structured to enable students to become more aware of how innovation can manifest itself within the business world. Students quickly realize that innovation is at the core of entrepreneurship and value delivery in virtually every business setting.

All Whitman undergraduate students must successfully navigate the Capstone experience during their senior year, regardless of their major. Students are placed into teams and challenged with creating a real-world business plan to be presented at a competition judged by successful alumni and other Whitman partners. While other business schools may have a Capstone course, the Whitman School doubles down and demands that student founders must envision a business that has never been created before — anywhere. This necessitates that students look at our world in a completely new way to determine where commercially viable and profitable opportunities lie. This process of ideation is at the heart of the Whitman Capstone experience and is a true differentiator.

Having taught this Capstone class twice each semester for the last 10 years, I can tell you that the ideation process is the hardest part for our seniors — but the most important. The ability to confidently innovate in a business setting helps Whitman students rise above the competition as they enter the job market.

In pursuit of its governmental mission, NASA constantly creates new technologies, something that has been going on since the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958. NASA patents its breakthroughs and licenses its more than 1,200 patents with attractive terms for commercial exploitation with the idea that they can be used for the good of all. In 2021, NASA created T2U (Technology Transfer University), which allows college students to use and benefit from these patents. It's been exciting to see the Whitman School take full advantage of this opportunity as


a major resource for students to innovate, freely use NASA technologies and potentially start businesses focused upon them.

Whitman works with NASA to bring these innovations into the classroom. During recent semesters, a NASA administrator has Zoomed in to explain the T2U program to our Capstone students. This affiliation enables Whitman seniors to apply NASA discoveries to their business ideation projects, and the results have been impressive. Just this spring, five of the nine finalists in the Capstone competition used patented NASA technology in their business plans. One team came up with an idea based on NASA's innovation for a microwave decontamination system for well water, while another employed bacteria- and pollution-eating microbes to clean contaminated Superfund sites and PCB-laden dwellings.

This NASA-Whitman affiliation continues to strengthen. NASA's T2U administrator, Mikaela McShane, joined us in-person last spring to help judge Capstone finalists. She was amazed at the creative applications our students developed from NASA-originated innovation. In addition, NASA invited me to participate in a podcast where I explained how Whitman has incorporated the T2U program into our ongoing curriculum. I was proud to have the opportunity to share the work Whitman students are doing in collaboration with such a respected organization.

It's exciting work, and my enthusiasm grows more and more as I continue to see our students take advantage of the technology, innovation and creativity offered by NASA, as well as other resources we provide, to ensure our Whitman grads will be better poised for the business world of the future.

Ken Walsleben is a professor of entrepreneurial practice at the Whitman School. Prior to joining the faculty full time in 2014, he had been a long-time entrepreneur and spent 30 years working in finance, including founding his own company, The Hamilton Group. A graduate of Syracuse University with a degree in economics, Walsleben was chosen as Faculty of the Year by the Whitman Class of 2024.

In the News and Trending is the perspective of accomplished Whitman professors on timely issues impacting business. Stated wording and opinions are those of the author. 

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