

Fall 2019

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
EDWARDSVILLE
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Business

The Magazine of the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Business



Innovation
Engagement
Impact



About the SIUE School of Business

Our Vision

The SIUE School of Business will be an internationally recognized premier business school that develops highly skilled and innovative professionals who, through achieving their full potential, enhance businesses, organizations, and communities.

<p>2 Undergraduate Programs</p> <p>BS Accountancy BS Business Administration</p>	<p>9 Undergraduate Business Administration Specializations</p> <p>Computer Information Systems Economics Entrepreneurship Finance General Business Administration Human Resource Management International Business Management Marketing</p>	 <p>International Recognition Top 5%</p> <p>Only 5% of business schools worldwide are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International. Even fewer have earned dual AACSB accreditation in business and accounting, placing the SIUE School of Business among the elite 2% of business schools around the world to have earned this dual distinction.</p> <p>SIUE is among an elite few: Less than 2% of business schools worldwide are AACSB-accredited in both business and accounting.</p>
<p>4 Graduate Programs</p> <p>Master of Business Administration Master of Marketing Research MS Accountancy MS Computer Management and Information Systems</p>	<p>Signature Courses</p> <p>Business Transitions I: Planning for Success Business Transitions II: Commitment Beyond College</p>	
<p>Faculty</p> <p>54 Full-time </p> <p>17 Part-time</p>		<p>Business Analytics Specialization offered in all graduate programs</p> <p>Project Management Specialization offered in the MBA and MS CMIS programs</p>

Our Mission

The SIUE School of Business engages in high-quality learning experiences, research, and service to develop current and future business professionals, scholars, and leaders.

We Are Committed To

- Provide a leading-edge environment for educating undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education students that fosters creativity, critical thinking, ethical behavior, and an appreciation of globalization and diversity.
- Develop and sustain partnerships with businesses, SIUE departments, and the regional community that lead to professional opportunities for students, alumni, faculty, and regional constituents.
- Offer programs responsive to the needs of our key stakeholders.
- Foster a vibrant regional economy through the exchange of ideas and knowledge.
- Maintain a highly competent administrative and support staff.
- Develop and retain a high-quality faculty whose members strive for excellence, are current in their fields, and make scholarly contributions through discipline-based, applied, and pedagogical research.

These efforts add value: for students, by facilitating and enhancing their career prospects; for organizations, by developing business professionals who meet their needs and stimulate innovation; for the university, by collaborating across the community; and for business disciplines, by producing and disseminating timely and relevant scholarship.



12 Student Organizations Including three national honor societies



350 Employers recruited SIUE business students through on-campus career fairs last year



14 Years For the 14th consecutive year, the School of Business is named an outstanding business school by *The Princeton Review*. "The Best 248 Business Schools: 2020 Edition" by *The Princeton Review* recommends the School as one of the best institutions in the U.S. from which students can earn an MBA.

From the Dean

Welcome to the Fall 2019 edition of SIUE Business. As I write this letter to you, it is from the familiar surroundings of the School of Business in Founders Hall. After spending a year being dispersed across several buildings throughout campus due to the first phase of the Founders Hall renovation project, it feels nice to be “home”. But I think everyone in the business school—faculty, staff, and students—agrees that it will be even nicer one year from now when the entire Founders Hall project is complete!

Undoubtedly, the most significant event for the School in the last year was our launch of the Accelerated Online MBA program. Interest in this program has exceeded all of our expectations. Overall enrollment in the MBA program has nearly tripled since fall 2018. Associate Dean and MBA Program Director Janice Joplin ably led this effort, but it was hard work from our business faculty and staff, as well as administrative staff from across campus, that made the success of this launch possible. While in one sense this program signifies a major change for our business school, in another sense, it could be viewed as a natural extension of our School’s rich history of making high quality business education (particularly graduate business education) accessible to students that are unable to come to campus. The first article in the magazine traces that history and I trust that you will enjoy reading about it.

Data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services estimate that direct spending on health care accounts for nearly 20% of Gross Domestic Product. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that an increasing number of our business students end up working in the health care sector. Our magazine highlights one of our MBA alumni, Jim Gera, who has founded a successful value-based health care company. Another article highlights new health care courses that have been added to our curriculum. We also hope to introduce a new specialization in health care administration to our MBA program in the near future.

These changes to our graduate programs have not caused us to lose focus on improving the educational experiences for our undergraduate business students. During the past year, we established an internship center focused solely on business students. We recognize that employers value job candidates that combine excellent academic training with practical work experiences. For most of our undergraduates, those experiences come through company internships. In her role as internship coordinator, Amanda Russell works with employers and students to ensure that as many of our undergraduates as possible gain valuable work experiences before they graduate and seek full-time employment. Additionally, we are consistently working to expand the scope of our international study options. The cover for this year’s magazine features a picture from one of our faculty-led study tours to Barcelona, Spain.



Finally, I want to express my gratitude to the many friends of our business school that support us financially and through the gifts of their time and expertise. We love having alums come back to visit campus and share their expertise with our students as guest lecturers in courses or as presenters to student organizations. Your financial gifts have allowed us to, once again, provide a record amount of scholarship dollars to our students.

The holiday season is a perfect time to reflect on the many blessings we have in our lives. I certainly feel blessed to work with such a talented faculty and staff in the School of Business. In higher education, our purpose is to help students reach their full potential. Your role in supporting us is critical to our ability to fulfill that purpose and for that, we sincerely thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Schoenecker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tim Schoenecker, PhD
Dean

Making the SIUE School of Business MBA Degree More Accessible

The Rich History of Tailoring Programs to a Diverse Student Base Continues

Competing demands between work and family make it difficult for many individuals to commit to the traditional on-campus MBA degree. In January 2019, the School of Business opened its virtual doors, offering students an option to complete their MBA degree entirely online. The 36-credit hour program meets the same standards as the blended program and is accredited by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

In the first six months, online enrollment almost tripled the number of students in the overall MBA program.

“Over the past 50 years, SIUE’s School of Business has made a very deliberate effort to evolve the delivery format for the MBA program to fit into the lives of students more easily,” said Janice Joplin, PhD, associate dean.

The online MBA program adds to the traditional on-campus MBA program and the broad selection of offerings provided by the School’s Executive Education program.

The Original Flexible Format: Taking MBA Classes on the Road

SIUE was a pioneer in flexible MBA formats, launching its first off-campus program on military bases in 1969 to help address the U.S. Department of Defense’s desire to retain personnel, especially Air Force pilots. Classes were conducted in intensive three-day sessions every three weeks to accommodate pilots’ flight assignments.

“We offered the flexibility of programming before there was online programming,” said SIUE Chancellor Emeritus David Werner, who was one of the first professors to teach on the bases and managed its evolution while serving as dean of the School of Business. “Bringing the MBA program to military bases not only provided an attractive option for pilots who wanted to further their education, but it helped the Air Force reduce turnover.”

Demonstrating nimbleness, the School of Business offered its MBA program on 11 military bases, which enabled active-duty students to complete their degree in two years, regardless of transfers to another base.



“We offered the flexibility of programming before there was online programming.”

—David Werner
SIUE Chancellor Emeritus



“It was an incredible gift to have the opportunity to earn my MBA while fulfilling my military obligation.”

—John Fletcher, MBA '73
Managing Partner, Fletcher Spaght

Air Force Base MBA Programs:

- Altus AFB (Oklahoma)
- Bolling AFB (Washington, D.C.)
- Chanute AFB (Illinois)
- Charleston AFB (South Carolina)
- Dover AFB (Delaware)
- McChord AFB (Washington)
- McGuire AFB (New Jersey)
- Norton AFB (California)
- Scott AFB (Illinois)
- Travis AFB (California)
- Azores Islands (U.S. Air Force facilities on a Portuguese Military Base)

“It was an incredible gift to have the opportunity to earn my MBA while fulfilling my military obligation, which required me to be away for weeks at a time,” said John Fletcher, MBA '73, managing partner of Fletcher Spaght, who earned his degree at McGuire Air Force Base. “The program opened doors for those who wanted options beyond airline employment.”

Innovation

Initially, MBA applicants were limited to military personnel, but over time the program opened to civilians on military bases and then the surrounding communities. SIUE discontinued this format in 1987, as lower-cost (and, often, non-accredited) competitors chipped away at market share. However, SIUE continued to find other innovative ways to meet student needs.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the MBA program was offered in west St. Louis County and at Southwestern Illinois College in weekend formats to accommodate students working in those areas.

From the Road to Routers

As technology developments opened new avenues, the School of Business shifted its focus away from weekend formats to hybrid on-campus and online MBA courses—and, most recently, introduced the fully online option.

In addition to adjusting the format, the MBA program has evolved to address changing market demands. For example, SIUE designed a pathway for students to concurrently earn an MBA and Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) or Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP).



“Pharmacy residencies are highly competitive, so having a dual advanced degree helped me stand out.”

—Kayla DuBois, PharmD/MBA '18
Clinical Pharmacist, Memorial Medical Center,
Springfield, Ill.

“It has become increasingly important for healthcare professionals who hope to advance their careers to have a fundamental understanding of finance, marketing, operations and management—regardless of whether they sit in an administrative position or are working their way up on the clinical side,” Joplin said.

“Pharmacy residencies are highly competitive, so having a dual advanced degree helped me stand out,” said Kayla DuBois, PharmD/MBA '18. After finishing her clinical residency in pharmacy in June at Memorial Medical Center in Springfield, Ill., she moved into a full-time position as a clinical pharmacist. “Whatever career path you take in pharmacy, the leadership skills and business fundamentals that the MBA program teaches will always be relevant.”

Christina Wagener is currently enrolled in the DNP/MBA program, balancing academics with her full-time job at Swedish Covenant Health in Chicago. Earlier this year, she was promoted from a nurse practitioner and manager to director of clinical operations and director of advanced practice providers.

“The degree has given me a valuable niche; I’m one of the rare people who can analyze issues from both a clinical and business perspective to find a positive outcome,” Wagener said. “I’ve been able to immediately put into practice what I’ve learned in the classroom. The MBA curriculum is not only thorough and challenging, but the professors have been very accessible and helpful, despite everything being online.”

“Offering an innovative, practical and high-quality curriculum that improves the careers and lives of our students remains our top priority,” Joplin said. “The shape of the MBA program will continue to evolve alongside market demands and student lifestyles.”

“The degree has given me a valuable niche; I’m one of the rare people who can analyze issues from both a clinical and business perspective to find a positive outcome.”



—Christina Wagener
Current DNP/MBA Student

Quick Facts: New Online MBA Program

- Six start dates throughout the year
- Price tag: \$17,787.12 (36-credit hours)
- Duration: 12+ months
- Options: General MBA or specializations in Management, Management Information Systems (MIS), Business Analytics, Project Management

For additional details and enrollment:
online.siue.edu

Alumnus-Led Startup Manages \$2 Billion in Two Years

How Timing, Talent and Music Have Contributed to His Success



Jim Gera, MBA '03, heads a startup company with enviable success. Fusion5, a value-based healthcare company, was formed two years ago and now manages more than \$2 billion of business across 41 states. Value-based healthcare is generally defined as payment models that incentivize providers to improve the quality of patient care and outcomes, instead of basing payments on the quantity of services offered.

Gera partnered with a team of other seasoned healthcare executives to establish the company after seeing a window of opportunity with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Service's (CMS) Bundled Payments for Care Improvement (BPCI) Advanced program. Fusion5 works with healthcare providers across the U.S. to help them implement and manage value-based care payment arrangements under BPCI and similar programs.

"We had the perfect storm of opportunity, relationships and timing to scale the business quickly," said Gera, who serves as the CEO of Fusion5.

Gera shared a few insights about his success strategies and how the business achieved such a high level of growth in a short period of time:

- **Hire the right people and get out of their way.** Fusion5 hired nearly 100 people in a six-month period. Gera emphasized that the employees of his firm have been crucial to its success. "I hire great talent, then trust them to do their job," Gera said. "I don't micromanage—it's one of the powerful lessons I learned from my MBA days that distinguishes leaders from managers."

- **Don't lose sight of what matters most.** "It's easy to get side-tracked from the end goal when moving quickly. You must constantly evaluate your priorities not only at work, but those tied to your personal wellbeing. Family comes first," Gera added.
- **Transparency and authenticity are critical.** Gera believes that being open and candid with employees about the business transforms the way decisions are made and reduces the associated politics. That philosophy transcends into all aspects of work and creates an environment where people understand how their contributions make a difference.

According to Gera, it's equally important that leaders maintain their personal authenticity as they advance in their careers to better connect with their teams. It's a valuable lesson that he learned as a musician and now applies to business. Gera earned his MA in music performance from SIUE. "Music teaches you to be who you are. When I first entered the business world, it was shocking to me how people kept their true personalities so hidden at work. If you carry yourself the same way all of the time, it garners more respect from others," Gera said.

- **Embrace failure.** Gera acknowledges that he has experienced the ramifications of bad decisions along the way, but his success is borne from those mistakes. "You can't be afraid to take on a new risk because of the possibility of failure—you simply have to be willing to learn from it," Gera said.

"You can't be afraid to take on a new risk because of the possibility of failure—you simply have to be willing to learn from it."

—Jim Gera, MBA '03
CEO, Fusion5

Opening New Pathways at the Intersection of Finance and Healthcare

Economics Professor Contributes to New Industry Payment Models

As healthcare shifts to a value-based care model instead of the traditional fee-for-service approach, the industry's financial and business models are radically transforming. This dynamic is creating greater demand for business professionals with finance and economics backgrounds who also understand the complexities of the healthcare industry. The School of Business is doing its share to bridge the worlds of finance and healthcare.



Ariel Belasen, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Economics and Finance, brings a healthcare insider's perspective into the classroom. He is a fellow at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), where he contributes to the development of new financial and policy models being tested across the industry.

"The CMS fellowship gave me an opportunity to examine healthcare from a different angle," Belasen said. "Instead of researching health issues at a macro-level, I'm getting into micro-level assessments of how specific elements within payment models—such as financial incentives for specific health outcomes—can impact the quality of patient care."

"Our new courses are designed to give students a more practical idea of how to apply economics to a specific industry."

—Ariel Belasen, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Economics and Finance

Now in his 11th year at SIUE, Belasen is always looking for new ways to infuse his healthcare economics expertise in the classroom. In 2018, he introduced a new course into the MBA curriculum on health economics and policy (ECON 532). A new course on the economics of health outcomes (ECON 411) will be available to undergraduate students this year, led by his colleague, assistant professor of economics Marlon Tracey, PhD.

"Our new courses are designed to give students a more practical idea of how to apply economics to a specific industry. We want to help them envision possible career options," Belasen added.

In addition, the School of Business has expanded opportunities to address rising interest from healthcare professionals interested in sharpening their business skills. Students working toward their Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) or Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) have the option to concurrently earn their MBA.

"Having a dual degree makes you stand out as a job candidate," said Irene Zollars, PharmD/MBA '18. "It opens the door to so many options within the broader pharmaceutical, healthcare and insurance sectors."

For Zollars, the degree helped her secure a newly created post-doctoral fellowship in regulatory affairs at Merck KGaA in St. Louis, giving her the opportunity to leverage her pharmacy expertise and business skills.

"Our job is to open students' eyes to the possibilities of where their degree and skill sets can take them," added Tim Schoenecker, PhD, dean of the School of Business. "We're continuously evaluating our curriculum and adding greater depth where we see a strong need."



"Having a dual degree makes you stand out as a job candidate. It opens the door to so many options within the broader pharmaceutical, healthcare and insurance sectors."

—Irene Zollars PharmD/MBA '18

The Power of Giving

Your Generosity is Shaping a Brighter Future

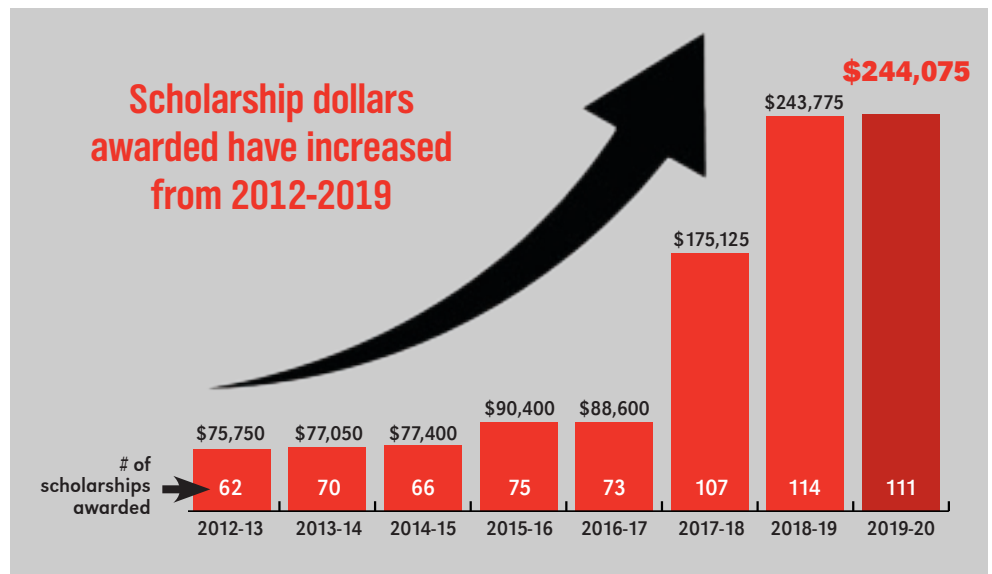
How does alumni giving affect the School of Business? When you consider the collective power of individual donations from the pool of 27,000 School of Business alumni scattered across the globe, the impact extends far and wide. Your generosity advances important efforts to empower students, enrich the academic experience and attract top-notch faculty.

“Scholarships are typically the biggest area for alumni donations; however, funds also support a variety of critical improvements that we need to excel,” said School of Business Dean Tim Schoenecker, PhD. “We put dollars to use where they will have the greatest impact—whether it’s toward students, faculty or facilities.”

Investing in Students

Scholarship awards that are funded by School of Business alumni donations have steadily increased year-over-year, with the total amount up more than 200 percent since 2012. More than 100 students are now supported by these scholarships.

Alumni donations, resources and participation have also been critical to the success of the leading-edge Business Transitions courses and the bi-annual business dinner, which provide practical guidance to students as they transition into the working world—on everything from interviewing to using proper professional etiquette.



Engagement

Faculty Accolades

Dedicating resources to support and recognize faculty is key to attracting and retaining the great talent that helps the School of Business earn its world-class reputation.

SIUE's first MBA graduate, Lawrence B. Heitz, recently established an annual award to bestow upon a School of Business faculty member for excellence in research and scholarship. "Recognition is a strong motivator. I think it's important to acknowledge stand-out faculty work, as it has a spillover effect to both the classroom and the University," Heitz said.

The inaugural award went to Riza Demirer, PhD, professor in the Department of Economics and Finance. He was selected for his original research in the areas of investments, asset pricing, risk management, valuation and decision theory.

"Research requires a high level of self-motivation. It's very personal work," Demirer said. "Receiving this award was special; it's a way for the administration to acknowledge the value of the time and energy I dedicate to it."



Snapshot: Riza Demirer's Research

Demirer's behavioral finance research has attracted global attention and garnered awards. Among the highlights:

- Demirer, R., D. Lien and H. Zhang (2015). Industry Herding and Momentum Strategies, *Pacific-Basin Finance Journal* 32, 95-110.
- Chen, C. C., M. Cheng, R. Demirer (2017). Oil and Stock Market Momentum. *Energy Economics* 68, 151-159.
- Demirer, R., S. Jategaonkar and A. Khalifa (2015). Oil price risk exposure and the cross-section of stock returns: The case of net exporting countries, *Energy Economics* 49, 132-140.

Facility Enhancements

Alumni giving has helped the School of Business move forward on two major facility developments over the past year: a new internship center (read more on page 8) and a new cyber classroom.

"The Ralph and Donna Korte Cyber-Analytics Classroom gives our students an immersive, interactive learning environment that will better prepare them to hit the ground running when they graduate."

—Tim Jacks, PhD, Associate Professor
Department of Computer Management & Information Systems

The Ralph and Donna Korte Cyber-Analytics Classroom mimics a real-world corporate network operations center. The simulated command center for information technology includes large monitors, wall-to-wall white board space and a rack of telecommunications equipment. The space can accommodate rapid changes in technology, and provides a safe lab environment where faculty can run classroom exercises in areas such as ethical hacking.

"Cyber threats are growing in sophistication and frequency, posing a serious risk across all industries. The cyber classroom gives our students an immersive, interactive learning environment that will better prepare them to hit the ground running when they graduate," said Tim Jacks, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Computer Management & Information Systems.

How Can You Help?

The School of Business relies on the alumni network for help in a variety of ways, including donations of time, talent and/or monetary resources. Each contribution has a ripple effect.

"I've always felt a strong sense of duty to give back to the School," said Lawrence Heitz, entrepreneur and SIUE's first MBA graduate. "Even though I reside in Arizona, I find excuses to get back to campus every year. Whether it's participating as a guest lecturer or serving on a panel or participating in a student dinner, I walk away energized by the learning environment every time."

Help us shape tomorrow's business leaders by supporting the SIUE School of Business.

Contact Sara Colvin, Director of Development
618-650-2317 or scolvin@siue.edu,
or visit siue.edu/business/alumni-giving.

School of Business Strengthens Its Internship Resources

New Office of Internship Services Provides a More Tailored Experience

School of Business students seeking an internship now have a dedicated resource at their disposal. In coordination with the SIUE Career Development Center, the School opened an internship center in the newly renovated Business Student Services Office in Founders Hall.

As the School's first internship coordinator, Amanda Russell serves as a liaison between students and corporations recruiting interns. Part of Russell's job is to coach students on the search process and how they can use internships to advance their career goals. She also assists corporations with structuring their internship programs and developing job descriptions that resonate with students.

"More than anything, students want a chance to work on real assignments to give them better insights into how the organization works and what their role might be," Russell said.

For Eisha Fatima, CMIS '19, her internship with Emerson was pivotal in shaping her career direction. Her work in the IT department started with the systems group, where she helped to automate various work processes. After talking with her manager about her interest in databases, Emerson worked that into Fatima's role and then rotated her through other IT functions to explore additional possibilities. One year later, she was managing projects and received the option to continue with the Emerson corporate IT co-op program for several months post-graduation.

"Rotating through different areas gave me a very clear picture of the kind of job I wanted," Fatima said. "Amanda Russell was great support, working with Emerson to help me receive academic credit."

Constructing more academic credit-based internship opportunities is a priority of the School of Business that Russell is advancing.

"Although most students recognize the value of internships, carving out the time can be a challenge—especially for those who are juggling school and work to pay for their education," Russell added. "When students can receive academic credit for an internship, it not only introduces a little more balance, but it also deepens the connection between classwork and the real-world."

Another priority for the School is to offer new opportunities that are more tailored to students' interests.

"Business internships are very nuanced—some accounting majors want to work for an accounting firm, while others may want to get exposure to financial roles in other industries. We're creating a more detailed database that reflects not only students' majors, but their specific areas of interest to ensure we're bringing students the right mix of internship opportunities," Russell said.



"Rotating through different areas gave me a very clear picture of the kind of job I wanted. Amanda Russell was great support, working with Emerson to help me receive academic credit."

—Eisha Fatima, CMIS '19

If you're interested in recruiting interns, or working with the School of Business to develop an internship program, please contact Amanda Russell at ambarto@siue.edu.

Reuniting Alumni Across the Country

From D.C. to Phoenix, Alumni Gather to Forge New (and Old) Connections



Building a strong alumni network is a key priority for the School of Business. Dean Tim Schoenecker, PhD, and Associate Dean Janice Joplin, PhD, welcome opportunities to meet face-to-face with alumni, especially when they travel to other cities. Not every trip leads to an alumni gathering; a few factors are considered when making that determination, including interest from alumni in the region and a substantial alumni presence.

“The events have been a great way for alumni to ignite new relationships with each other and to reconnect with the University.”

—Sara Colvin, Director of Development
School of Business

During the 2018-19 academic year, School of Business alumni gathered in six cities outside of the St. Louis region:

- Washington, D.C. (September 2018)
- Chicago (October 2018)
- Phoenix/Scottsdale (November 2018)
- Jupiter, Florida (March 2019)*
- Dallas (April 2019)
- Houston (April 2019)

*SIUE Alumni Association *Cougars on the Move* annual event

“The events have been a great way for alumni to ignite new relationships with each other and to reconnect with the University,” said Sara Colvin, Director of Development for the School of Business. “It also gives the School of Business an opportunity to talk with alumni about their career experiences and explore ways to leverage that expertise with current students.”

The Dallas gathering was a welcome reunion for alumni in the region. “We had a number of Dallas alumni who were vocal about wanting to engage with the School. They are eager to increase SIUE’s visibility in the area,” Colvin said.

Among the Dallas alumni was Nick Mysore, a Dallas-based venture builder who graduated from SIUE with an MBA and MS in business economics. He said the event sparked such great interest from those who attended that they planned their own informal meet-ups afterward.

“I enjoyed mingling with both recent graduates, experienced professionals and even a past colleague who I discovered was a fellow alumnus,” Mysore said. “Many of us share a passion for the School that we hope will lead to a more robust and vibrant alumni community in the future.”

Look for events in these cities in 2019-20

Chicago: December 14-17, 2019

Nashville, Tenn.: February 2-4, 2020

Washington, D.C.: March 4-6, 2020

Jupiter, Fla: March 6-8, 2020 (Cougars On the Move)

Denver: April 26-28, 2020

Do you want an alumni event near you?

Keep us updated on where you live and where you work. Reach out to Sara Colvin at scolvin@siue.edu or 618-650-2317. Upcoming events are listed at siue.edu/alumni. If your city isn't on the list, let Sara know where you would like us go next!

Travel Programs Open Doors to New Cultures and a New Mindset

Experiences Shape Soft Skills and Build Confidence

New cultural experiences can shape lives in unimaginable ways, as many SIUE School of Business students can attest.

Grahaeme Hesp, EdD, BSBA '97, MBA '99, is a prime example. A first-generation college student, he originally came to SIUE's campus as an international student from the U.K. Instead of staying two semesters, he ended up completing his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Edwardsville.

Now, he serves as a regional director of institutional relations at FIE: Foundation for International Education, which provides educational programs for undergraduate students in London, Dublin and Amman. He forges partnerships with universities across the Midwest, including SIUE. Things have come full circle for Hesp, as he helps current School of Business students set off on FIE's study abroad programs.

"Experience is what shapes an open and accepting mindset, an attribute in high demand in today's business world," Hesp said. "It's why travel programs—and especially overseas internships—are invaluable. The perspective and skills gained can't be easily replicated in the classroom, making students with this experience more desirable job candidates."

School of Business students who study through FIE have the option of completing an internship in London or Dublin. The internships focus on small and mid-sized companies where students can be more hands-on and interact directly with a variety of people.



Conner Whyte, BSBA Finance '19, spent the fall semester of his senior year studying and working abroad in Dublin through FIE. His internship at TaxAssist Accountants helped boost his confidence while interviewing for jobs before graduation.

"I would argue that any type of work experience you have abroad is transforming. You're thrown into an entirely new situation,

interacting daily with local people in the community—it gives you the opportunity to get to know individuals; not just the general culture," Whyte said. "My experience overseas was a focal point for many of my job interviews."

Whyte secured a job prior to graduation with Acuity, a Wisconsin-based insurance provider.

"Business travel is going to be a part of many students' careers. Our travel programs offer another avenue for students to sharpen practical job skills and broaden their sense of place in

"Experience is what shapes an open and accepting mindset, an attribute in high demand in today's business world."

—Grahaeme Hesp, EdD, BSBA '97, MBA '99
Regional Director of Institutional Relations, FIE: Foundation for International Education



Engagement

the world,” said Janice Joplin, PhD, associate dean, who leads the development of international study programs in the School of Business. “Students learn flexibility and adaptability when going abroad. These are skills they will use in their careers.”

The School of Business has made a firm commitment to offering students a global perspective and is continuously expanding its offerings, forging partnerships with international universities and running short-duration travel study programs throughout the year. Shorter programs, which are typically 8-14 days long, offer a nice alternative for students who may be reluctant or unable to commit to an entire semester away.



Snapshot: 12 Days in Spain

In January 2019, Joplin and Norris Manning, Director of Business Student Services, led a student group on a trip to Barcelona and Seville in Spain. They helped familiarize students with the country’s economy, business practices and culture in advance of the trip. Students reviewed a variety of case studies, followed news reports from Spain, and reviewed relevant books and movies.

After learning about the region’s rich history of rulers and religious beliefs, students toured historical sites such as the Great Mosque of Cordoba and Royal Alcazar of Seville. Reading *Tales of the Alhambra*—a collection of tales and sketches of the Moors and Spaniards published in 1832—provided deeper meaning for students when they visited the ancient fortress. They then traveled the same roads that the book’s author took from Seville to Alhambra’s location in Granada.

“I didn’t just learn about a new culture, I learned a great deal about my own ability to adapt to change and get along with the different personalities traveling in a big group,” said Taylor Hancock, a junior who is earning her BSBA in finance and management. The Spain program was the first time she had traveled internationally.

Visits to local businesses are also part of the travel study experience. On the outskirts of Seville, students toured an olive farm with ties to a St. Louis retailer, giving them an inside look at the production of olive oil and global distribution systems. The bonus (aside from the tasting) was seeing how the farm supplements its income with other ventures—in this case, serving as the set for a “Game of Thrones” episode.

However, it’s the unplanned moments that sometimes stick out most in students’ memories. For Thomas Giacobbe, a senior majoring in mechanical engineering and minoring in business, his surprise adventure in Seville was the highlight of the trip. A last-minute outing to the grocery store one evening resulted in a detour (following the sound of drum beats) where he stumbled upon The Three Kings Parade, an annual celebration that rings in the Day of the Epiphany; traditionally, “Christmas Day” in Spain.

“Stumbling into that parade was a stark, visual representation of the beauty of Spain’s culture,” Giacobbe said. “It’s one thing to study the customs and history of another culture, but to put myself in the middle of it opened my mind in so many ways. I definitely have a more adaptable mindset now.”

Cost is one of the biggest limitations for students interested in studying abroad. Alumni can help by donating to the School of Business International Travel fund, which is used to directly reduce overall student costs for each travel study course.

To learn more, contact Sara Colvin, Director of Development, at scolvin@siue.edu or 618-650-2317.

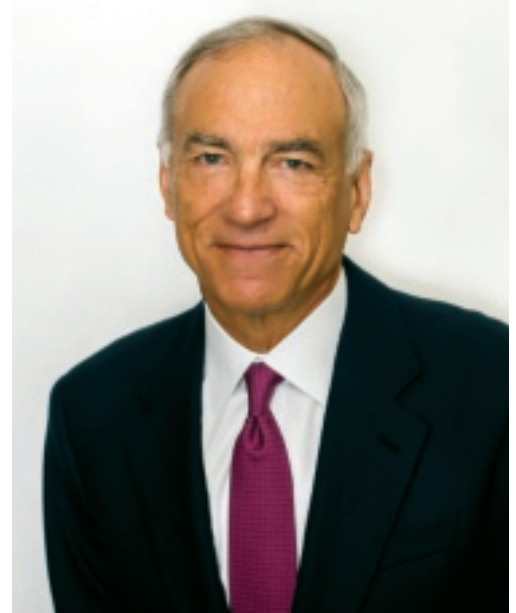
Alumnus Named NACD's Director of the Year

John Fletcher Shares His Insights on Effective Leadership

John Fletcher, MBA '73, is on the short list of individuals who have earned the prestigious "Director of the Year" award from National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD). Over the course of his career, he has served on the boards of 14 businesses and five philanthropic organizations, and founded the Boston-based consulting firm Fletcher Spaght in 1983.

The NACD award specifically recognized his work at Spectranetics Corporation, where he served as chairman of the board during its turnaround and subsequent sale to Philips NV. Its enterprise value grew from \$200 million to \$2.2 billion during that time. However, Fletcher is quick to put the value of that growth into context—revenue growth enabled the company's medical devices to save the lives and limbs of nearly 100,000 patients each year.

We jumped at the opportunity to speak with an alumnus whose outstanding leadership is nationally recognized to learn more about his approach and observations on great leaders.



In the NACD award ceremony, your peers and colleagues pointed out your keen ability to work with strong personalities and disparate opinions to gain consensus and push organizations toward a greater good. Can you describe your approach?

Fletcher: Treat each board member with respect and give everyone equal air time. Boards are typically comprised of leaders who are used to having the microphone. When I'm leading a meeting as chairperson, I embrace Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer's method: no one talks twice until everyone talks once. Talking more doesn't make you a better leader. When a difficult personality or clash emerges, I'll have separate one-on-one discussions with those individuals to acknowledge their viewpoint, address the situation, and remind them of the board's responsibilities and end goal.

What constitutes "good" leadership?

Fletcher: There isn't a neat and tidy formula, but I'll share a few observations. Good leaders set the tone and direction, then empower others to do their best to help the company reach its goals. Good leaders don't have a rigid leadership style—they adjust their approach to the situation at hand. Sometimes that means conferring with others and giving them room to make the right decision; other times it requires a more authoritative approach to decision-making using the best information available.



Board leadership calls for a different approach than management leadership. NACD's founder, John Nash, coined the adage "NIFO: nose in, fingers out." In other words, boards shouldn't micro-manage. Their top priority is governance, not management. Ultimately, the board's job is to: (1) evaluate the risks and benefits of a particular situation, (2) ask penetrating questions, (3) frame alternatives, and (4) provide guidance that has considered different perspectives. Since all board members have equal authority, decisions must be made by consensus. To be effective, board members must listen carefully to all the opinions around the table, then set ego aside to provide direction that is in the best interest of the company and its stakeholders.

What advice would you give to someone who is considering a board position?

Fletcher: It's important to believe in the mission of the organization you are serving. Take the time to do your homework before joining a board—meet the other directors and management, and observe a meeting in action. Board

members bear significant responsibility; you must be ready to devote your personal best in both good times and bad. Serving on a board offers a tremendous growth opportunity. It opens your eyes to an entirely new view on leadership that you can't gain when you're sitting on the inside of an organization. It's a wonderful way for experienced leaders to give back—shareholders need more good directors.

What are some of the big governance trends influencing boards?

Fletcher: The tenure of board members is being examined more closely, as many boards have had the same people governing for too long. While historical perspective is critical, it's important to have a well-balanced mix of tenured and new board members to ensure fresh perspectives are considered. For that matter, there is a push to add more diversity overall to boards, which is critical. Oversight of risk management has also become exceedingly important for boards over the past decade. Board members must be tuned in to how supplier disruptions, cybersecurity and other key risks can deteriorate their company's reputation.

Reflecting on your personal approach to leadership, what was one of the strongest influences?

Fletcher: My experience as an Air Force captain and pilot was instrumental. Traveling around the world on assignment with a crew quickly teaches you that a good leader doesn't simply fly the plane and complete the task; the well-being of the crew is equally important.

Is there other advice you'd like to offer to alumni who are reading this article?

Fletcher: Alumni networks are an incredibly important asset of educational institutions, providing value for alumni, current students and the school itself. Harness your network and look for ways to give back. Think about how you can help current students be successful—whether it's through internship opportunities, speaking opportunities or finding other ways to connect; every action helps to strengthen the entire alumni network.



Help us shape tomorrow's business leaders by supporting the SIUE School of Business.

Contact Sara Colvin, Director of Development, at 618-650-2317 or scolvin@siue.edu, or visit siue.edu/business/highimpact

Another Young Alumna Joins the “40 Under 40” Club Lissa Johnson-Lewis Shares Her Drive to Succeed



Lissa Johnson-Lewis, BSBA-Marketing '10, has come a long way over the past decade—from first generation college student to earning a spot on the elite St. Louis Business Journal 40 Under 40 Class of 2019. The list recognizes young leaders who are making their mark in both business and the community.

Her rising visibility is a testament to her strong drive to succeed, a willingness to take on new challenges, and passion for helping others.

Johnson-Lewis was promoted to assistant brand manager at Nestlé Purina Pet Care in early 2019, after leading efforts to launch a first-of-its kind cat food product (combining wet and dry ingredient packages) in the U.S. and Thailand. But this is far from the first time, or the first company, where Johnson-Lewis has delivered stand-out work. A few years ago, she was part of IKEA's launch activation team, introducing new stores in St. Louis, Las Vegas and Memphis. Prior to that, her work on a record-breaking cause marketing campaign garnered attention at Caleres.

“You can't ever get too comfortable with where you are,” Johnson-Lewis said. “I'm always looking for new opportunities that will push me. I've worked hard to get where I am today, but I'm also here because of other people's willingness to give back.”

Growing up on the south side of Chicago, Johnson-Lewis' family had limited resources. SIUE wouldn't have been an option for her without two intervening factors. One was a donation that provided funding so that high school students like her could participate in a bus tour of different colleges, opening the door to new possibilities. The other was a scholarship that supported her tuition expenses at SIUE.

Once inside the School of Business, her professors played an instrumental role in shaping her career plans. “I wasn't surrounded by examples of successful business people growing up,” Johnson-Lewis said. “But I was fortunate to have professors who were dedicated to my success and helped me envision a future that I couldn't otherwise see.”

Community activism has been a priority for Johnson-Lewis since she graduated. She currently chairs the leadership development committee for the St. Louis chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women.

She also works with Social Venture Partners, which provides nonprofit organizations with management resources and guidance to help them achieve their goals. She has made a point of sharing her marketing talents and professional skills with a variety of community organizations in the region that help those who are economically disadvantaged or in need.

“Community involvement is more than just a personal passion; it has helped me build a stronger professional network as well,” said Johnson-Lewis. “That network has broadened exponentially after being honored as part of the 40 Under 40 class.”

“I wasn't surrounded by examples of successful business people growing up, but I was fortunate to have professors who were dedicated to my success and helped me envision a future that I couldn't otherwise see.”

—Lissa Johnson-Lewis, BSBA-Marketing '10
Assistant Brand Manager, Nestlé Purina Pet Care



Shaping Student Perceptions on Diversity

Alumnus' Role in Bringing Diversity to Life



“I think it’s important for alumni to share their experiences with students, so they don’t leave school with a false hope of what the real world is like.”

—Jimmie Howlett, BSBA '06
Vice President of Community Development, Busey Bank

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives within the corporate world have moved from the sidelines to the board room agenda in recent years. Yet women and minorities still remain underrepresented, despite research demonstrating the competitive and financial advantages that a more diverse workforce yields. As the corporate world tests effective strategies to improve diversity, SIUE and the School of Business are shining a brighter spotlight on the issue.

At the University’s inaugural Diversity Day last fall, the School of Business sponsored a panel to highlight what D&I efforts look like in the workplace and their value. The panel brought together several School of Business alumni, including Jimmie Howlett, BSBA '06, vice president of community development at Busey, an Illinois-headquartered bank.

Diversity is an inherent part of Howlett’s responsibilities. Part of his job as a Community Reinvestment Act officer is to ensure Busey is allocating resources to low- and moderate-income individuals and neighborhoods. He is also tasked with educating Busey’s workforce about the value of diversity as part of its D&I task force. He has presented to the executive team and board about real revenue-generating opportunities that have emerged—for example, a Spanish-speaking mortgage lender who was able to help the organization connect with an entirely new market that had previously gone untapped.

Howlett is committed to mentoring the next generation as well—both within and outside of his firm.

“I think it’s important for alumni to share their experiences with students, so they don’t leave school with a false hope of what the real world is like,” Howlett said. “The business world is finally starting to understand how a diverse workforce drives economic growth, reduces turnover and drives innovation. But it’s still a work in progress.”

Bringing alumni from a variety of backgrounds to campus is a major area of focus for the School of Business D&I Committee. Laura Wolff, an instructor in the Department of Economics and Finance who serves as the committee chair, stressed how alumni have a powerful influence on student perceptions.

“You can’t replicate the credibility of listening to an alumnus talk about how the diversity of their team increased revenue,” Wolff said. “But the topic of diversity doesn’t need to be the focal point. We want to engage with a broad representation of alumni to help students better relate with their own background and their transition to the real world.”

If you’re interested in mentoring students or serving as a panelist for a future School of Business event, please contact Sara Colvin, Director of Development, at 618-650-2317 or scolvin@siue.edu, or connect with her via LinkedIn.

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The School of Business works closely with the business community to provide the very best business expertise and develop programs that provide a foundation for students to become leaders in their chosen careers. The commitment of these advisory board members to lend their expertise and to serve the School of Business as ambassadors in the business community is gratefully recognized and appreciated.

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With gratitude, Tim Schoenecker, Dean, School of Business

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