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Achievement and Innovation

The beginning of this academic year was a particularly exciting one, with new and returning students creating a terrific energy as they arrived on campus. The School was pleased to welcome several new faculty members and administrators. Our undergraduate, master's, and PhD programs all experienced significant increases in both volume and quality.

For those of you who are new members of the Business School family – new students and parents, new donors and mentors, along with many more – welcome to our community. I hope I will have the chance to meet each of you personally sometime soon, if I haven’t already.

This year is an important one at the School. Our outstanding students continue to surpass even our highest expectations, and to constantly teach faculty and staff members, even as they learn from us. We have a number of industry and academic conferences coming up during the next several months. Our international immersion courses are expanding to offer practical learning opportunities in China and Latin America, in addition to India. We are piloting a new student consulting course in conjunction with the University of Miami Life Science and Technology Park. We are preparing to launch the new Miami Executive MBA for the Americas this summer, as well as new specialty master's programs in key areas such as business analytics, finance and international business.

These achievements and innovations are possible only with the help of the entire School of Business community. We need the support of alumni, parents, partners and business leaders.

From a financial perspective, I ask that you please consider a gift to the University of Miami's Momentum2 campaign, which aims to raise $1.6 billion by 2016. Gifts to the campaign, designated to the School, will help support our efforts to advance our position as a leader in global business education and research.

Gifts of time and talent are as important to our mission as financial gifts. Sharing your expertise with students in the classroom, hosting students in international immersion courses, working with student consulting teams, hiring students as interns — all of these help advance our mission.

I encourage you to make a commitment to the School or to renew the commitment you have already made. It will have an incalculable impact on our efforts to become a center of excellence in developing the next generation of global business leaders.

— Gene Anderson
genea@miami.edu

Mission Statement: To develop innovative ideas and principled leaders that transform global business and society.
I am looking forward to collaborating with them on projects that align both of our missions.” He noted that the School’s strategic location in Miami, capacity to teach in multiple languages (English, Spanish and Portuguese) and strong relationships with Latin American businesses will help further GBSN’s initiatives.

Faculty and students from the School will be able to take advantage of educational, networking and practice-based opportunities through GBSN, which has focused on the developing world since its founding in 2003. The School will also work with other GBSN members on programs to assist companies in variety of emerging markets with capacity building, strategic consulting and mentoring programs. The programs aim to end “brain drain” in the developing world by promoting quality in-country business education, while at the same time strengthening the role of business schools around the world as knowledge generators and innovation disseminators.

“Becoming a member of GBSN will help us achieve our vision of becoming a leader in advancing sustainable prosperity, especially in emerging economies,” said Gene Anderson, dean of the School. “We have an important role to play in supporting responsible globalization and we look forward to partnering with other members of the network to further management education in these markets.”
It’s often said that pictures are worth a thousand words — but are images also powerful enough to drive customers to make a purchase? Not necessarily. In fact, displaying too many photos or images could spell lost sales for many online retailers, suggests new research led by Claudia Townsend, assistant professor of marketing at the School.

Townsend’s research, conducted with Barbara Kahn of the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School (and a former dean at the School), shows that no matter what they’re shopping for online — from nail polish to crackers to mutual funds — people strongly prefer to look at pictures rather than text. But, when presented with a large number of products to choose from, they are more likely to actually make a purchase decision when their options are presented as text. With a small selection of products (for example, four crackers), the use of images didn’t keep people from making a purchase decision.

This is likely due to the fact that people examine items in a different way when they’re displayed with images versus text, as prior research has shown. Townsend and Kahn’s study, however, is the first to show that the way people examine individual items in a group also influences how they examine the entire group, and whether they ultimately choose — or don’t choose — to purchase an item.

**Images Can Lead to Choice Overload**

The researchers found that when people were shown a large set of products presented with text, they scanned the options in an orderly fashion, processing the entire set in a systematic way. When the same large set was presented visually, people spent less time examining each individual option — and less time examining the entire set of options.

“When images are used, people tend to just take in the overall idea of what each item is. It’s much more haphazard, people take less time on each item and just jump around,” Townsend says. When examining the images, people experience a phenomenon known as “choice overload,” in which overwhelmed shoppers simply choose nothing. “Because they don’t spend enough time looking at each individual item, consumers feel overwhelmed — which causes them to have a harder time making a final decision,” Townsend adds. Her research is the first to connect choice overload to the way products are presented on screen.

The findings, to be published in the February 2014 issue of *Journal of Consumer Research*, provide a warning to online retailers, particularly those selling products on mobile devices. “This study shows that, although images are attractive and fun, they aren’t as effective at selling products,” Townsend says. “When a large product set is shown with images only, there is a tendency among consumers to quickly gloss over them rather than making a purchase. Text-based presentation is often actually better — potential customers are more likely to make a choice, and ultimately, a purchase.”

Townsend suggests that online retailers take a two-pronged approach to product presentation: “Because consumers prefer to see products visually, we suggest e-retailers design a home page that uses images, emphasizing ease-of-purchase and variety. They should then make their product offering pages more heavily text-based in order to cause the shopper to slow down, review each option more carefully and buy.”

— Tracy Simon and Rochelle Bruder-Singer
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—Tracy Simon and Rochelle Bruder-Singer
State’s Loss, Investor’s Gain

INVESTORS AND BUSINESS RESEARCHERS are always looking for ways to predict stock market returns. George Korniotis and Alok Kumar, both faculty members at the School of Business, have found that returns can be predicted, in part, based on the state a company has its headquarters in.

Korniotis, an assistant professor of finance, and Kumar, Gabelli Asset Management Professor of Finance, found that when a state economy is doing poorly, local investors sell the stocks they own in local companies, driving down share prices. As a consequence, those stocks become undervalued. Those who buy the stock when it is undervalued then realize healthy returns as the state economy improves and investors subsequently drive stock prices back up.

“We show that the future returns of firms in depressed states are higher than those of firms in booming states,” Kumar says. “During our sample period, a strategy that exploited this geography-based predictability would have earned an annualized risk-adjusted return of over 5%.”

Their findings appeared in the June 2013 issue of the Journal of Finance.

What’s Down Is Up

Korniotis and Kumar started with the observation that state economies are largely independent. While the economy in Texas may be booming, economic conditions in Vermont might be dismal. They combined that insight with another observation: Investors tend to invest locally. Many stockholders buy and sell shares primarily of companies headquartered in the state in which they live. So, they wondered, how does a state’s economic performance affect future stock returns of companies in that state?

The researchers looked at three indicators used by economists to gauge the health of the national economy. First is the growth rate of labor income in the state. Second is current unemployment compared with past employment levels in the state. And third is the ratio of housing equity to labor income in the state. Those indicators are good predictors of the state economy’s health as well as of individual investors’ ability to borrow and, hence, take on risk.

Finally, Korniotis and Kumar combined these predictors with stock returns over periods between 1978 and 2009. What they found is that “geography-based trading strategies earned annualized risk-adjusted returns of 5%,” according to their paper. Why? Because as the local economy worsened, investors sold their local stocks. The increased volume of sales drove down stock prices. Those who bought then saw strong future returns. Buyers didn’t have to hold stocks for long before they reaped the rewards. “What we show is that it takes about six months to a year” for the investments to pay off, Kumar says.

Macro-Economic Indicators Can Predict Returns

The findings answer a long-standing question about return predictability. “There has long been a debate whether macro-economic indicators can predict returns,” Korniotis notes. “Our research suggests that there is predictability, but you have to look at the U.S. economy not as a single entity but as many loosely connected economies.”

Do the findings have application in the real world? Yes, Korniotis says, with a couple of caveats. Firstly, as stated in the study, “past performance is not always a reliable indicator of future results.” Secondly, as with all investing, timing is everything. If you buy when a state economy is weak and stock prices are low, there’s no guarantee the economy won’t further weaken and stock prices fall even lower. The returns come only after the state economy improves.

What about national or international investments? “Our research shows a mechanism for predictability,” Kumar says. “But we can’t necessarily extrapolate to the national or international level, because we haven’t tested those scenarios.” But Kumar and Korniotis are considering additional research. “We’ve talked about expanding our analysis to European countries, where we can think of each country as the geographical unit of analysis,” he says.

—Eric Schoeniger
In Proactivity We Trust

BUSINESS UNITS WITH PROACTIVE LEADERS ACHIEVE POSITIVE RESULTS ONLY WHEN EMPLOYEES TRUST THEM

Managers consistently report that proactive employees generally achieve better individual results, such as bigger raises and faster promotions, according to Cecily Cooper, associate professor of management at the School. But what happens when these proactive individuals become managers? Does their proactivity lead to better team results, or does it get in the way when they are setting the tone for others?

That’s what Cooper and her co-authors set out to investigate when they examined the association between managers’ proactive behaviors and unit sales performance at a large U.S.-based consumer packaged-goods company. They defined proactive leaders as “people always looking for positive ways to initiate change to improve their work or organization.” Using that definition, they found that it’s more complicated to assess the benefits of proactivity as it relates to leadership and group performance than it is to assess those benefits in individual performance. The critical factor that must be included with groups, Cooper says, is trust.

“We found that trust acts as a social lubricant to allow these proactive managers to have a positive effect in terms of driving the performance of their business units,” Cooper says. “No one had really looked at proactivity and trust together. But since we were looking at the proactivity of leaders — and trust is such a critical component of leadership — it made sense to bring trust into the conversation.”

The authors, who include Craig Crossley, professor of business management at the University of Central Florida, and Tara Wernsing, professor of organizational behavior at IE Business School, had their findings published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*.

The research focused on the company’s 50 managers, who each oversaw one of the 50 district sales forces around the country. They gathered data through multiple surveys and also used the company’s sales performance metrics.

**Trust Is Needed to Embrace Change**

The results, Cooper says, showed that the districts with proactive leaders whose employees trusted them had the best sales results. This made sense to her, since proactive managers often initiated changes. “If you don’t trust a manager who is trying to make constant improvements, the work environment is going to be unsettled and you as an employee are going to be uncomfortable,” she says. “But if you trust your manager, you’re more likely to buy into and go along with all the changes that they want to make.” Indeed, the research showed that proactive managers whom employees did not trust had the highest turnover in their units.

In addition, they gleaned that proactive managers are more likely to set higher goals for their units, and these higher goals then drive the units to have a higher performance. “Again, trust is the social lubricant that allows all of this to happen,” Cooper says. “If the employees don’t trust the manager, then this scenario breaks down.”

The portion of the study dealing with trust yielded extremely objective outcomes, which is important for Cooper’s research, and for applying the results. “Sometimes people think trust is a soft topic, but we found that trust within organizations can have significant financial implications in terms of sales performance and turnover,” she says. “We always knew about benefits to being trusted, but we also see that there are risks to not being trusted. And that lack of trust can cost organizations. So trust may be a soft topic in some ways, but it influences hard outcomes for a firm.”

—Jill Colford Schoeniger
New Health Care Options Come Into Play for Individuals and Businesses

BY RICHARD WESTLUND (MBA ’83)

FOR INDIVIDUALS, businesses and health care providers, the rules of the game are changing dramatically as implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) shifts into high gear in 2014. All participants in the U.S. health care system have new options and strategies to consider.

“Health care reform is very much a work in progress,” says Steven G. Ullmann, professor and director of the School’s Center for Health Sector Management and Policy and head of programs in that area. “There are more than 10,000 pages of regulations and most people will like some provisions of the law and have concerns about other aspects. I expect there will be ongoing adjustments to the law over time, just as there was when Medicare and Medicaid were introduced back in 1965,” adds Ullmann, who is now routinely tapped as a national expert on the new law.

While the details of health care reform may evolve, the ACA is already transforming the insurance market. “There will be important decisions facing individuals, small businesses and large employers,” Ullmann says. “For those affected, it will be important to do your homework and look at your specific situation before deciding what direction to go.”

New Insurance Options for Individuals

The ACA requires all Americans to purchase health insurance or obtain coverage from their employers, Medicare or Medicaid in 2014. However, the penalty for not being covered is just $95. “That’s a small penalty and it may not be a big driver for compliance next year,” Ullmann says. “Faced with a multitude of choices, it’s likely that many individuals may simply postpone buying a policy.”

In most states, individuals will have plenty of coverage choices to make during the ACA’s first open enrollment period, which got off to a rocky start Oct. 1. New policies may be purchased directly from an insurance company or through a state marketplace (many of which are operated by the federal government).

On the exchanges, consumers will choose plans offering several, standardized, levels of coverage. The standardized coverage levels are meant to make it easier to compare plans. There are four levels of coverage. In Florida, for example, with a bronze plan, the insurer would cover 60% of a medical bill, while a platinum plan may cover 90%. Younger adults may instead choose to purchase less-expensive policies that only cover catastrophic medical expenses.

In most states, major insurers are offering a variety of plans within each coverage category, based on factors like the size of the plan’s provider network. “You should take a look at the plan to see which physicians are in the network and where their offices are located,” Ullmann says. “The cost of the premium shouldn’t be your only consideration.”

Factors Affecting Coverage

Many Americans who could not find insurance on their own (in what is known as the “individual market,” outside of group coverage through an employer) will now be able to do so. “One of the biggest [consumer] benefits of the new plans is that individuals can’t be turned down for pre-existing medical conditions,” Ullmann says. “That’s a huge benefit for people who have problems like diabetes, heart disease or cancer.”

Another change is that insurers are only allowed to use age, smoking status and geographic location to set an individual’s premium rates. In addition, the ACA compresses age-related differences in premiums, so a younger adult may pay relatively more for coverage than in the past, while an older adult may find the premiums more affordable.

Subsidies

One of the ACA’s most important goals is for more Americans to have health insurance. To up the odds of that... continued on page 8
happening, the federal government is providing subsidies to lower-income individuals and families. These subsidies will cover a portion of the premium in 2014. A small subsidy is available for families of three with incomes up to $90,000, according to Ullmann.

**Businesses Face Insurance Decisions**

Smaller employers with fewer than 50 full-time workers should review their health insurance options in early 2014, Ullmann advises. Florida employers can examine the state’s Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) marketplace, which will allow enrollment through March 31, 2014. To encourage enrollment, employers will be eligible for a 2014 tax credit covering 50% of the premium costs. Buying a group policy through SHOP allows businesses to determine what type of coverage to offer employees — a potential competitive advantage when hiring new workers, Ullmann says. “A business could subsidize all or part of the premium costs,” he adds. “That would be similar to the defined contribution model with a 401(k) retirement plan.”

Other small employers may choose to drop group coverage altogether, and require employees to purchase individual coverage.

Larger employers with 50 or more full-time workers have until Jan. 1, 2015, to prepare for full ACA implementation. They might need to revise or drop a group insurance plan, although many will find the best option is simply to continue with their current insurance plan. “Bigger organizations will have a full year to evaluate their programs and see what makes the most sense for their businesses,” Ullmann says. “But they face financial penalties if they decide not to provide coverage.”

Neither individuals nor businesses need to make quick decisions, Ullmann stresses. “Take your time, consider your options and purchase your coverage. It’s really a different landscape now.”

**Taking a Seat at the Table**

*LESSONS FROM WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP*

BY KIRA LEWIS

Alumni, current MBA students and members of the community came together this September at the Four Seasons Miami to hear from top female executives about their own experiences reaching, and staying in, leadership positions.

The evening began with a welcome from Dean Eugene Anderson and a brief keynote address by Frances Sevilla-Sacasa (AB ’77), CEO of Banco Itau Europa International and former interim dean of the School. Then Patricia Sanchez Abril, an associate professor at the School’s real estate board.

The speakers, clockwise from top left: Frances Sevilla-Sacasa, Kim Stone, Lucy Morillo-Agnetti, Tere Blanca, Marilyn Blanco-Reyes and Associate Professor Patricia Sanchez Abril.
Some of their most revealing insights:

Moving Up the Ladder
There was collective agreement that women are still struggling to achieve equality at the top echelons of business and nonprofits. And, Blanca noted, “we have not broken that glass ceiling in terms of participating in public and corporate boards.” Sevilla-Sacasa suggested that reaching this goal would require women to be a little bit more aggressive. “We need to ask for that raise if we’re not getting it and we know the guys are,” she said. Women, she noted, can be timid about taking jobs they are not prepared for while men rarely hesitate. “Women should take stretch jobs and lateral moves which move them away from their comfort zones,” she advised. “It’s worth taking some calculated risks for advancement.”

Stone pointed out that you never know when an opportunity might present itself. She shared her own experiences in the Miami Heat locker room, where some players weren’t always respectful. Stone stayed cool and professional, and eventually the quality of her work gave her an opportunity to ensure that every player treated her with respect. Her advice: “Stay dedicated, stay professional at all times. You have to have your ethics above reproach and stay above the fray.”

While the women noted the importance of mentoring for advancement, Blanca said it is even more important to find sponsors. “Whether they are men or women, find someone that will include you in opportunities to interact at a certain level and that will allow you to grow individually, intellectually and professionally,” she said.

Reframing Gender as an Asset
Women in leadership positions are often still treated differently than men are, but they don’t need to accept the characterizations that may be thrust upon them, Morillo-Agnetti advised. She shared a personal example: After being told by a male board member that she was very emotional, Morillo-Agnetti came to realize, “I’m not emotional, I’m passionate.” She advised women to use their passion to set the agenda for their own careers, for a particular project or even for an individual meeting. “Never stop being passionate about anything you do,” she said, “regardless of whether that can be confused with emotion.”

Blanco-Reyes noted that women’s comfort with emotion is also a leadership asset. “We’re not self-conscious talking about things that might be a little bit emotional or embarrassing or awkward,” she said. “Whatever your role, allow yourself to teach the people around you by opening up and sharing.”

There’s no Such Thing as Balance
On the always-prevailing topic of work/life balance, most of the women agreed with Blanca’s assessment: “I don’t think it exists.”

Sevilla-Sacasa and Stone suggested that, rather than balance, having a successful career and a full personal life is about knowing what to focus on when. “It’s about having the right priorities at the right times,” Stone said. Sevilla-Sacasa agreed, saying, “There are times when you can be 100% dedicated to your professional life and times you can be 100% dedicated to your family.”

Of course, being able to shift priorities requires support. Sevilla-Sacasa shared that she and her husband “invested in a great nanny, and that was the salvation of my life.” Several of the panelists had done the same thing and agreed that it was crucial. Blanco-Reyes noted that she hired a regular housekeeper very early in her career. “I always found money to pay for somebody to take care of me,” she said. “Because if I wanted to go out there and do everything I needed to do for my professional career, I needed someone to take care of my home.”

Morillo-Agnetti agreed, saying that every woman needs a “good support system that you design. It doesn’t have to be the typical support system.”

Blanca noted that women need to speak up and ask for the support they need, whether in the workplace or at home, and may often be surprised at what they can negotiate. She and Stone also noted that when those in leadership positions ask for and use flexibility at work, they help change a company’s culture. When those above and below them on the corporate ladder see that flexibility and business leadership can go hand in hand, they are more likely to ask for or grant needed changes.

Shattering the Glass Ceiling
In the next decade or so, technology is likely to make workplace flexibility the rule rather than the exception, the panelists said. Blanca predicted that, “With younger people coming into the technology era of being able to work from anywhere, this will guide us into an evolution in the workplace that will allow for flexibility that I think everyone should have.”

At the same time, market demands will lead companies to seek out more women in high-ranking positions. “The more senior management teams and boards mirror their company’s employee and customer base,” Sevilla-Sacasa said, “the more success the company can achieve, as a result of having a better understanding of their shareholders’ needs and behavior.”
Launching the School’s Accelerated MBA in Real Estate Program

BY RICHARD WESTLUND (MBA ’83)

Catherine Cai, Theresa Schwark (BBA ’12) and Tom Speno are getting hands-on experience in the complex field of commercial real estate as the first three graduate students in the School’s new Accelerated MBA in Real Estate program. “By combining classroom work with two paid internships, this program was a perfect fit for me,” says Speno, who was a commercial leasing broker at CNL in Orlando. “Being able to stay in the workforce while gaining the academic experience and a graduate degree in real estate was a win-win all around.”

Designed for a limited number of students, the Accelerated MBA in Real Estate program was developed in partnership with UM’s School of Architecture with input from the School’s Real Estate Programs Advisory Board. The first class began in May with three weeks of concentrated studies followed by six-month internships at South Florida commercial real estate firms.

During the fall semester, Speno spent his internship at Miami-based Banyan Capital, a private equity firm that focuses on financing office projects. Cai, a native of China and former stock analyst in Australia, worked at Swire Properties, a Hong Kong-based company now developing the mixed-use $1.05 billion Brickell CityCentre in Miami. “Swire’s project is a game changer for South Florida,” she says. “I’m working in the finance department, and have assisted with a pro forma for land acquisitions and take part in meetings with the construction and sales and marketing teams.”

Schwark grew up in Germany and lived in Panama before enrolling at UM. This fall, she was an intern at Miami-based The Related Group, a multifamily housing company founded by Jorge Perez. “Real estate today is an international field, and it’s exciting for me to work for a company that has projects both inside and outside the United States,” she says. “This program has helped me make new connections at a multifaceted development company.”

After their on-the-job learning, Cai, Schwark and Speno will return to the classroom for the spring semester, then complete the program with a second paid internship outside the area.

“Many real estate, financial, marketing and management professionals find a need to broaden their skills,” says Andrea J. Heuson, professor of finance at the School and head of the program. “Our program provides real world experiences that allow them to expand their professional horizons.”

New Executive Director of Alumni Relations and Development

Nancy Hullihen joined the School in October as executive director of alumni relations and development. She is now leading the School’s alumni and development efforts, including its capital campaign as part of Momentum2: The Breakthrough Campaign for the University of Miami. “I am excited to meet and work with our many alumni to further the mission and vision of the School,” Hullihen said. “Our alumni serve as our greatest supporters and are essential to the success of the Campaign.”

Before coming onboard at the School, Hullihen helped UM’s Miller School of Medicine successfully raise major and principal gifts for areas including medicine, orthopedics, the UM Tissue Bank, and the Life Science and Technology Park. Prior to joining the University, she was a private wealth advisor for the investment management division of Goldman Sachs in Miami. “As a long-standing member of the Miami business community, Nancy enjoys strong relationships with many of the School’s alumni and other major stakeholders,” said Dean Eugene Anderson. “I look forward to working with her to continue the School’s great momentum in alumni relations and development.”

Hullihen has a B.Sc. in Finance from Carnegie-Mellon University and an MBA from Thunderbird School of Global Management.
Reverse Mentoring
What’s the most effective way for senior executives to learn about social media and digital technologies? One approach is known as “reverse mentoring” – a relationship where a more junior-level person is the mentor, teaching a more senior-level person. Watch video and read about the program that has School of Business students mentoring senior Citi executives, or listen to a segment about it on WLRN Radio.

Who Owns Your Data?
In an online exclusive story, the School’s faculty examine other aspects of big data: privacy, data breaches and what companies can do when data gets away.

Top Tweeter
Follow the Twitter feed of Management Professor Terri Scandura, named one of the world’s top 50 professors on Twitter: @terriscandura

Stories of U
School of Business Alumnus Robert Castro shares a story about his favorite professor, Arun Sharma, in this short video.

At the Clinton Global Initiative Meeting
School of Business senior Travis Montaqué, founder and CEO of Splyst LLC, speaks about the access, mentorship, technology and education that international young entrepreneurs need, in video from the annual meeting.

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Ruben Dario Lizarralde (MSPM ’99) was named Colombia’s minister of agriculture on September 11. In announcing the appointment, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos called Lizarralde a great manager and great leader, noting that he was the architect of a successful model for collaboration between businesses and farmers. Prior to his appointment, the School of Business alumnus was CEO of the palm and rubber company Indupalma for more than 15 years.

Lizarralde’s appointment comes at a critical time, as he will be responsible for leading the implementation of the most ambitious reform of Colombia’s agricultural sector in the last 50 years, according to Joseph Ganitsky, director of the UM Center for International Business Education and Research and a senior lecturer in management at the School of Business.

Lizarralde joins a roster of School of Business alumni currently serving or having served in key Latin American governmental positions. Porfirio “Pepe” Lobo (BBA ’70) has been the president of Honduras since 2010; Mercedes Araoz (MA ’91) served as Peru’s first female minister of finance from 2009 to 2010, after serving as the country’s minister of foreign commerce and tourism from 2006 to December 2009; and Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace (MBA ’80) served as minister of tourism and aviation for The Commonwealth of The Bahamas from 2008 to 2012.

Bringing Business Acumen to Government Service
ALUMNUS APPOINTED COLOMBIA’S MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

COHEALO, the health care services and technology company that was last year’s Business Plan Competition Grand Prize-Graduate winner, just finished a new round of seed funding. The company has now raised a total of $11.5 million in funding, which it is using for product development and to fund a nationwide expansion. The most recent investment round was led by Boston-based Romulus Capital.

Founded early last year by Brett Reed (MBA ’12), Mark Slaughter (MBA ’12) and Michael Slocombe, Boca Raton-based Cohealo uses technology and trucks to allow medical systems to share expensive and under-utilized equipment between locations. By the time the group won the Business Plan Competition last year, while Slaughter and Reed were completing the School’s Executive MBA program, the company had finished a pilot program and was preparing to expand. Now, Cohealo works with more than 40 hospitals in four states and has 19 employees. Slaughter, the company’s CEO, expects to triple the number of hospital clients by early 2014.

This year’s freshman undergraduate class:
450 students from 34 countries
Up Close With the 2013 NBA Champions
ONE STUDENT’S UNFORGETTABLE INTERNSHIP WITH THE MIAMI HEAT

**F**EW INTERNSHIPS PROVIDE the opportunity to gain valuable hands-on experience plus the chance to meet the players behind back-to-back national basketball championships. But that’s exactly what School of Business senior Jeffrey Chan experienced during 2012 and 2013, when he worked for the Miami Heat during the team’s National Basketball Association championship season.

Chan served as an Internet services intern during the pre-season and regular season and helped manage the team’s website, Heat.com. His work involved chatting live with fans from all over the world on the website’s “CoveritLive” section, keeping fans up to date with the latest stats and top team news.

While the internship provided Chan with valuable experience in customer relations and publicity, it came with an added bonus few business school interns can boast about.

“I got to meet LeBron James, Dwayne Wade, and Chris Andersen,” said Chan. “I was shocked, I couldn’t picture in my mind getting to meet these players.”

Chan’s internship lasted through the playoffs and up until the team earned its third NBA championship title on June 20. After finishing his last chat on that winning night, Chan got to have his picture taken with the Larry O’Brien NBA Championship Trophy.

“My coworker and I went downstairs and celebrated with the team in the locker room. They were spraying champagne everywhere,” Chan said. “This internship was an opportunity that I’ll never forget.”

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**Partnering with Companies**

**ADDRESSING BUSINESS CHALLENGES WHILE FURTHERING RESEARCH**

**THE SCHOOL** is partnering with businesses and other organizations to address their leadership, human resources, development and other challenges – while gathering data for important research. Cecily Cooper, associate professor of management at the School, and her partner Craig Crossley of the University of Central Florida, will be working with organizations of 250 employees or more that need help on issues ranging from employee retention and onboarding to assessing the effectiveness of various programs.

“Research partnerships are beneficial for companies because they are essentially a mini-consulting engagement but come at little to no cost to the company, depending on the scope of information and output,” Cooper said. “We will meet with the firms’ executive leadership to define their area of concern, develop an assessment strategy, collect data and offer detailed insight on the focal issue.”

As Cooper assists these companies, she will also gather data to conduct research on trust in organizations. Internationally-recognized experts in that field, Cooper and Crossley have been conducting research into trust in organizations for more than a decade.

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**School Hosts Top Latin American Executives For Program in Marketing**

**THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS** in September hosted more than 40 Latin American marketing executives for a one-week Executive Program in Marketing. Participants from 12 countries learned the latest and best practices in marketing, exchanged ideas and learned from colleagues as they expanded their professional networks.

The high-level directors, general managers, vice presidents and CEOs learned from School faculty in both English and Spanish, with simultaneous translation.

Program topics included service quality, pricing strategies, building powerful brands, globalization vs. localization in emerging markets, advanced sales management and customer relationship management strategies. The program was so successful that it will run again in April 2014. “We are proud to have become the go-to school for Latin American professionals looking for short-term certificate programs in the United States,” said David Lecón, the School’s director of executive education.
School Hosts International Finance Conference

The world’s leading finance scholars descended on the School of Business last spring for the 2013 Finance Cavalcade academic conference. The annual conference, organized by the Society of Financial Studies, drew 240 finance professors from nearly 50 institutions, including Harvard University, Yale University, The Wharton School, MIT, Stanford University, Cornell University, the University of Chicago and Duke University.

Alok Kumar, the School’s Gabelli Asset Management Professor of Finance and chair of finance, organized the event. Other participants included Jawad Addoum, assistant professor of finance at the School, who served as the discussant for one of the papers presented at the conference.

“The Society for Financial Studies is one of the largest finance associations and publishes the Review of Financial Studies, which is one of the top journals in academic finance,” Addoum said. “This is the third year that they are holding the Cavalcade. It provides another venue for the discussion of current research and the exchange of new ideas.”

Emery noted that the conference — which drew twice as many scholars as had been expected — was a great opportunity to promote the School in front of an important audience.

Teaching about Tourism

UNDERGRADUATES HELP SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS IN GALAPAGOS EMBRACE BEST PRACTICES

FIVE UNDERGRADUATE School of Business students spent part of their summer break helping small business owners in the Galapagos Islands’ nascent hospitality and eco-tourism industry.

The students, as members of the School’s Hyperion Council, helped business owners on Isabela, the archipelago’s largest but least-developed island, implement best practices in accounting and operations. Jasmine Holmes, Shannon Nurse, Curtis Oseola, Ana Ruiz Villalobos, and Alban Harrison began with workshops to improve local accounting practices. They also worked with Isabela’s local tourism office, sharing practices for providing higher-quality consumer experiences and discouraging customer poaching. Customer poaching, Harrison explained, is part of a low level of internecine warfare between established hotels and local hostel owners. The smaller family hostel operations attempt to steal customers away from established hotels by undercutting the hotels’ prices.

“Before the tourists get to the hotel,” Harrison explained, “these businesses try to offer an accommodation for $8 to $10 a night. That creates a problem for the hotel owners, since it drives away interest from the tourists.” The prices these small hostel operations charge are unsustainable, and as a result the owner/operators are unable to cover the costs of expenses such as water and electricity. The students worked with established hotels on securing reservations and developing a plan to reinvest profits into their facilities, in order to retain customers and create a better customer experience.

The students also helped the smaller hostel operations create more effective promotional materials and implement new marketing tactics. In particular, they helped introduce more effective social media practices, which were particularly useful in helping both kinds of businesses offer incentives to keep customers engaged with their pre-selected hotel.

The students also met with Carla Flores Sáenz, director of tourism for Isabela, and discussed macroeconomic perspectives with Isabela mayor Bolívar Tupiza.

“This has been the perfect opportunity for our students to take their experience abroad, challenge themselves, and support small businesses in need,” says EllenMarie McPhillip, assistant dean for undergraduate business education. “The School of Business offers an excellent program for these students to cooperate and introduce the best business practices to encourage more effective, modern, and sustainable financial planning by these small companies.”
Yongtao Guan, a professor of management science at the School, is studying potential links between cancer risk and the proximity of homes to heavy automobile traffic along with collaborators from the Yale School of Public Health. They are backed by a $453,000 grant from the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Cancer epidemiologists have previously studied such data based mostly on aggregated zip code data. Even studies based on street addresses, however, did not account for “spatial uncertainty” – errors introduced by geocoding. The new research by Guan and his colleagues will be based on the actual latitude and longitude of each specific address and will account for geocoding errors in order to produce more accurate findings.

“Cancer epidemiologists can extract data from many different sources such as censuses, statewide health surveys, tumor registries and population-based case-control studies, but each source may yield data with different types of spatial uncertainty,” said Guan, who is the study’s lead researcher. “This usually results in biased parameter estimates, inflated standard errors, and reduced statistical power to detect clustering and trends.” Guan and his colleagues believe their research will produce more accurate results.

The goal of the work is to develop user-friendly software that can be used by the public and/or those making public policy to assess the cancer risk in current or future living, commercial and recreational environments. Such software might answer questions such as whether those living near a major highway, where there is a higher density of auto emissions, face a higher risk of cancer. Researchers believe the identification of such links could be used to more effectively reduce the burden of the disease. The researchers are analyzing 20 to 30 years of data for people diagnosed with cancer in Connecticut for the study.

“This grant will enable us to use readily- available data to assess how one’s geographical location may increase his or her cancer risk, and package it in such a way that can offer the public an understandable resource for planning new roads, parks, neighborhoods, schools, etc. with health risk in mind,” Guan said.

The $453,000 grant will fund the first year of the study, which will continue through 2017. The expected total grant funding for the entire study period exceeds $1.7 million.

Catching up with Health Sector Major Graduates

The School’s First Undergraduates majoring in health sector management and policy graduated in May of 2012, and the School’s first full class of students in the major graduated last spring. These alumni are securing jobs in this expanding and specialized field. “There are jobs everywhere in health care and I wanted to make sure I had the specialization,” says Bryan Alexander (BBA ’12) who is working as a supply chain operations analyst for Health South, a chain of inpatient rehabilitation centers in Birmingham, Ala.

“You can get your finance or accounting degree, but if you want specialization in a field that’s the fastest growing out here, this is the major.”

Alexander transferred into the major, which the School first offered in 2010, from accounting, even though it meant first finishing a roster of core classes that left no time for electives. He found it well worth the effort when he enrolled in a health care politics course taught by UM President and former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala – who brought in Bill Clinton as one of her guest speakers.

“That was a great experience,” Alexander says. “It was a solid two-hour conversation and we could ask him questions.”

Sarah Cox (BBA ’13), meanwhile, is in South Africa working in two positions. She’s the co-founder and 2013 program coordinator at One Sun Health with the Malaria Awareness Program and also the drug safety coordinator at BioSoteria. “I learned the basics of health care management, policy, law and accounting, which have helped me tremendously,” she says. “It’s truly an amazing program with excellent faculty, resources, students and support.”

— Brett Graff
School’s Faculty Share Their Expertise

interest.com – 10/29/13
Andrea Heuson, a professor of finance, provided analysis of the financial advice website’s annual Home Affordability Study, which found affordability down across all major markets. For the Miami metropolitan market, she said:

“I expect the situation to be worse from an affordability standpoint next year. Prices have stopped falling, stabilized and started to rise.”

In a post on the Journal’s “The Experts” blog, Robert Plant, an associate professor of computer information systems, offered insight into whether companies should be allowed to profit by selling their customers’ data. He noted that: “Twitter’s IPO is not in the long-term from an affordability standpoint...”

Financial Times – 10/21/13
Dean Eugene Anderson discussed the types of executives who are attracted to educational programs in Miami, in an article about the area being a “hotspot” for executive MBA programs. The School’s new EMBA for the Americas, Anderson noted, aims to attract “executives in the U.S. that want to do business in Latin America and Latin American executives that want to do more business in the U.S.”

The Miami Herald – 10/2/13
In a story about the School’s reverse mentoring program, in which 15 School students are paired with senior Citi executives, Terri Scandura, a professor of management at the School and mentoring researcher, explained why reverse mentoring is gaining traction. The story noted that:

“Even baby boomers who might bristle at the idea of being mentored realize the value in learning what motivates Gen Y and how to market to them.”

Harvard Business Review – 8/15/13
In a regular blog post, Robert Plant, an associate professor of computer information systems, wrote that IT-related problems at firms are rooted in leadership failings. He asserted that:

“People in the C-suite don’t understand IT problems, don’t provide adequate resources to solve them and don’t approach the issues as members of unified technology-literate teams.”

Harvard Business Manager Germany – 8/7/13
In a blog post, Robert Plant, an associate professor of computer information systems, offered advice to the many companies that said “annoy their customers with poor service,” which is often “due to the asymmetry of power between companies and consumers.”

America Economia – 7/18/13
Arun Sharma, a professor of marketing, discussed the growth of network marketing — the product-sales strategy used by companies such as Avon, Amway and Natura — in new markets. He noted that:

“The doctor coming out of medical school today is facing a system that is much more business-focused.”

The New York Times – 7/14/13
Shoppers being tracked by retailers using video surveillance and their cell phone signals may find the practice more repellent than those being tracked online, wrote Robert Plant, an associate professor of computer information systems. He noted that, “The idea that you’re being stalked in a store is, I think, a bit creepy, as opposed to it’s only a cookie – they don’t really know who I am.”

Compliance Week – 6/25/13
In an article about how much information firms should disclose about the personal lives of their CEOs, Ann Olazabál (MBA ’97), vice dean and professor of business law, asserted that companies should not be required by law to disclose such information. The article pointed to a paper Olazabál co-authored with Patricia Abril, an associate professor of business law at the School, on “Celebrity CEOs.” Their research, Olazabál said, challenges the notion that a single executive can make or break a company’s fortunes. She added that:

“The often salacious nature of media reports, and a voyeuristic thirst for gossip, provides little in actionable information for investors; it only encourages speculation.”
New Faculty Join the School

This fall, the School welcomed three new faculty members: 

**DERICK DAVIS**, assistant professor of marketing, joined the School after earning his PhD in marketing from Virginia Tech. His specialties include consumer behavior, social psychology and marketing research. Davis’ research interests include phonetic priming and processing, order effects and errors and biases in reading and processing text and numbers.

**STEFANOS DELIKOURAS**, assistant professor of finance, earned his PhD in finance from the University of Michigan before he joined the School. His research interests include asset pricing, financial macroeconomics, investor behavior and behavioral finance.

**ALEX HORENSTEIN**, assistant professor of economics, was an assistant professor of finance at ITAM in Mexico before he joined the School of Business. He earned his PhD in economics from Arizona State University, and his research interests include asset pricing, econometrics and health economics.

New Vice Dean Oversees Faculty Development and Research

**ANDREW LEONE** steps into newly created role

Andrew Leone, the School’s Andrew P. Metzger Professor of Accounting, took on the newly created role of vice dean for faculty development and research on July 1. Leone, who was previously chairman of the accounting department, will lead the School’s efforts to recruit, support, retain and develop world-class faculty. Leone will also take the lead in expanding the School’s PhD program. He joins the School’s two other vice deans: Ann Olazabal (MBA ’97), vice dean for undergraduate business education, and Anuj Mehrotra, vice dean for graduate business programs and executive education. “The driving considerations in expanding the School’s team of vice deans include the imperative of continuing to build on our great momentum in faculty research and support,” said Dean Eugene Anderson, “as well as the forthcoming wave of innovation in Graduate Business Programs and our community’s commitment to growing our activities and reputation in executive education.”

American Marketing Association Award

A. “PARSU” PARASURAMAN, holder of the James W. McLamore Chair in Marketing, professor and department chair of marketing, received the 2013 Gilbert A. Churchill Award, for lifetime achievement in the academic study of marketing, from the American Marketing Association (AMA). The AMA noted that Parasuraman’s “seminal work ... on developing a scale to measure service quality – SERVQUAL – played a major role in the emergence of services marketing as a distinct sub-discipline.”

Best Paper Award

GERGAN TODOROVA, assistant professor of management, received the Best Paper Award for Conflict in Context from the Academy of Management. The award was for a research paper Todorova co-authored, titled “Can Conflict be Energizing? A Study of Task Conflict, Positive Emotions, and Job Satisfaction.” The award recognizes an outstanding field-based paper studying organizational, political or social conflict.

Teaching Excellence Award

The World Education Congress presented HARESH GURNANI, professor and Leslie O. Barnes Scholar of management, with its “Global Best Professor of Management” Award, which recognizes individuals and institutions for excellence in education, leadership and teaching.

Editorial Board Appointments

TERRA A. SCANDURA, professor of management, and CECILY COOPER, an associate professor of management, were both reappointed to the editorial board of the *Academy of Management Journal*, one of the world’s leading management research publications.

Conference Presentations

A. “PARSU” PARASURAMAN delivered a plenary session presentation at Aston Business School's Marketing Research Camp in Birmingham, United Kingdom, and at the 13th International Research Symposium on Service Excellence in Management (QUIS13) in Karlstad, Sweden. Also, in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the University of Olbia, Parasuraman delivered a keynote address entitled “Achieving Excellence through Superior Service and Technology” in Sardinia, Italy. And, he delivered a plenary presentation entitled “Customer Delight—More Confusion than Clarity?” at the 2013 Frontiers in Service Conference in Taipei, Taiwan.
BIG DATA: TURNING INSIGHTS INTO ACTION

Big data is a valuable business asset and a useful tool for companies that know how to gather, parse and analyze it. And as all business becomes global, it’s increasingly essential to remain competitive.

By Robert S. Benchley
Illustrations by Harry Campbell
BIG BUSINESS IN REAL TIME
Welcome to big data, currently the hottest two words in business. Truth be told, it’s tough to get consensus on exactly what big data is, except … big, and useful. Robert Plant, associate professor and vice chair of the School’s computer information systems department, writes about the topic regularly for the Harvard Business Review, among other publications. “There is so much data out there that I see it as a new currency,” Plant says. “In fact, some companies are buying up certain types of data to prevent other companies from having access to it. Today, data is a company’s most-valuable asset.” Data has so much value in business, in fact, that the School plans to launch a one-year Master of Science in Business Analytics degree program next fall.

It’s been possible to collect reams of data for years, but it’s only recently that technology has advanced enough that we now have the tools to capture, store and analyze massive data sets. Add in smart people who understand how a business, industry or consumer group works, and businesses can, with an impressive degree of accuracy, predict actions and activities in complex systems ranging from the weather to the stock market to consumer purchasing behavior.

The data is available in incomprehensible volumes, just waiting to be mined, and more is produced every day — layers upon layers of medical records, social media posts, legal filings, census data, corporate transactions, cell phone calls, retail sales, scientific research and more. Almost all of the daily activity on Earth, great and small, ends up stored somewhere. And increasingly, what is getting crunched is real-time data, not historical records.

How much data are we talking about? Think about it this way: Wal-Mart, a company founded in the days when offices were filled with typewriters, now generates enough data to fill 60 million five-drawer file cabinets every hour.

Using all this data in business involves capturing, combining and analyzing seemingly unrelated bits and bytes of information to make business decisions. It’s about finding patterns, connections and relationships among those pieces of information and using sophisticated algorithms and other analytical tools to make timely decisions and predict future events. “Big data doesn’t just mean getting clever answers out the other end,” Plant says. “You have to be pretty smart about what you ask it.”

Many companies have learned the hard way that simply collecting reams of data won’t help their business. Hong Kong-based Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, for instance, is trying to gain a better understanding of its guests by combining two different sets of data: social media and traditional loyalty measurements. “Historically, our industry has relied on data warehouses to collect information and build a 360-degree view of our guests,” says Monika Nerger (BS ’95, MBA ’99), the company’s global CIO. Data the company uses includes the dates a guest stayed at one of its 27 properties around the world, how often a guest stays at Mandarin Oriental properties, how many different properties a guest has stayed at and the value of each stay. “Our goal is to tailor the experience in a way that is dynamic to each guest,” Nerger says. But conventional customer relationship management systems simply can’t keep up with guests in real time, so the company has added in social media data. Now, all that data translates into ideas the hotel can immediately put to use. “With social data

A NEW MASTER’S PROGRAM

Big Data in the School of Business Classroom

“Business professionals need to be comfortable with data-driven decision-making,” says Anuj Mehrotra, vice dean of graduate business programs and executive education. That’s why learning to analyze data for actionable insights using business scenarios has been part of the School’s curriculum for some time.

Sara Rushinek, professor of computer information systems, pits teams of students against each other in the health informatics and stock market classes she teaches. It can get competitive, just like in the business world. “We’re exploring algorithmic forecasting and programming,” she says. “The students look for patterns of data that assist in decision-making. Typically, each team is made up of students in different majors, so they bring different strengths. The teams compete to see which can use available data to generate the greatest profits.”

In fall 2014, the School plans to launch a new Master of Science in Business Analytics degree program, which is pending approval from UM’s Faculty Senate. The degree is for professionals who need a structured approach to working with data in a business context. “Graduates of this program will have the ability to work with big data, develop and use data-mining methods and software tools, understand and use decision models and develop and use predictive models,” Mehrotra says. “They will be technically trained to understand and tackle large data issues in any type of organization.” – R.S.B.
interjected in real time, we are more quickly able to understand sentiments — what guests think about our brand — as well as individual behaviors, such as whether a guest spends time at our spa but hasn’t stayed at the hotel,” she explains. “Actionable insight is what is needed to transform our business.”

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION ... AND DATA
Actionable insight has long been a mantra in the real estate industry, where proprietary databases of information have a history of influencing a company’s success. What’s changing is just how much of that information is now available publicly. In residential real estate, private companies such as Zillow are just beginning to bring data into public view, but in commercial real estate, much of the key data is public record and readily available, says Matt Rotolante (BBA ’97, MBA ’01), managing director at the Miami office of the national commercial real estate advisory platform Sperry Van Ness.

Factors such as demographic trends, traffic patterns, crime statistics and consumer purchasing all have an impact on a real estate parcel’s desirability and, ultimately, its value. Rotolante has always used data to help clients make investment decisions. Now, however, he has more data, can access it anywhere and is able to analyze it quicker. It is “rapidly shifting the old paradigms” in real estate, he says. “My grandfather used to trudge around with Miami-Dade plat books. I now access that same property data and more using Google Earth functionality for anywhere in Florida from my cell phone. I use it to help my clients forecast trends and understand why building in a certain location will work.” The ability to mine all that public data and make smart recommendations from it, he adds, means more accurate and better decision-making for customers.

“Data is especially vital in today’s global economy, in which managers often have to oversee operations in far-flung locales. For instance, you can buy a Coke just about anywhere in the world, and Javier Polit (BBA ’87) helps make sure you get one when and where you want it. Polit is CIO of The Coca-Cola Company’s Bottling Investments Group, a $16 billion business with 90,000 employees in 20 countries on five continents that processes, packages and distributes the many beverages owned by its parent, The Coca-Cola Company. It delivers to

“There is so much data out there that I see it as a new currency.”

– Robert Plant, Associate Professor and Vice Chair, Computer Information Systems, School of Business

BIG DATA’S GLOBAL IMPACT
Data is especially vital in today’s global economy, in which managers often have to oversee operations in far-flung locales. For instance, you can buy a Coke just about anywhere in the world, and Javier Polit (BBA ’87) helps make sure you get one when and where you want it. Polit is CIO of The Coca-Cola Company’s Bottling Investments Group, a $16 billion business with 90,000 employees in 20 countries on five continents that processes, packages and distributes the many beverages owned by its parent, The Coca-Cola Company. It delivers to
“In India, it can get too hot to go shopping,” he says. When that happens, the company needs to change its shipment and distribution plans.

Right now, The Coca-Cola Company’s Bottling Investments Group is in the middle of a significant global initiative to improve its collection and use of data. “Dealing with as many countries as we do, we still need one common data repository, one version of the truth, where everybody in every country can go and get the same information,” Polit says. This, he notes, is where big data becomes hard work. With the necessary databases and infrastructure already in place, he is working on the master data management piece — the common data structure across all countries. “If you don’t have that, you don’t have all of the information you need to make the right decisions,” he says. “At the same time, as a global company, you need to leave some freedom in the framework. You may have a different strategic initiative in India than in Germany or Uruguay, and you need to give the locals the freedom to deal with their own marketing execution. As long as the freedom isn’t 60 to 70% of the whole, you’re OK.”

HEALTH CARE’S DATA PRESCRIPTION

As the use of big data expands, one of the industries poised to see the most transformation from it is health care. Health care reform has been a major catalyst in getting the whole industry focused on big data, especially for use in managing the chronic diseases that consume a huge portion of overall health care costs, says Jim McDowell (MBA ’85), senior director of health care strategy at Oracle. Data analytics provide insights into better treatments, while helping drive process improvements. “We need to learn how to take better care of people and drive costs down,” he says. “Studies show that one leads to the other. A combination of less-expensive hard-
“Historically, our industry has relied on data warehouses to collect information and build a 360-degree view of our guests.”

- Monika Nerger, Global CIO, Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group

decisions about both individual patients and best practices for the future.

MANAGING AND PROTECTING DATA ASSETS
For Wilder, whose systems also interact with his hospital clients’ systems, data security can be as important as innovation in its collection and use. Even when the data isn’t sensitive, like health care records, it is still valuable. Business competitors, foreign governments and organized criminal enterprises have all been implicated in the theft of corporate and consumer data. The more data that is out there, the greater the opportunity for bad acts, says Sandy Goldstein (BBA ’81, MBA ’85), CEO of the data security and forensics firm Capsicum Group and chairman of the School’s Entrepreneurship Programs Advisory Board.

“Large corporations are well aware of the threats,” Goldstein says, “but small- and medium-size companies are all over the map in terms of addressing data governance issues. Data moves in a stream like water, and none of us is fully protected. Our security is really our ability to quickly react to potential breaches, because you’re not going to stop all the threats.”

Security Consultant Cem Gürkök (BBA ’00, MBA ’02) agrees. “It’s not a question of if, but when, an incident will occur for the average company,” he says. “A company needs to be prepared to secure its data by educating employees about threats, having a proper incident-response policy, and constantly monitoring its systems. It also needs to have big data instrumentation in place to process security-related information.” And don’t forget, he adds, that other types of disasters — like fire, flood or power outages — also can take down your company’s data. You need to have multiple backups at different locations and plan for those events, too.

TURNING DATA INTO RESULTS
Used well, big data can significantly impact a company’s bottom line. Henry Holaday describes one way Campbell Soup Company and Walmart turn insights into results. Certain items sell better in certain stores.

“The high-velocity items need greater emphasis during the weekly store visits by our representatives to make sure they are fully maintained and stocked on the shelf,” he says. When a best-seller slows down, it’s a concern. It could happen because the store has run out of the product and needs a delivery, or simply because an empty shelf has not yet been replenished from in-stock inventory.

Campbell created an algorithm that analyzes the data, determines the reason for a sales drop, and alerts either the sales rep or the store to remedy the situation. Holaday says improvements in Campbell’s data systems dropped false alerts to reps by 17% and increased the on-shelf availability of its products. That translates into significant revenue.

“Millions of dollars in sales can be lost if a consumer sees an empty shelf and buys a competitive product or walks out of the store,” he says. But having the data — and knowing what to do with it — prevents that from happening.
Ideas They Can Execute

Behind the scenes at the 2013 UM Business Plan Competition, from stressful preparations and technological fumbles to soaring presentations and impressive ideas.
Photos by Steven Vote
Text by Bob Woods
COMPETITORS tried their best to be relaxed and take advantage of the breakfast-time networking activities as the final day of the University of Miami’s 2013 Business Plan Competition began on April 18. Sponsored by the School of Business, the competition itself had lasted for most of the school year, finally coming to a head with the semifinal and final rounds. Undergraduate students, graduate students and — for the first time — alumni arrived on campus that day to present their business plans to a distinguished group of judges. At stake: prize money totaling $30,000.

While many of the competitors did take the time to talk with judges, each other and School of Business faculty during the pre-competition breakfast, others were furiously completing last-minute changes to PowerPoint presentations, rehearsing their pitches or simply meeting face to face with members of their team for the first time in days. One alumnus, whose flight to Miami had been grounded the night before due to storms, was on an early-morning plane, hoping he’d make it in time to present (He did).

Once the competition kicked off, the intensity ratcheted up. Each of the 15 semifinalist teams had 30 minutes to present their business plan to judges and answer tough questions about everything from a path to profitability to whether they had properly researched their market to how they would address potential manufacturing issues. After a break for lunch and feedback, 10 teams moved on to the final round that afternoon. They then repeated their presentations to different judges, holding steady while answering a new set of questions.

The Grand Prize winners — shoe wholesaler Category 5, home health care company SHHADE and social entrepreneurship café Savory Community Café — each took home $5,000 checks. Their diversity reflected that of the entire competition, in which finalists included two shoe companies, two restaurants, two health care companies, an online service for managing employee incentive programs, an online textbook market, a way to sample gym workouts and a platform for renting exotic cars.

“That speaks volumes about the School and the competition,” says Susy Alvarez-Diaz (BBA ’93, MBA ’95), a lecturer in the management department and the School’s director of entrepreneurship programs. “We go beyond just talking about the concepts of running a business. We go into the nitty-gritty and the tools they’re going to need to launch a business.”

BusinessMiami was there for competition day, from the first coffee to the final announcements. In the following pages, we give you a peek into the competition.
Providing SHHADE to Health Care

A team of four MD/MBA students developed a business plan for a company that addresses two of the more vexing problems in health care: overutilization of emergency rooms and hospital readmissions. SHHADE — shorthand for Supplying Home Healthcare Alternatives and Dedicated Education — proposes to offer affordable in-home primary and preventative care for patients with chronic diseases, including diabetes, congestive heart failure, hypertension, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma. Rimsky Denis (MBA ’13), Onyinye Ugorji (MBA ’13), Chaitanya Vadlamudi (BS ’09, MBA ’13) and Karan Srivastava (MBA ’13) proposed a multidimensional solution to the vexing problem of overutilization of ER and hospital services. The chronic diseases the company focuses on are largely manageable with outpatient therapies, so a core element is mobile, in-home primary care services. Once a patient is enrolled with SHHADE, he or she is paired with a physician and case manager; they each visit the patient at home to evaluate medical, social and economic needs and set up a comprehensive care plan. A nurse practitioner schedules monthly checkups but may visit more often if the patient’s health worsens.

Read more about SHHADE, including other accolades the business plan has received and how the students blend their training in medicine and business, at bus.miami.edu/magazine.

A full day (clockwise from top left) Karan Srivastava of SHHADE presents to the judges, PowerPoint remote control in hand. The day started with relaxed networking between competitors and judges, as well as a hearty breakfast. Once the presentations started, things moved quickly, with judges watching the clock at every stage — including setup, as Michael Lazarra (BS ’13) (left) and Jake McPhee (right) of Uber Food are doing here.
Feeding Local Needs

When she learned about the University’s new alumni category in the Business Plan Competition, Sandi Vidal (BBA ’88) and the board of the nonprofit Christian HELP were researching programs that could both serve its social mission of preventing homelessness in the Orlando area and bring in revenue. Vidal is the executive director of the 20-year-old nonprofit. Knowing about the competition, she says, forced the group to speed up its process and choose which of four different business ideas to pursue. They settled on Savory Community Café, an eatery that would serve fresh local food in a welcoming environment while also fostering Christian HELP’s wider mission: Finding jobs, reducing hunger and providing hope. “Eat a meal, change a life” became the subtitle of the business plan that Vidal and Royce Gomez, an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer and seasoned entrepreneur recruited to help research and write it, would ultimately present to the competition’s judges.

Read about how Savory Community Café plans to capitalize on local eating trends, create a culinary training program and teach skills that can be used in a variety of fields, at bus.miami.edu/magazine.
SHARED HARD WORK (clockwise from far left) Judge Sandy Goldstein (BBA '81, MBA '83), founder and CEO of Capsicum Group and chairman of the School's Entrepreneurship Programs Advisory Board, pre-competition. Judges pour over a plan: (from left) Quinn Warden (BBA '12), founder of last year's Grand Prize winner, PT United; Mark Sanna, CEO of Breakthrough Coaching; Isaias Sudit, CEO of TROVE and Datumcom Corp.; and Glenn Camche (AB '80), president of Sondra Roberts. Competitors Cecile George of CineCaribe.com, Obediah Ben Samuel of Luxshare, Jason Shuman of Category 5 Boat Shoes and Sandi Vidal of Savory Community Café.
Sole Survivor

Maybe his last name is merely a coincidence, but Jason Shuman (BBA ’13) is all about the shoe, man. And not just any shoe, but the rubber-sole, leather-upper, distinctly laced slip-on boat shoe that’s ubiquitous among yachtsmen, as well as college fraternity members, according to Shuman. It’s that latter group that inspired him to launch Category 5, a company that specializes in custom boat shoes, in 2012. He’s since developed the formal business plan that won over the UM Business Plan Competition’s judges last April, changed manufacturers twice and relaunched the company a month later. Today, a determined Shuman is the full-time CEO of Cat5 — its informal moniker — from his native Massachusetts.

Read more about Category 5 Boat Shoes, including the story of how Shuman raised funds, launched the company and changed manufacturers, at bus.miami.edu/magazine.
2013 University of Miami Business Plan Competition
HOSTED BY THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Alumni Winners

Grand Prize - $5,000: Savory Community Café, Sandi Vidal (BBA ‘88)
Second Place - $2,500: Luxshare Luxury Car Share, Obediah Ben Samuel (BBA ‘08)
Third Place - $1,000: Advanced Imaging Projects, Stanley Satz (BBA ‘63)

Undergraduate Student Winners

Grand Prize - $5,000: Category 5 Boat Shoes, Jason Shuman (BBA ‘13)
Second Place - $2,500: Sol Food, Lisa Weintraub (BBA ‘13)
Third Place (tie) - $1,000: Huah.co, Parker Barnett (BBA ‘13)
Third Place (tie) - $1,000: uTextBook Exchange, Ana Gil (BBA ‘13), Lili Qiu (BBA ‘13) and Shuai Wang (BBA ‘13)

Graduate Student Winners

Grand Prize - $5,000: SHHADE, Rimsky Denis (MBA ‘13), Karan Srivastava (MBA ‘13), Onyinye Ugorji (MBA ‘13) and Chaitanya Vadlamudi (BS ‘09, MBA ‘13)
Second Place - $2,500: CrewHu, Stephen Spiegel (MBA ‘12) and Juan Barrera (MBA ‘12)
Third Place - $1,000: KOLYR, Whitney Kimmel and Alexander Shapiro

Paul K. Sugrue Entrepreneurial Spirit Award – $1,000
Chad Brick (MBA ‘13), Joshua Banner (MBA ‘13), Joseph Coconate (MBA ‘13), Caroline Ferris (MBA ‘13), Oscar Harada (MBA ‘13) and Ryan Keller (MBA ‘13)
As phase two of the Affordable Care Act is implemented, this conference will bring together national health care industry and policy leaders for a unique exchange of ideas on the business of health care.

Panel sessions include:

- The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: Impact on Employers in 2014 and Beyond
- Benefits, Costs, Politics and Policy
- The Impact of Implementation on Health Care Providers

Keynote Speaker

Olympia Snowe
Former U.S. Senator (R-Maine) and Senior Fellow, Bipartisan Policy Center

Panelists

Alice Rivlin
Director, Engelberg Center for Health Care Reform, Leonard D. Schaeffer Chair, Health Policy Studies, and Senior Fellow, Economic Studies, The Brookings Institution

Diane Rowland
Executive Vice President, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

Donna E. Shalala
President, University of Miami, and Former U.S. Secretary, Health and Human Services

Helen Darling
President, National Business Group on Health

James M. Winkler
Senior Vice President, Innovation Leader, U.S. Health & Benefits, AON Hewitt

Michael Freed
Executive Vice President, Corporate Resources and Chief Financial Officer, Spectrum Health, and President and CEO, Priority Health

For more information and to register visit:

bus.miami.edu/healthcare2014
An MBA for the Americas

School introduces a new executive MBA designed with high-growth markets and busy schedules in mind.

By Rochelle Broder-Singer

Companies operating in today’s emerging global business markets need leaders with unique skills and training. These leaders must be able to interact with individuals from a variety of cultures, bring global connections to their organizations and think across business disciplines. The School of Business has designed a new executive MBA program to address these needs and take advantage of both the School’s location in Miami and its experience with multinational and Latin American companies. »
The new program blends nine weekend on-campus sessions with distance learning. “There are gaps in the marketplace. There aren’t any programs addressing the unique needs of executives focused on the Americas,” says Anuj Mehrotra, the School’s vice dean for graduate business programs and executive education. “We are particularly well-suited to offer such a program, with our location at the crossroads of the Americas here in Miami, our reputation in the Americas and our multinational, multicultural faculty. Plus, our faculty has extensive experience working with corporations in the Americas.”

Gene Anderson, dean of the School of Business, views the new program as essential to the School’s mission and strategy. “One of our community’s most important goals is to develop global leaders for the Americas,” he says. “The Miami Executive MBA for the Americas specifically speaks to this goal, while meeting an important need in the marketplace for leaders who are globally focused and who understand high-growth markets. Anuj and the faculty involved have done a spectacular job of developing this program.”

PUTTING MIAMI INTO THE MBA
One of the most important considerations in developing the program was how to best take advantage of the School’s Miami location, at the crossroads of the Americas. It makes the new program unique, and ensures that participants’ trips to campus bring them the highest value for their time.

Miami, ranked year after year by América Economía magazine as the best city for doing business in Latin America, offers an opportunity to engage with companies that are based around the world and focused on doing business in the Americas. More than 1,200 multinational firms have offices in the region, which has 25 foreign trade offices, 64 consulates and 40 bi-national chambers of commerce.

The Miami Executive MBA for the Americas will use all of those resources, giving participants the opportunity to see how companies and organizations in the area engage with Latin America, Europe and Asia. In the classroom, participants will interact with C-level executives from local and Latin American companies. Outside the classroom, they will be able to take advantage of Miami’s resources and of networking opportunities. “This will be a very distinctive and different experience,” Mehrotra predicts.

“We will leverage the many Miami connections to Latin America and the rest of the world,” says Olivier Bouclier, the School’s associate dean for executive education. “People come here to make those connections, find new opportunities and develop their businesses, and participants in this program will have ample opportunity to do so.”

After nearly two years of work, the School introduced The Miami Executive MBA for the Americas, which is set to begin in August of 2014. The program is built around management themes that are of particular importance to companies and individuals who are doing business in high-growth markets, especially those of the Americas.

The importance placed on networking and making connections is just one way that the new executive MBA program is less like a traditional class and more like an extended executive education program. On-campus sessions, for instance, are not structured in a lecture format or even a traditional university classroom discussion format. Rather, they will focus on high-level discussions, learning from peers, interacting with industry leaders and gaining insights specific to each participant’s business.

“Participants want a learning experience that is highly relevant and that helps them develop their leadership skills,” Bouclier explains. “Their organizations want to maintain or gain a competitive advantage. The program will give each participant an opportunity to think critically about some of the management issues he or she is facing.”

The core program themes of Global Multicultural Leadership; Managing Global Operations and Decision Making; Global Strategy and Execution; and Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Technology will be
examined through a multi-cultural, cross-disciplinary framework. These multifunctional courses will be taught by teams of faculty experts in conjunction with industry leaders.

“There has been a lot of discussion in the business world about the cross-disciplinary approach, but it does not happen so much in the classroom,” Bouclier says. “During our residencies, though, you may have – for instance – accounting, management and marketing faculty all teach and discuss the same core program theme through various lenses.”

This is the kind of learning that today’s high-level executives demand, Bouclier says. In designing every aspect of the new program, faculty consulted with the business community, including members of the UM Citizens Board and other alumni, executive education clients and leading companies in Miami and in Latin America. The goal is to ensure that every minute spent in the program is of concrete value.

As Mehrotra has shared the plan for the program with business leaders, “several have remarked that the program is ideally suited for executives,” he says. “They believe this program will be especially attractive for managers being groomed in succession planning.”

Although the School already offers executive MBA programs, The Miami Executive MBA for the Americas is a new program, conceived from scratch with no pre-existing framework to constrain it. “We started with a clean slate to design this program and challenged ourselves to come up with an ideal MBA program for executives,” Mehrotra says. “As the faculty developed each module, they did not say; ‘This is what or how I will teach because this is what I have been teaching.’ Instead, they have challenged each other to ask, ‘What is the value our course brings to participants, and how does it address emerging business issues?’”

“**Participants want a learning experience that is highly relevant and that helps them develop their leadership skills.”**

**BUILDING ON FACULTY EXPERTISE**

The School’s faculty are excited to put their expertise in emerging markets and current business issues to use in a new venue. “They realize that they are very strong in this area, and are really going to be able to make an impact, to make a difference,” Mehrotra says, noting that faculty have extensive experience working directly with organizations throughout the Americas. For more than a decade, the School has offered a Spanish-language executive MBA program, which draws executives from around Latin America. The School’s Executive MBA program in Puerto Rico also draws executives from multinational companies based on the island and around the Caribbean. The Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER), established in 2010 with a U.S. Department of Education grant, has also brought faculty close to the business community for consulting programs and given them opportunities to travel through CIBER grants. They’ve led students in global business projects and had additional exposure to international issues through CIBER.

Faculty and administrators have also worked very closely with organizations throughout the U.S. and Latin America to design and refine custom executive education programs. “In the process, they have further developed their appreciation for the organizational needs and what executives really require to succeed in the next few years,” Bouclier says. “They can bridge the gap between theory and practice in the classroom, so it is something exciting for faculty.”

**A PERSONALIZED MBA FOR BUSY EXECUTIVES**

In order to give busy executives the flexibility they need to complete an MBA program, the 17-month Miami Executive MBA for the Americas combines two weeklong sessions and seven weekend sessions at the main School of Business campus in Coral Gables, Fla. with distance learning and remote team projects. Throughout the program, each participant will also work on a single, self-directed, project specifically related to a challenge his or her organization is facing.

Every two months, on-campus residency sessions will include case studies, group projects and simulations in industries relevant to the participants. C-level executives from Miami and Latin America will also join the discussions, leading talks about issues multinational firms are facing, particularly pertaining to the Americas. They will also identify current business issues and trends and discuss participants’ own business challenges.

In between the residencies, participants will engage in activities including videoconferences, online discussions and simulations, practice exercises, tests and virtual team projects. In this way, they will cover business fundamentals and prepare for upcoming campus residencies. “Each component of The Miami Executive MBA for the Americas will be integrated with each participant’s real business life,” Bouclier says. “At every turn, they will tie their learning experience to their work.”
HIRING ALUMNI Real Estate Programs Advisory Board member David Luski (left) hired alumnus Adam Melnick (right) at DRA Advisors.
from funding an annual conference to hiring and mentoring summer interns and recent graduates, David Luski is making a powerful contribution to the School of Business’ real estate programs.

“I’ve always felt an affinity for university real estate programs and enjoy making a contribution to the education of our industry’s future leaders,” says Luski, who is president and CEO of DRA Advisors LLC, a New York City real estate investment advisory firm with about $11 billion in assets under management.

Founded in 1985, the firm is active in the U.S. office, retail, industrial and apartment markets. “We are a value-added manager,” Luski says. “We put together the equity to buy under-performing assets, create a business plan and add value through renovations, expansions and tenanting programs. In other words, we take things that are not perfect and fix them up to provide more value for the next buyer.”

Luski is an active member of the School’s Real Estate Programs Advisory Board, which includes prominent real estate industry leaders from South Florida and across the nation. The board advises the School on its real estate curriculum and is exploring the establishment of a new Center for Real Estate Studies and Research. Luski has been involved with the board since its inception in 2010. Since then, the board has helped create a new Accelerated Real Estate MBA Program, which guarantees internships for students, and the board also has helped strengthen the School’s other graduate and undergraduate programs.

The board also was instrumental in the creation of UM’s annual Real Estate Impact conferences, organized by the School of Business and School of Architecture. Luski’s firm has been a key sponsor of the conferences, which bring together top real estate finance, design and development professionals to discuss current trends and issues. Last year’s conference united more than 300 key people in the real estate industry, with panelists including Stephen M. Ross, chairman and founder of Related Companies, and Jorge Pérez, CEO and founder of The Related Group.

Luski’s generosity will have a continuing impact on the School. “To support the School’s class of 2014, I will personally match the dollars they raise for the University of Miami,” he says. “It’s a great opportunity to help keep the School moving forward.”

For Luski, helping the School has always been about sharing his time and expertise more than anything. “I like to give back to the real estate community, not just financially but also by conveying the knowledge and experience we have developed through the years,” Luski says. He works with the School personally as well as through the company. The managing partner of DRA’s Miami office, for instance, often gives guest lectures and participates in classroom discussions at the School.

“David is a great supporter of our School,” says Andrea Heuson, professor of finance at the School and head of its real estate program. “He hosts our undergraduate finance students and graduate real estate students every year in New York and gives our students important insights into what makes him such a successful real estate investor. He has been an invaluable mentor for the alums who work at DRA and for others who want expert advice on various aspects of the different career paths in commercial real estate.”

In June, he hired Adam Melnick (BBA ’11) who had spent 18 months as a real estate investment banking analyst for Jones Lang LaSalle’s capital markets group. “I had been working with distressed debt and found myself wanting to transition to the principal side,” Melnick says. “Coming to DRA was a great move for me, and I’ve already been able to make a contribution to the firm. I enjoy the entrepreneurial, team-oriented culture, and I’ve had an opportunity to learn from David Luski and our impressive acquisitions team. Each deal is truly a team effort, as we are able to leverage our firm’s expertise in acquisitions, asset management, financing and dispositions.”

Reflecting on his role as a coach and mentor, Luski has a few words of advice for the School’s finance and real estate students. “Be sure you know the fundamentals, including financial analysis and modeling, and build your communication skills,” he says. “Real estate is a broad industry, so look at your individual strengths to find a position that’s a good fit for you.”
Citi Reverse Mentoring Program Kickoff

On Sept. 27, Citi and the School of Business kicked off Citi’s “reverse mentoring” program with an event at the School, where MBA and undergraduate students such as Magali Ferber (left) met the Citi executives they will be mentoring, including Adrian Cristiani (right).

TOM STEPP, GORT PRODUCTIONS
TEDGlobal Comes to Campus
On June 13, the School hosted alumni, students and business leaders from the South Florida community to watch a special live stream from the TEDGlobal (Technology, Entertainment, Design) conference in Scotland. Attendees watched the conference and debated some of the ideas discussed there. On the television is former Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou.

Real Estate Networking in New York
This fall, members of the School’s Real Estate Programs Advisory Board, alumni in the real estate industry and students interested in the field gathered for a relaxed reception at the New York home of Steve Witkoff, chairman of the board and chairman and CEO of The Witkoff Group. Attendees included (from left to right) hotelier Ian Schrager; real estate advisory board member Howard Lorber, who is president and CEO of Miami-based Vector Group and chairman of Douglas Elliman; School of Business Dean Eugene Anderson; real estate investor Sheldon Lowe; and Witkoff.

Annual New York City Trip
Students, faculty and administrators visited financial centers, met with executives in the financial, real estate and marketing industries, and networked with alumni during the School’s 2013-2014 New York trip. Ber- mont/Carlin scholars (far left) in Midtown Manhattan after a meeting at Barclays. At an alumni reception (left to right), EllenMarie McPhillip, assistant dean for undergraduate business education, is joined by Erin Red- outey (BBA ’08) of Citi and Bill Fisse (BBA ’75, MBA ’76), senior human resources officer for Citi’s Transaction Services business.
Earlier this year, Keystone closed its first deal, purchasing 80% of Apptitude Mobile, a mobile app developer based in Tampa, Fla. The deal is something of a game changer for the brothers, giving them a tangible success to show potential new investors. “It has made a complete difference for people to be able to see a real deal,” Robert says. “It has opened doors and made it easier — but I wouldn’t say easy — to work with a wider network of investors.” Keystone recently purchased a 15% stake in a second company and continues to evaluate other deals.

The brothers’ previous entrepreneurial experience has been a real asset in their current business. During their first semester at the School of Business, they started Random Media, an integrated media company involved in the digital distribution of Caribbean content, which eventually became YouTube’s first Caribbean media partner. Running Random Media gave the pair exposure to various technology businesses, and to the ins and outs of conducting negotiations with companies.

Their own experience also equipped them to work with the entrepreneurs who founded the companies they target today. Unlike the typical Wall Street investor, “we have run a business,” David says. “We know what it means to hire and fire people, to make payroll, to spend money to grow. When we are talking to entrepreneurs and management at companies, we can identify with them. We’re cut from the same cloth.”

Looking back, Robert admits that many people thought founding an investment firm was an “audacious” idea for the two young men. But they also had encouragement — from their parents, from investors and from the business people they met along the way. “Yes, there was risk in starting this,” he says. “But a lot of people were saying, ‘go for it.’ The real risk in these things is in not trying. The only way you are guaranteed to fail is if you don’t try.” — Peter Haapaniemi
Music is the thread that runs through Alex Merchan’s career — a thread that began to spool out when Merchan visited a college career fair during his sophomore year at the School of Business and left his resume with MTV. He ended up interning with the company. “That internship basically threw me into the advertising sales department, which, in turn, became a trampoline that got my career up and running,” he says. “It led to my first job — as an advertising coordinator at Cisneros Television Group — while I was still a junior in college.”

Holding down a full-time job while getting his undergraduate degree wasn’t always easy — Merchan’s first international business trip fell the week before finals. But the juggling act paid off at graduation, when he was promoted to an advertising executive role. “I was pitching business and attracting clients before I even graduated,” he says. “That experience gave me a chance to get out of the gate a little bit earlier.”

A few years later, when MTV recruited him back after he’d left the network, Merchan’s ad sales career hit a hiccup: He was among a large group laid off by MTV’s then-struggling parent company Viacom. He rallied by starting his own consulting group and pursued his graduate degree — a move he credits in part to the urging of Patti (BBA ’57) and Allan (BBA ’56, MBA ’58) Herbert, the UM donors who had funded his undergrad scholarship. “The Herberts have been like a second set of parents to me, and they always encouraged me to go to grad school,” explains Merchan, whose own parents were hard-working immigrants from Colombia who never had the opportunity to finish college. “I thought, ‘This is the time to do it.’”

After getting his MBA, Merchan worked at post-dot-com-bubble AOL before joining the music and retail chain Virgin Megastores, a division of Richard Branson’s Virgin Group. “That’s where I got to focus on U.S. marketing for the first time, learning about bringing people into stores in places like Phoenix, New Orleans, San Francisco,” he says. “Until then, most of my career experience had been international.”

Orlando, Fla.-based restaurant, resort and entertainment company Hard Rock International was a natural next step for Merchan, who joined the company as regional marketing director for its Eastern division. In that role, he oversaw strategic planning, live music and event marketing for 24 Hard Rock Cafe locations. Promoted to senior director, brand marketing for North America in 2010, he now oversees the company’s brand marketing efforts across the continent, including advertising, partnerships, public relations and all local market activation.

“It’s great to be part of a global brand in 54 countries around the world,” Merchan says. “At Hard Rock, I’ve had the opportunity to partner with big firms — from large music festivals and media partners to companies like Pepsi and Interscope Records — all with the objective to understand each other’s goals and establish mutually beneficial programs. Ultimately, that’s what I like most: the opportunity to keep growing.”

— Jennifer Pellett
1950s
RICHARD MCCONAGHY (BBA ’50) is a manufacturer’s representative for Protec Cooling Towers of Miami. He retired from the U. S. Naval Reserve as a lieutenant commander.

1960s
ROBERT J. LOUGHLIN (BBA ’69) is president and CEO of the Techron Trading Corporation, a commodity brokerage firm based in Palmetto Bay, Fla.

1970s
RAUL ALVAREZ (BBA ’76), a member of the School’s Board of Overseers, was featured in The New York Times in the Carnegie Corporation’s “Pride of America” ad for 2013.

SANDRA P. GREENBLATT (MBA ’77, JD ’84) joined the Lubell/Rosen Law Firm in Fort Lauderdale as a partner.

ALLAN LESTER LANGER (BBA ’68, JD ’71) is working with the Reyes Law Firm in Coral Gables as a certified civil and appellate mediator.

1980s
AISHAH ABDUL-AZIZ (BBA ’87) has been promoted to retirement plan services support specialist at Dubuque Bank & Trust in Iowa.

SCOTT S. BEASLEY (BBA ’87) co-founded the CPA firm Disabled Accountants International, which aims to put disabled people back to work.

JEANNE A. BECKER (MBA ’84) merged her South Florida-based public relations firm with Wragg and Casas Public Relations, which is also South Florida-based.

TERRI K. ECHARTE (MBA ’88) was recently appointed senior vice president, private banker and commercial real estate lender at Gibralta Private Bank & Trust in South Florida.

Playing His Own Tune

WINSTON WARRIOR, BBA ’92, MBA ’96
PRINCIPAL, VINTAGE CONSULTING & ENTERTAINMENT, ATLANTA

For a decade, Winston Warrior put his MBA to good use at Cox Enterprises, the diversified communications and media company headquartered in Atlanta. He did quite well in various roles, and was involved in everything from driving increases in advertising revenue to developing a marketing strategy targeting millennial consumers. By 2009, he was head of corporate marketing at one of the Cox companies.

It was a great career, but for Warrior, it wasn’t enough. Years earlier, he had been in an R&B group in Florida, and he found that his interest in music refused to abate. “I felt this pull back to music, so I started dabbling with it in the studio,” he says. He enjoyed it, and in 2011, he left Cox and the corporate world to devote himself full time to singing and songwriting.

Warrior made two albums of what he calls “Vintage R&B” and gained a fair number of fans. One song made the Billboard charts, his videos were played on national television and he toured, giving live performances. He found considerable success, and “it was very rewarding,” he says. “But the industry can be difficult, and it wasn’t easy.”

So, in early 2013, Warrior took another step — one that combined his interest in entertainment and his business background. He turned his attention full time to his boutique marketing consulting agency, Vintage Consulting & Entertainment, which serves a variety of clients, many of them artists and entertainers. “Most of my clients are in front of the camera or in front of the microphone,” he says. With the agency, he adds, “I’m using my marketing background to help other people reach their dreams through branding and marketing strategy.”

Warrior says he has no regrets about giving the music business a shot. “It was something I wanted to try, something on my bucket list, and I’m happy I had a chance to do it,” he says. He still pursues his music on the side. And his experience has proven to be a valuable marketing tool, because clients can see how quickly he was able to create awareness and a brand for himself in the independent music world — and they understand that he speaks their language.

Others have also taken notice of Warrior’s unique background. He’s been talking to a number of Fortune 100 companies about potential roles. “They’re telling me that they like the totality of my experience — the fact that I stepped outside the box and took a risk, the entrepreneurial and business experience and the educational background,” he says. “So, we’ll see — there might be yet another chapter to the story.”

— Peter Haapaniemi
Making Museum Magic
DEBORAH SPIEGELMAN, BBA ’78 CEO AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MIAMI CHILDREN’S MUSEUM, MIAMI

in her more than two decades with the Miami Children’s Museum, Deborah Spiegelman has helped the museum grow from a 1,000-square-foot space in a West Kendall shopping mall into a 60,000-square-foot museum that just celebrated a decade in a high-profile location on Miami’s Watson Island.

When Spiegelman joined the museum, she was already an accomplished nonprofit manager, having begun her career at the University of Miami’s Bascom Palmer Eye Institute before moving to The Greater Miami Jewish Federation. She then worked at UM’s Project to Cure Paralysis. The Miami native brought that experience and her business school knowledge to the children’s museum, developing its operational model and strategic framework as it expanded.

Only 35% of the museum’s income comes from individual and corporate donor contributions, which include donations from heavy hitters such as Carnival Cruise Lines, Publix, The Miami Heat, Bank of America and Baptist Health Systems. The other 65% is earned revenue. “We use a business model that involves diverse revenue streams to support operations,” Spiegelman says. One revenue stream is the museum gift shop — something most museums have, but usually outsourced, Spiegelman says. Not Miami Children’s Museum — it even orchestrated a management deal with the on-site Subway restaurant. What’s more, the museum is home to an early-childhood education center that educates 100 children and also offers an on-site charter school for 300 students, kindergarten through 5th grade. “We’re very unique as far as children’s museums,” Spiegelman says. “We provide formal education opportunity in addition to a museum experience.”

Spiegelman and her board recently finished a master plan for the next five years, which includes re-creation of some exhibit spaces and doing a community assessment on how to best serve the population of people ages 8 and younger. “I’m honored to be at the helm of an organization with a passionate board and committed leadership,” Spiegelman says. “We’ve opened such an incredible institution that’s embraced by the community — and with the complement of a formal educational program that really sets us apart. I’m incredibly proud.”

— Brett Graff

GREGORY J. HICZEWSKI (MBA ’82) is the chief financial officer at the State University of New York’s University at Buffalo School of Medicine/Internal Medicine.

BRIAN L. ITZKOWITZ (BBA ’89) earned Arkansas Business’s “Nonprofit Executive of the Year” award for his work as leader of Goodwill Industries of Arkansas since 2008.

BRIAN RICE (MBA ’82), a member of the School’s Board of Overseers, retired from his role as chief financial officer of Royal Caribbean Cruises, a position he has held since 2006. Rice remains the cruise line’s vice chairman.

ROLAND SANCHEZ-MEDINA JR. (BBA ’88) was elected to the Orange Bowl Committee and to the board of directors of FairDistrictsNow.org.

HENRY J. WEISS (MSIE ’87, MBA ’87) was recently featured in an article called “True Blue Diplomats,” which will be published in Reader’s Digest India.

THOMAS S. BARTSCH (MBA ’95) was named chief marketing officer for international supply chain by FOCUS Brands Inc.

SCOTT J. BENESKIND (BBA ’91) is a U.S. Army management analyst at Fort Hamilton, the only active military installation in the New York City metropolitan area.

TERE I. BLANCA (BBA ’81, MBA ’83) has been selected to serve as chair of the City Year Miami board of directors, and was recently elected to the board of Miami Lakes, Fla.-based BankUnited. She is president and CEO of Blanca Commercial Real Estate. Blanca is a member of the School’s Real Estate Programs Advisory Board.

JONATHAN D. BONCHICK (MBA ’92) is co-founder of Viridian Spirits, which helped break the U.S. ban on absinthe. The company recently sold its Lucid Absinthe Supérieure to Hood River Distillers.

JEFFREY LEVINSON (MBA ’91) is the senior vice president at Coconut Grove Bank and vice chairman of the Aventura Marketing Council, both in the Greater Miami area. He is also the treasurer of the Michael-Ann Russell Jewish
New Master’s Programs Planned for 2014:

Building on its established MBA and other graduate business programs, the School of Business Administration is planning to launch five new master’s degree programs in the fall of 2014.

PROGRAMS INCLUDE:
- Master of Arts in Economics
- Master of Science in Business Analytics
- Master of Science in Finance
- Master of Science in International Business
- Master of Science in Management

For more information about the School’s new master’s degree programs, contact Jeff Hunter, director of recruiting and admissions, at jeffhunter@miami.edu or 305-284-2691.

CHRIS J. DREW (BBA ’02, MBA ’04) was honored with the South Florida Business Journal’s “40 Under 40 Award” for professional excellence and commitment to the local community.

RENE GARCIA (BBA ’04), Florida state senator for District 38, received the Public Service award at the Chamber of Commerce’s United Home Care 19th Annual Claude Pepper Memorial Awards.

BRADLEY GOODWIN (BBA ’09), a Los Angeles-based stand-up comic, helped form the UM alumni stand-up comedy group, The Canes of Comedy.

G. JAY HALL (AB ’06, MBA ’08) has recently been promoted to banking officer at BB&T; he is based in Miami.

LUCAS IRWIN (BBA ’07), founder of Steelhouse Fitness Miami and Steelhouse Franchising, had his company listed by Entrepreneur Magazine as a “Trend to Watch in 2013.”

JASON LIBERTY (MPRA ’01) was named chief financial officer and senior vice president of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd., the parent company of Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Azamara Club Cruises, Pullmantur and Croisières de France. He had been the company’s senior vice president for strategy and finance.

Cristina Leon-Rivero (MBA ’06) was honored with the South Florida Business Journal’s “40 Under 40 Award” for professional excellence and commitment to the local community.

Murali Menon (MBA ’04), a non-profit consultant and attorney in Southern California, was awarded a Coro Executive Fellowship by the Coro Foundation.

Robert H. Mullings (BBA ’01, MBA ’03) and David Mullings (BS ’00, MBA ’03), owners of Keystone Augusta, acquired 80% of...
Apptitude Mobile, a mobile application
development firm.

VANESSA PATIENCE (BBA ’00, MBA ’03), a member of the UM Citizens Board, was appointed president of export company Mivasa Worldwide.

BRETT REI ZEN (BBA ’99) was honored with the South Florida Business Journal’s “40 Under 40 Award” for professional excellence and commitment to the local community.

KERRY-ANN RIN (BBA ’02, MPRA ’07) joined Yip Associates forensic accounting and financial investigation firm in Coral Gables.

ALBERTO D. SARDINAS (BBA ’02) recently published the book “The Power of Your Story: 40 Short and Real-Life Stories Filled With Lessons.” He is a Spanish radio host, a motivational speaker and part of the Spanish television show “Despierta America.”

ERIS THOMAS (BBA ’00) was honored with the South Florida Business Journal’s “40 Under 40 Award” for professional excellence and commitment to the local community.

DIEGO VALERA (BBA ’07) and VANESSA VALERA-NOLTE (BBA ’05), co-founders of DistriValto USA, were named Ernst and Young Entrepreneurs of the Year Finalists.

2010s

AMANDA (CRUM) HARDING (MBA ’11) recently published a memoir titled “The Woman of the House,” about her determination after her mother’s death when she was 10 years old to “make her house better than any house with a Mama in it.”

MATTHEW JANES (BBA ’12) is an accountant in IBM’s North America Software Group.

JULIO C. SEVILLA (PHD ’13) graduated from the PhD Project, which aims to create a more diverse corporate America, and became an assistant professor of marketing at the Terry College of Business at the University of Georgia. He is one of only 26 male, Hispanic-American marketing faculty members in the U.S. At the Forefront of Their Fields.

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Be a Part of Our Future
Investing in a bold new talent-development program in the middle of a global recession is as risky as it sounds. But Marcelo Fumasoni (MSPM ‘09, MBA ‘10), vice president and head of human resources for Latin America and Canada at Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp., believed it was the best way for the growing global health care company to meet its future talent needs. Basel, Switzerland-based Novartis is involved in a wide range of health care businesses, including medicines, eye care, generic pharmaceuticals, consumer health products, preventive vaccines and diagnostic tools. Latin America is a key growth area for the company, and Fumasoni knew that an innovative leadership-development program was the best way to support that growth.
When I joined Novartis in 2007, the company was undergoing a shift in strategy in the Latin American region. Instead of having individual countries working under sub-regional organizations that then reported to a regional office, the company cut out those middle layers so that each country had its own stand-alone operations, collaborating directly with the regional office. The goal: Tailor efforts more closely to each individual market’s needs and, ultimately, drive growth in the region.

As head of HR in the Latin American region, I was heavily involved in determining how to find the leadership talent needed to make this new structure work. It was clear that we would need to build a more robust pipeline of upper managers and leaders, and strengthen our ability to develop internal talent. As my team and I were developing a plan to ramp up the talent pipeline, the company was hit by the 2008 global economic collapse. This caused companies everywhere to think of cutting back and hunkering down, and like everyone else, we were very concerned.

As those events unfolded, my team and I completed a talent-development plan. We hoped to establish a “Novartis university,” tailored to the Latin American region, which would bring together academia and internal business people to accelerate talent development. Under the traditional approach, we were preparing perhaps 10 new leaders a year; with our new plan, we hoped to increase that to 40 or 50. This approach would involve a significant investment—one that seemed especially large against the backdrop of the global economic crisis.

Needless to say, I knew it was a difficult time to pitch such a program. But I also knew that this would be good for Novartis. And I believed that it was in the company’s DNA to support the development of knowledge and talent. So, I plowed ahead with the presentation to the board. I made sure that I was armed with a solid business case that spelled out our talent needs for the coming years, and explained how the plan would accelerate talent development and support our growth plans for Latin America.

As one might expect, there was a fair amount of pushback, with a number of people basically saying, “it’s a good idea, but it’s the wrong time.” In the end, fortunately, the board decided that it was the right time, and signed off on the plan. However, approving a plan and executing a plan are two different things. The board had made it clear that if this university were to have the Novartis name on it, it needed to be of the highest quality. With that in mind, we got the buy-in and involvement of top business schools in the region, such as the IAE Business School in Argentina, Universidad de los Andes in Colombia and, of course, the University of Miami School of Business. Our team worked closely with professors and internal Novartis managers to develop content that was relevant, up-to-date and focused on the company’s Latin American business. And we took care to balance the business and academic perspectives to make sure the university brought together the best of both worlds. We packaged all this into an accelerated “mini-MBA” curriculum centered on an action-learning program. Actual experience is a great teacher, but it was not practical to provide on-the-job management experience for the numbers of potential leaders we wanted to develop. With the action-learning program, we essentially re-created that experience within the university.

The university was launched in 2009, and I’m happy to say that it has been a success. It is recognized as a groundbreaking development approach, and is used as a benchmark by other companies in the region. It also helped us earn a Great Place to Work ranking as the best health care company to work for in Latin America. We have expanded the program to include Canada, and it is now known as LaCan University.

But most importantly, the program has brought us significant business benefits. With the combination of academic and operational business expertise and the use of action learning, we’ve been able to compress the traditional five-year development process into less than three years. We recently assigned 40 professionals to fill new leadership roles in our commercial and medical businesses in Latin America and Canada, encompassing areas such as neuroscience, critical care and integrated hospital care—and nearly all of these leaders came from our internal development efforts. The program has also given our senior management deeper visibility into the talent pipeline, helping them with succession planning.

All of this has helped our talent pipeline stay in step with the Novartis global strategy of being a leading pharmaceutical company that provides the right drug for the right patient at the right time. And it has supported the company’s continued growth in Latin America—which in turn helped Novartis become the fastest-growing pharmaceutical company globally. From 2007 to 2012, we grew from being the seventh-largest pharmaceutical company in the world to being the third largest.

Looking back at 2008, I can see that it was a bit of a crazy idea to try to get an investment in development instead of cutting back. Companies everywhere were facing some tough years, and it would have been understandable for the board to shelve this kind of plan. But our talent pipeline would not be where it is today if we had not taken these steps back then. As is so often the case, we’ve found that investing carefully and thoughtfully in talent pays off in the long run.

—As told to Peter Haapaniemi