

WINTER 2016

insight

INTEGRATIVE THINKING | EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING | GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

The Kresge Foundation
powers \$2 million student
managed investment fund



School of Business Administration



inside this issue

- Alums support student success
- Scholarships make a difference
- Crain's recognizes alums

REPUTATION AND RECOGNITION

A Message from Dean Michael A. Mazzeo

The Oakland University School of Business Administration is moving beyond the realm of “hidden gem” and into the ranks of a school known for its reputation for excellence.



In this issue, you’ll read why The Princeton Review (TPR) recognized Oakland’s business school as one of the best in the nation. Our students told TPR that the quality of our education is our greatest strength. Students also called attention to the strong link between academics and the real-world, as well as the small classes that allow for meaningful interaction with caring faculty.

Within the last year, *Crain’s Detroit Business* has welcomed a number of OU business alumni to its elite class of recognized professionals. In this issue you’ll read about two: Double alum Sheri (Profant) Gordon who joined Crain’s 20 In Their 20s, and Finance alum Kyle Anne Sasena who was one of two business alums named to Crain’s most recent class of 40 Under 40. Both go out of their way to say the education, resources and faculty at Oakland were pivotal to their success.

This issue also features three alums going the extra mile to help the business school and its students reach new heights. Craig and Ann Stinson recently made a \$5 million commitment to the b-school and athletics to enhance student support and services. Rob Manilla was instrumental in creating a partnership between the Oakland b-school and his employer, The Kresge Foundation, that brought our new \$2 million student-managed investment fund to life.

Meanwhile, retiring Professor Gadis (Buck) Dillon believes so strongly in the professional experiences our students gain at the business school, he and his wife endowed a scholarship to encourage student leadership.

This recognition and support enhances the reputation of our school, increases the value of an Oakland business degree, and, I hope, makes you proud to be an alum.

Read more news like this by connecting with us on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook.



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PAYING IT FORWARD

B-school alums make \$5 million commitment to Oakland

Craig and Ann Stinson believe so strongly in the difference Oakland makes in students’ lives that they are constantly seeking ways to support it.

They recently made a \$5 million commitment that will help two areas they are most passionate about: the business school and athletics. This support will enhance the Stinson Student Advancement Center in Elliott Hall and create a Student-Athlete Development Center in Athletics.

“Craig and Ann have been tireless supporters and given back through many gifts to the School of Business Administration,” says Michael A. Mazzeo, Dean and Professor of Finance at Oakland’s business school. “They continually find ways to provide advantages to our students, faculty and staff.”

PRIDE AND APPRECIATION

From the professors and classroom education to the internships and career support they received as students in the early 80s, the Stinsons are enthusiastic when talking about how their Oakland business education prepared them for success in business and life.

Both always mention the pride they feel when they see the quality of today’s Oakland graduates. They want to make sure Oakland continues to offer the best

academic opportunities and programs for students well into the future.

“The business school is so pivotal to OU. My wife and I are so proud to be able to give something back to the faculty and students,” Craig says.

Helping others succeed truly motivates them.

“It’s the whole pay it forward concept,” Ann says. “We came here, received a great education and became successful, and now we can help others succeed. We encourage others to help too -- it’s not just about money, it’s also about time and talent. Students need mentors and advice, and a place to get it.”

VISION AND LEADERSHIP

They also recognize the critical need for support from outside the university.

“When Ann and I were students, the university got about 80 percent of its total funding from the state. Now we get 16 percent. It’s important to be able to



The latest commitment from Craig and Ann Stinson will enhance the Stinson Student Advancement Center which opened in late 2010 in Elliott Hall.

call upon donors and inspire others to give and be impactful,” Craig says.

Craig adds that he hopes this will be inspirational for other people who are in a position to help Oakland University achieve greatness.

“We’ve been inspired by the vision and leadership of Hugh and Nancy Elliott, and Steve and Patti Sharf for transforming OU from good to great,” he says. “Now, Ann and I have a chance to follow in their footsteps and hopefully inspire others after us. ■

ABOUT CRAIG AND ANN STINSON

CRAIG

EDUCATION: BS Finance, OU ’84; MBA, University of Michigan ’90

CAREER: Craig rose through the ranks of Arvin Industries and Arvin Meritor to the senior executive level before becoming an executive adviser partner for two private equity firms. He currently serves as chairman for two private equity companies.

OU INVOLVEMENT: Craig is the chairman of the Board of Visitors at the business school. He served on the committee during the presidential search in 2014 and for the business school dean in 2013. He received the OUAA Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 2010. He has also served on the advisory board for Oakland’s Department of Athletics for several years.

ANN

EDUCATION: BS in Marketing, OU ’83

CAREER: Ann was recruited on campus by Winkelman’s, the former Detroit women’s clothing retailer, for a full-time job after graduation. She began as an assistant buyer and was later promoted to buyer, working there for seven years.

OU INVOLVEMENT: Ann serves on committees to support the President’s Invitational, Oakland’s premier golf and gala event; and was instrumental in the OU Student Athlete Development Center planning and awareness campaign. She is a member of the Meadow Brook Hall Ladies Committee, which hosts various fundraisers and supports the Hall’s conservation efforts. She was also a member of the former President’s Campaign Council.



STINSON FAMILY SUPPORT

Craig and Ann have made numerous gifts to business school programs totaling over \$550,000. They were instrumental to the success of the President’s Invitational, which has raised more than \$1.5 million for OU athletics. They also partnered with friends Hugh and Nancy Elliott to create a matching gift challenge that helped the business school raise nearly \$400,000 in 2008. Together they received the Dr. Gary D. Russi Community Service Award for work with Athletics in 2012.



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

The Kresge Foundation powers \$2 million student managed investment fund

In addition to creating one of the largest student managed investment funds (SMIF) in Michigan, Oakland’s \$2 million fund, fueled by The Kresge Foundation, is generating a priceless opportunity for OU business students to learn portfolio management skills using real money.

Kresge carved the OU fund out its \$3.5 billion investment portfolio, which is used to support nearly \$140 million grants and social investments annually in arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services and community development in Detroit.

“Students typically don’t get this kind of hands-on experience until their first postgraduate job,” says Kresge Vice President and Chief Investment Officer Rob Manilla FIN ’85. “This will make them more competitive for their first professional position.”

The SMIF is just as important to Kresge as it is to Oakland.

“Our Investment Office’s creativity to attract students to local careers in asset management, and OU’s ingenuity to craft a curriculum that prepares students for real-life opportunities is a great example of how philanthropic

capital can support communities,” says Kresge Foundation President and CEO Rip Rapson.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

“The challenging curriculum combines the very best blend of investment and portfolio management theory with the experience of working as a member of an investment team,” says Michael A. Mazzeo, dean and professor of Finance at OU’s business school.

Student Investment Managers learn security analysis techniques and investment approaches used by professional investors from OU Finance Professor Ranadeb Chaudhuri, Ph.D. Using the Bloomberg Professional financial platform, students study individual equities, stock market indices, fixed-income securities, currencies, commodities, futures, and foreign exchange rates.

“The Oakland business school is providing us with every single tool we’ll ever need,” says Finance Senior Leah Slazinski.

Students then present their recommendations to an advisory board. The board, made up of investment professionals from Kresge and other Detroit-area companies, acts as a sounding board to review, challenge and fine tune the students’ recommended

“This course is unlike any other. You draw on all you learned ... to work as a team, research, analyze, and make decisions on how to invest real money.”

Finance Senior Brad Garrigues

portfolio. They also serve as guest lecturers, and share their personal experiences in the asset management profession.

“These students have an opportunity to get a much deeper multifaceted understanding of how some very complex



Oakland’s first student managed investment team with the members of the advisory board.

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- Brian Edgar**, senior vice president, investments, UBS Financial Services
Nick Krasnokut, investment officer, The Kresge Foundation
John Lesser, president, Plante Moran Financial Advisors
Chris Liparoto, senior VP, wealth management, Merrill Lynch Wealth Management
Jason Raznick, CEO, Benzinga
Phil Serra, first VP, investments, Merrill Lynch Wealth Management



Advisory board member Brian Edgar responds to a recommendation.



Finance student Phillip Johnson makes his sector presentation to the advisory board.

interrelated economic policies and variables will interplay,” says advisory board member Brian Edgar, senior vice president, investments, UBS Financial Service.

STANDOUT EXPERIENCE

The experience is a standout addition on any resume.

“I have complete confidence that the students will excel from the practical job training they are gaining from their professor and their best-of-the-best team of advisers,” says Rapson.

The first class of students enrolled in the program in Fall 2015 and embraced the opportunity with enthusiasm.

“This course is unlike any other. It gave me so much insight on how to apply classroom learning to the real world,” says Finance Senior Brad Garrigues. “You draw on all you learned in this class and your previous classes to work as a team, research, analyze, and make decisions on how to invest real money.”

“We get real life experience. Not only working with real money, but working with valuation of companies and stocks ... actually doing the things we would if we were working for a big investment firm,” says Nicholas Stanon, Finance senior.

BRIGHT FUTURE

Top employers seek candidates with hands-on experience translating classroom learning to the business world.

Rapson adds, “We will know this is a success when the other Michigan companies — the GMs, the Fords, the Strykers and Mascos, and the local foundations and pension funds — are fighting to recruit graduates of this program.” ■

By Rachel Oakley



Rip Rapson, President and CEO, The Kresge Foundation, joins OU President George Hynd in the b-school’s Data Analysis Lab.



Finance student Leah Slazinski talks to Kresge President and CEO Rip Rapson in OU’s Data Analysis Lab.



Finance student Nicholas Stanon takes advantage of the Bloomberg Professional terminals in the lab.



The class had a chance to hear from London-based Mark Scher ACC/FIN/ECN ’90 Senior Investment Advisor, Maseco Private Wealth, when he was in town for business.



Finance Professor Ranadeb Chaudhuri works with a student at one of the Bloomberg Professional terminals in the lab.

ASSET MANAGEMENT CAREERS

Building a pipeline of portfolio investment talent

Think pension fund manager, brokerage analyst or portfolio associate, and the markets from New York to Chicago come immediately to mind. What many find surprising is that Michigan is also home to hundreds of private and publicly held companies that employ investment analysts and managers to protect and grow their assets.

“It’s as if our area’s finance and economics graduates aren’t aware – or don’t take seriously – the many rewarding careers that exist within metro Detroit’s public, private and philanthropic sectors,” says Rob Manilla FIN ’85, vice president and Chief Investment Officer, The Kresge Foundation.

“I’m the perfect example of this – as a finance graduate I focused on corporate work at first. I didn’t think about this other career potentiality in investment,” he adds. “But with the ‘Graying of America’ it’s a wide open field with many lucrative opportunities.”

As someone involved in recruiting for Kresge’s three-year rotation program for undergraduates, Manilla wants those opportunities to benefit local students.



Rob Manilla FIN '85 Vice President and Chief Investment Officer for The Kresge Foundation.

Since the rotation program started several years ago, Kresge has recruited locally, regionally and across the country at schools like Northwestern, University of Chicago, Notre Dame and Amherst.

“When we started to plan our last round of recruiting what struck me was the paradox of needing to jump on a plane to visit out-of-state campuses when the talent exists locally, and how increasingly difficult it is to recruit local graduates,” he says.

That was the drive behind partnering with Oakland to power a \$2 million student managed investment fund.

He adds the program “opens up the field to OU grads in a way that wasn’t previously possible. Being able to walk into a new position with hands-on Bloomberg experience is a major step up on other candidates for a position.”

The program has already spawned interest from other institutions. “I have had calls from other CIO’s around the country asking about the program, so let’s hope we have started a trend.”

But Manilla admits he has other motives.

“Selfishly, I’m looking forward to this program building a robust pipeline of qualified, experienced graduates who we can hire into Kresge’s rotation program and give visibility to our peers in this market as they recruit new talent.” ■

By Susan Thwing



Rob Manilla talks to Actuarial Science student Jennifer Krumholz about the SMIF.

ABOUT ROB MANILLA

EDUCATION: BS Finance Oakland University; MBA University of Detroit Mercy

CAREER: 20 years at Chrysler gaining experience in finance, sales, marketing, product development, manufacturing, international business, capital markets and asset management before joining The Kresge Foundation as Senior Investment Director in 2005, promoted to Chief Investment Officer in 2008.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES: Board of Visitors Oakland University School of Business Administration, investment committee of the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, Trinity Health Systems and the Boeing Corporation. He also serves on numerous private equity, venture capital, real estate and natural resource advisory committees.

RECOGNITION: Named one of the 100 most influential global institutional investors by aiCIO in 2013; named large foundation CIO of the year by Institution Investor magazine in 2012.

THE PRINCETON REVIEW NAMES OAKLAND A BEST BUSINESS SCHOOL

Oakland University’s School of Business Administration is among the nation’s best business schools, according to The Princeton Review. The education services company profiles the school in the new 2016 edition of its annual book, “The Best 295 Business Schools” and on its website.

“We recommend Oakland’s business school as one of the best to earn an MBA,” said Robert Franek, Princeton Review senior vice president-publisher. “We chose 295 schools in this book based on our high regard for their academics and our assessment of institutional data we collect from the schools.”

The Princeton Review compiled the list based on its surveys of more than 22,000 students attending the 295 business schools in the book, as well as on school-reported data. The Review does not rank the business schools in the book on a single hierarchical list from 1 to 295.

“This recognition reinforces the high quality education OU business students gain from expert faculty and top-notch curriculum. Our program integrates theory, research and experience with solid academic preparation and practical skills that help our students launch successful careers,” said Michael A. Mazzeo, dean and professor of Finance at Oakland’s School of Business Administration.

Here’s what Oakland students say about the business school in the 2016 book:

- At OU, “First and foremost, the quality of education is the greatest strength.”
- OU’s “smaller class sizes allow for more meaningful interaction with professors,” “the school feels small and personal,” and “everyone contributes to engaging conversations on current business applications of the lessons we’re being taught.”
- Oakland University’s “strong correlation between academics and real-life experiences make this a robust program,” as does the fact that its “faculty and administration care deeply about the value of the program to the graduate.”
- Students value having individual “person-to-person contact with adviser[s],” and also flourish in collaboration with professors, who “are very enthusiastic about the subject matter that they teach, and they encourage students to excel in the business world beyond academia.”
- OU’s “convenient location and class times” make the program manageable for students who need to keep their current jobs, and to help land students’



Recognized
The Princeton Review
THE BEST 295 BUSINESS SCHOOLS
2016 Edition

Recognized by
US NEWS & WORLD REPORT
2016 BEST GRADUATE SCHOOLS
PART-TIME MBA PROGRAMS



Named a
BEST VALUE COLLEGE FOR BUSINESS MAJORS
FOR ANNUAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT AND 20-YEAR RETURN ON INVESTMENT BY
PAYSCALE’S 2015 COLLEGE ROI REPORT



Less than 1%
OF THE WORLD’S 15,000+ BUSINESS PROGRAMS
HOLD AACSB-INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION IN BUSINESS AND ACCOUNTING

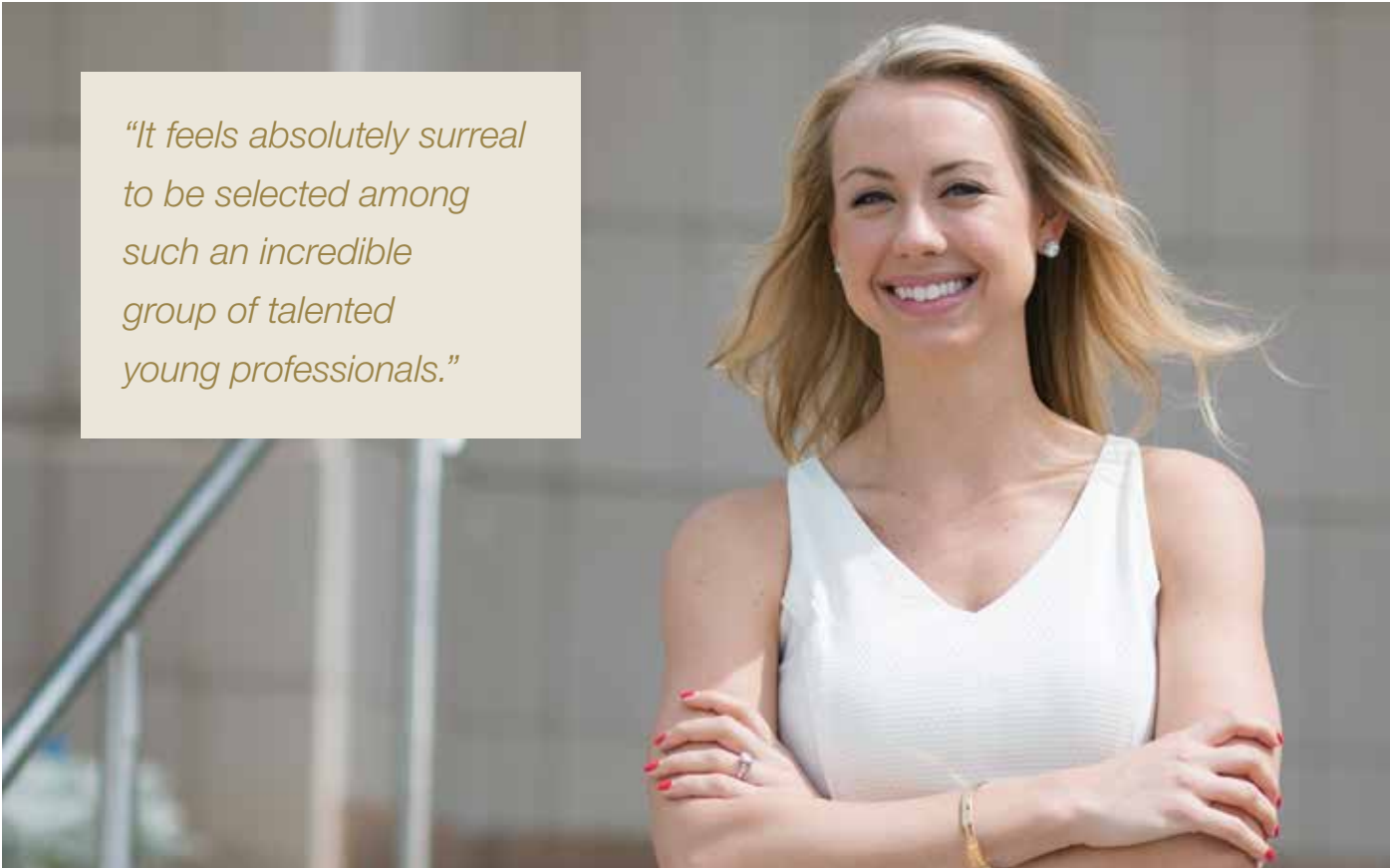
next jobs. The university excels at identifying “what the employers needs are, and aligning partnerships to incorporate those lessons within the educational experience.”

ADDITIONAL RECOGNITION
The long-standing elite dual accreditation the OU School of Business Administration holds from AACSB-International in its business and accounting programs indicates a high-quality business school.

The Oakland University School of Business is recognized in the 2016 edition of *U.S. News and World Report’s* “Best Grad Schools” under the

specialty of Best Part-Time MBA Programs. The OU MBA program is one of five programs ranked in Michigan.

The business school at Oakland University is ranked as one of the “Best Value Colleges for Business Majors” in Michigan for both annual return on investment and 20-year return on investment in Payscale’s 2015 College ROI Report. The study’s annual ROI figure compares the return over 20 years when investing money in a degree at a certain school as opposed to other investments, such as stocks or bonds. ■



“It feels absolutely surreal to be selected among such an incredible group of talented young professionals.”

DOUBLE ALUM NAMED AMONG CRAIN’S 20 IN THEIR 20s

When alum Sheri (Profant) Gordon switched her career path from medicine to marketing, she didn’t realize she would still end up saving lives.

As senior analyst in government relations for a major defense company based in Michigan that designs and manufactures armored vehicles for the armed forces, it’s not uncommon for Gordon to hear military soldiers tell her “your vehicle saved my life.”

The sense of meaning this brings to Gordon gives her great pride in her work. “It’s a very rewarding and satisfying job,” she says. “I absolutely love the company, I love the product we stand behind, I love the client we serve. It’s definitely become a part of my DNA now.”

Gordon used tools she gained from her Oakland University business education to propel herself from intern to senior analyst in five years, which is why she was named to the Crain’s 2015 class of 20 in their 20s, honoring young high achievers around Detroit. “It feels absolutely surreal to be selected among such an incredible group of talented young professionals,”

Gordon says. “I very vividly recall flipping through this very same list while working on my undergrad degree with other colleagues thinking ‘How cool would it be to be part of that group one day?’ To see that manifest years later is truly a humbling experience and I am so grateful for the opportunity.”

Gordon completed a Bachelor’s in Marketing in 2010, and she graduated with a Master of Business Administration, concentrating in entrepreneurship in 2012. She attributes much of her success to the “entrepreneurial coursework, attitude and posture” she learned from OU’s business school, which brought her out of her comfort zone, and taught her how to recognize business needs and develop ways to fulfill them.

Networking also plays a major role in her job, where she educates military clients about her organization’s products. “It’s all about building strong relationships with people and building trust,” she says. “If people can trust you and they have that strong relationship, it makes business a lot easier.”

Gordon advises students “your network starts now,” and she encourages them to get involved in student



organizations. “OU has a lot of ties to high caliber alumni who are willing to come back, willing to come speak to classes, or come speak to student organizations like AMA.”

Gordon makes it clear that along with her career, she also harbors great pride for OU. “I’m the biggest cheerleader for Oakland University.” She tells anyone looking for a business school that they “absolutely need to go to Oakland University, and here’s why: The caliber of professors and the resources they have on hand. It’s unbelievable.” ■

By Rachel Oakley

EUROPEAN TRIP GIVES MBA STUDENTS A GLOBAL VIEW

Oakland MBA students explored the intricacies of the European Union when Professor Frank Cardimen led his 13th international trip last June. Stops included Budapest, Prague, Regensburg, Munich, London and Oxford.

Along the way, the group visited with representatives from organizations such as the American Embassy in Budapest, IBM and the director of governmental affairs in Hungary, the Czech National Bank, Rigaku Innovative Technologies in Prague, and AT&T in London.

The focus, says Cardimen, is making a “hands on evaluation of the status of the European Union today, what it will look like in the future, and what American companies looking to expand need to know.”

Cardimen says that for MBA students, a thorough comprehension of the global marketplace is essential. “You must experience it, not just talk about it. And that includes all aspects of the country: the history, the culture, the language, the currency. Each country does business differently and to be a successful part of it you must understand how they do business.”

Cardimen has been helping master’s students acquire this knowledge since 1999. He believes in teaching students the importance of understanding international business first-hand by leading them on trips to companies abroad, meeting high-ranking executives, politicians and U.S. embassy personnel.

Rakan Bayouk, MBA student and a dimensional engineer, Cosma Internation Group of Magna International, says he learned about the different cultures in Europe and how they are different from the US. He also found out “how companies in Europe do business, what is their motivation, what are their priorities, how they handle failures and, on the other hand, how they handle success.”

“This trip exposed me to new things, understanding new culture, new ways of doing business. This will give me an advantage and ability to think more globally when improving a business. I will understand some of the challenges of a global economy as well as the benefits.”



MBA students, Professor Frank Cardimen (second from left, front) and Michael A. Mazzeo, dean, OU business school (second from right, front), at the Budapest Parliament.

His fellow traveler, Dr. Sharelle Brown, Director of Pharmacy, McLaren Oakland Hospital, and OU Executive MBA student joined the trip to obtain an understanding of international business, including the restrictions and regulations that are required for an American company to compete in Europe.

“This enhances my understanding and knowledge of what is required to operate an American company in Europe,” she says. “It also helps me understand the

“You must experience it, not just talk about it. And that includes all aspects of the country: the history, the culture, the language, the currency.”

Professor Frank Cardimen

current conditions of the European Union and the Eurozone and how each of the four countries and businesses compete within the European Union.” ■

By Susan Thwing



MBA students Danielle Lia, Sharelle Brown and Amy Butler in Prague.



MBA students with host John Salga, Secretariat of the Czech National Bank.



ALUM BUILDS ROAD TO SUCCESS ON HARD WORK, EDUCATION

Kyle Anne (Boehlke) Sasena, FIN '03, has always been happiest on the road less traveled.

She left a comfortable analyst job at Comerica Bank in 2007, her first full-time position post-graduation, to be one of the founding employees at start-up Level One Bank in Farmington Hills, Mich., where she currently works as vice president of commercial banking and its international product specialist.

“It was very scary because I had no clients, no book of business, and everything was fine at Comerica. But there was something enticing about doing something entrepreneurial in banking,” Sasena explains.

Making the leap into the unknown was doable because she was confident her Oakland University education had prepared her well for the challenge.

“It’s the foundation for my whole success in my career,” she says. “Oakland saw potential in me and gave me a scholarship. That helped me —with all of the pre-requisite classes —to decide that I wanted to go to the business school. I had all these great courses. I had two internships. Then professors helped me prepare for my interviews for my first job. I owe my career to Oakland.”

Sasena, who often held three jobs while a student, learned at Oakland that working hard pays dividends.

She applied that work ethic at Level One Bank by becoming an expert at helping small Michigan manufacturers secure financing through U.S. Small Business Association-backed loans that encourage growing business through foreign purchase orders. This Export Working Capital line of credit, notorious

for its extra paperwork and monitoring duties, intimidated other bankers. Unintimidated, Sasena wrote more loans using that financing than any other banker in Michigan.

As a result, she helped Level One win the Small Business Association’s Export Lender of the Year award in both 2013 and 2014, an accomplishment that previously went to bigger banks like her former employer.

The back-to-back awards thrust Sasena into the national spotlight. She has received invitations from across the country to participate in various discussions, including the Association’s export roundtable panel.

“It was fun to be a part of it. It never feels like work because it’s enjoyable helping people,” she says.

More accolades have followed. Crain’s Detroit Business named her to its 2015 40 Under 40 roster, which honors those in the business community who make their mark before age 40.

“I am not surprised she received that recognition,” says Stefanie Kimball, ECN ’82, chief risk officer and executive vice president at Independent Bank Corporation in Troy, Mich., who mentored Sasena at Comerica. “I’ve seen her dedication, her professionalism and her hard work throughout her entire career.”

Sasena credits her success to tangible skills she acquired in several accounting classes taught by now retired Professor David Sidaway.

“He had us doing in-depth analysis similar to the credit analysis I do now,” she says. “He was a

“Oakland saw potential in me and gave me a scholarship. I had all these great courses. I had two internships. Then professors helped me prepare for my interviews for my first job. I owe my career to Oakland.”

phenomenal teacher and the hardest one I had.”

Her pre-requisite communications course taught her how to prepare and deliver presentations, a task she now completes daily at Level One.

“These are all skills that transferred into my daily work life,” she says. “I didn’t realize when I was going through school how important these skills would be for the rest of my life.” ■

By Rene Wisely

STAYING CURRENT

Executive MBA enhances vision, strategy, achievement

As Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse Executive for the Detroit Medical Center (DMC), Shawn Levitt is charged with driving the next level of nursing service and development.

With more than 25 years in the healthcare industry, she has strong experience in patient care, clinical operations, project management and performance improvement strategies.

That’s good for DMC. At the time of her appointment in 2011, then DMC President and CEO Michael Duggan said, “Shawn is strategic, vision driven, and demonstrates that DMC attracts the best, brightest and the most committed.”

It’s that drive and commitment that led Levitt to enter the Executive MBA program at Oakland University. For Levitt, the program provides a foundation to further develop her knowledge of key business practices that she can apply in the healthcare industry.

“The healthcare industry is constantly changing. Nursing executives need to stay current with national trends and patient needs,” she explains. “Oakland’s Executive MBA provides tremendous value to me, not just because of the course content, but the ability to connect with other students who are also leaders in their fields.”

Levitt says the diversity in her fellow student’s background broadens her own understanding.

“I have the ability to meet other healthcare executives, as well as leaders in IT, business, etc., and sit down to listen to their perspectives and learn from each other,” she says.



Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer for the Detroit Medical Center Shawn Levitt (center) with fellow OU Executive MBA students.

The 21-month cohort program structure is also a plus, she explains, “Oakland’s program takes into consideration that as students who are well into our careers, we are busy and have multiple responsibilities. . .the course work allows us to manage our time effectively.”

Continuing to grow and stay current in the healthcare industry is essential not only for Levitt’s success, she says, but for passing on the torch to future leaders.

“I get great satisfaction in ensuring the patients receive quality care, but I also enjoy working with the younger nurses who have tremendous zeal for the profession,” she explains. “Mentoring is amazingly satisfying. It is a positive experience to work with nurses who are in line to step up and ensure the succession is seamless.”

As the regional chief of nurses for seven hospitals, Levitt says that role mixes business practices with the compassion of nursing in a very positive way.

“I can’t be the same type of leader across the board. It’s a mix of operations, strategy, statistics, economics and human resources. Everything I do must stay current with the patients and the employee’s needs,” she says.

“I am a lifelong learner — in my field and in my personal life. The Oakland Executive MBA program helps me stay on top.” ■

By Susan Thwing

ABOUT SHAWN LEVITT

EDUCATION: Currently Executive MBA student at Oakland University; also holds BS in Nursing from Wayne State University and an MS in Health Services Administration from Central Michigan University. She is also certified in healthcare quality and managed care nursing, and is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: Currently Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse Executive, Detroit Medical Center, a division of Tenet Healthcare Corporation, one of the largest systems in the country. Previous titles include Corporate Director, Medical and Academic Affairs, Detroit Medical Center, Vanguard Health System; Vice President, Chief Operating Officer, Children’s Hospital of Michigan.

BOARDS & MEMBERSHIPS: Levitt sits on the Detroit Regional Infant Mortality Reduction Task Force, Oakland University School of Nursing Board of Visitors; Wayne State University College of Nursing Dean’s Advisory Board. She is also a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Inforum, The American College of Healthcare Executives, and is a Board member of the Midwest Chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executive.

THE EXECUTIVE MBA AT OAKLAND UNIVERSITY is a premier graduate business program designed exclusively for experienced professionals. Offered in a cohort structure, the fully inclusive 21-month program meets on Friday afternoons and Saturdays to support the lifestyles of busy professionals. Learn more at oakland.edu/emba

RETIRING PROFESSOR SAYS “THANK YOU” WITH STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

Every day people find different ways to show their appreciation. Rarely, though, does it take the form of an endowed scholarship.

Yet that’s exactly why Gadis “Buck” Dillon, professor of Accounting at Oakland’s business school, and his wife, Sue, established the Dillon Accounting Student Leadership Scholarship.

“Oakland University has been a major part of my professional and personal life. This is my 50th year in the classroom – 29th at OU – and the scholarship is my thank you to the university,” Dillon says. “It is also a thank you to all of the students who worked so hard for the student organizations through the years.”

Throughout his career, Dillon has received numerous honors, including Advisor of the Year, National Advisor of the Year, and teaching awards from organizations such as the MICPA and the Chamber of Commerce.

“I am honored by these awards, however the students did all the work, and I just provided some guidance.” he explains.

Dillon is in his second year of a three-year graduated retirement. He will teach alternate semesters until August 2017.

PAYING IT FORWARD

It was the support Dillon received as a student that inspired him to give back through a scholarship. He grew up in a coal-mining town where he was one of the 11 students from his class of 110 to go to college. “I did so through scholarships and fellowship assistance,” he explains.

His wife, Sue, says “I enthusiastically supported creating our scholarship. Growing up in the economically depressed area of southern West Virginia, my husband was truly grateful for the financial aid and scholarship assistance he received throughout the 10 years of his university education.” It was there he began to learn the power of networking. “One of my professors at West Virginia University was especially supportive. I worked for him for a time, and then he left for the University of Michigan. We stayed connected, and he helped me get my first job.”

AN INSPIRED LIFE

It’s clear Dillon has enjoyed his work as an educator. He hopes his involvement with students inspires their gusto for professional life.

“Being involved is one of the most important experiences a student can have,” says Dillon, who serves as faculty advisor for the b-school’s National



Association of Black Accountants (NABA) chapter. “I consider it every bit as important as being in class.”

In student organizations, members learn what it takes to thrive beyond college, Dillon explains. “It’s not something that’s in the textbooks; it’s a tremendous opportunity to learn what they need to do to prepare for the business world.”

His best advice to current and future students is to “network, network, network.” He also says the profession takes a balance of number know-how as well as a comfort level in working with the public.

“I have always felt that learning does not end when class ends. Accordingly, I worked to provide professional development and maturity building experiences for my students, in particular by supporting student professional organizations,” he says. “I want to support OU and see it become ever more recognized as a truly high-quality educational institution.” ■

By Susan Thwing

MAKING AN IMPACT

From creating and sustaining active, successful student organizations, introducing high school students to accounting careers and college opportunities, to guiding students in gaining professional development opportunities and seeking out financial assistance through scholarships, the impact of Dillon’s mentorship is immense. For example, Professor Gadis “Buck” Dillon:

- Helped establish OU’s Beta Alpha Psi national accounting fraternity
- Supported the launch of the student chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants
- In partnership with MACPA, brings more than 200 high school students and teachers to an all-day High School Leadership conference at OU annually
- Serves as a trustee with the Michigan Accountancy Foundation, where he also encourages OU accounting students to apply for foundation scholarships
- Regularly connects OU business students with leaders in the accounting profession, such as annual meetings with the leaders of the American Institute of CPAs
- Focused his research on identifying student characteristics that CPA and industry recruiters value
- Supported the launch of the OU business ACHIEVE program, which helps students develop professionally while guiding them toward their ideal career

SCHOLARSHIPS MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO BUSINESS STUDENT BROTHERS

Hard work and success runs in this family.

Dan ACC ’15, the older of the pair, is the first recipient of the Dillon Accounting Student Leadership Scholarship. The scholarship, created by OU Accounting Professor Gadis “Buck” Dillon and his wife, Sue, is awarded to an undergraduate accounting major entering the OU Master of Accounting (MAcc) program who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and support of the OU Accounting student professional organizations.

“The Presidential Scholarship is like a reward for hard work from OU that builds my passion for the school.”

Joseph Wysocki

With a resume packed with leadership experience, Dan is the perfect choice for the first award.

He is the current president of Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) and active student member of the Michigan Association of CPAs (MICPA). Former treasurer of both BAP and the Masters of Accounting Student Association (MASA), he has also been involved in OASIS.

This leadership is paying dividends. In summer 2015, Dan completed an internship with Plante Moran and will launch his professional career there after he earns his MAcc in August 2016.

“It was a tremendous honor to receive Professor Dillon’s scholarship,” Dan says. “In the time I’ve known Professor Dillon, he’s provided me with numerous opportunities to develop as a professional, both inside and outside the classroom. The scholarship is just another example of his generosity, for which I am extremely grateful.”

ENCOURAGING INVOLVEMENT

Junior Finance major Joseph, who is minoring in business analytics, is one of OU’s Presidential Scholars; a pivotal merit-based scholarship that covers full tuition for four years.



“This scholarship really encourages me to be involved on campus,” Joseph says. And he certainly is.

This year alone, Joseph is President of Global Business Brigades and secretary of the Society for Applied Investing and Financial Education (SAIFE). He also tutors fellow business students in economics and QMM through the business school’s Peer to Peer Academic Assistance program.

In the community, Joseph coaches an 8th grade football team during the school year and a 10-12 year old baseball league in the summers.

This involvement and experience supplements his academic achievement. Prospective employers are taking notice. Plante Moran selected him for an internship position for Summer 2016.

“The Presidential Scholarship is like a reward for hard work from OU that builds my passion for the school. It makes me want to give back all I can,” Joseph says. ■

By Rachel Oakley

ABOUT THE DILLON ACCOUNTING STUDENT LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate accounting major entering the OU MAcc program, who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and support of the OU Accounting student professional organizations. Grade point average is considered, but is subordinate to leadership activities.

ECON PROFESSOR SETS BENCHMARKS WITH SOCIAL CAPITAL RESEARCH

Scholar, professor, author, editor. All describe the many roles Professor Sherman Folland has served in the Economics Department at Oakland University’s business school since 1986.

Though he spent the majority of his career at Oakland, his influence has spread throughout the globe because of a best-selling economics book he co-authored. “The Economics of Health and Health Care,” now in its seventh edition, has been considered the bible on an international level since it published in 1993.

With it, Folland carved out an expertise in health and social capital — the measure of a person’s network of friends and how the more social capital one has, the healthier a person is likely to be. His revolutionary research backed by the scientific method was the first to show causal relationship that improving a social life of a community makes it healthier and happier.

“He’s a pioneer in the field,” says Dr. Audrey Laporte, associate professor of health economics at the University of Toronto and director of the Canadian Centre for Health Economics. “He was instrumental in bringing rigor and economics perspective to the area of social capital and health.”

Though Folland retired in August, his admirers say his work and his reputation will continue to set benchmarks.

“He’s leaving a legacy of high quality work and of not being afraid to ask important, big questions that mainstream economists may be at first suspicious of,” Laporte says. “That tells you he takes risks. By taking risks, he moves the field forward and leads the way for the next generation.”

His social capitalism expertise continues to keep him busy. “I’ve discovered that people seek me out,” Folland says. A book publisher has asked him to edit the “Handbook of Social Capital and Health,” a 500-page tome written by authors Folland has hand-picked.



Oakland business students also appreciate his influence.

“Professor Folland was the first professor I had who made me realize college isn’t just about textbook learning but it’s about applying what you learn to what you see in the real world,” says Laura Tack ACC ’15.

Lauren Huisman ECN ’15 says her experience in his class opened her eyes to the possibilities of a career in economics. “Professor Folland is one of those really great professors who cares about his students.” ■

By Rene Wisely

STIRRING UP A PASSION FOR BUSINESS

This summer, 25 high schoolers from Pontiac, Avondale and Rochester learned about different business disciplines at a week-long Explore the World of Business camp in Elliott Hall.

Here, students were exposed to a stimulating and enriching academic environment where they learned about various business disciplines and success factors while networking with industry leaders.

“Our whole purpose was to expose these students to the business world and to what it takes to be a good businessperson,” says Professor Frank Cardimen, who guided the students through the bulk of the camp’s activities.

Each day the students participated in interactive learning activities, which included games and presentations by OU and business leaders.

“All the speakers we got to listen to were really inspirational,” says Adams High School student Jose Leonard. “You could tell they were passionate about what they were doing.”

Campers also visited local businesses, including Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), where they met with top leadership executives and received an exclusive tour of the aero-acoustic wind tunnel, courtesy of Mike Novak FIN ’83, vice president, NAFTA regional controller, FCA. A visit to Krispy Kreme offered the chance to observe supply chain management in action while enjoying glazed treats.

The camp changed Christopher Streng’s perspective on business.

“Before camp I wasn’t 100% sure I wanted to go into business,” says Streng. “And if I did, I wasn’t really sure what I wanted to do. But now I know more about the different fields. I want to be a leader like these people.”

Interested in learning more about summer camp at the OU business school? Details are in the works for Summer 2016. Check oakland.edu/business and select “Summer Camps” from the left-hand navigation for updates.■

By Rachel Oakley



IN THE NEWS



OUAA HONORS MARKETING ALUM

Tony Moscone MKT ’89, owner, GM, Total Sports Complex; owner, Cattails Golf Club, received the Distinguished Alumni Service Award at the 2015 OU Alumni Awards Banquet. The award recognized his ongoing involvement with the university. In 2013, OU and Total Sports Complex created a unique public/private entity partnership on OU’s campus in the form of the Oakland Dome. The 108,000 square foot Dome was opened in January 2015 and is triple the size of the previous dome. The Dome provides substantial practice space and keeps student athletes on campus. The Dome also provides an opportunity to host outside events and introduce young student athletes to all that Oakland has to offer. Moscone’s commitment was the driving force to making the Dome a reality. In 2012 Moscone formed a team of OU alumni to host the Smiles for Children Golf Outing, now an annual tournament, that has raised more than \$30,000 for the OU Center for Autism Research Education and Support.

ECONOMIC DATA CENTER INSIGHTS

Recent commentaries on Southeastern Michigan economic trends by Professor Jonathan Silberman include a look at Detroit’s continued reliance on the automotive and related traded clusters; Metro Detroit’s recovery from its economic decline that began before the Great Recession; Detroit’s strong architectural and engineering base which is counterbalanced by its weakness in scientific fields; and an analysis about how much further Metro Detroit has to go to become a hub of entrepreneurship and innovation. Read them all at oakland.edu/business



Tony Sakich



Paul Traub (center) with Ed Eickhoff (left), Chair, Economics Advisory Board, and Anandi Sahu, Chair, Economics Department.

ALUMNI SPEAK ON CAMPUS

The American Marketing Association hosted **Tony Sakich** MKT ’09, marketing director, Augur, who presented Marketing A Start-Up to the largest AMA session to date. The AMA also welcomed former AMA president **Steve St. Germain** MKT ’10, who shared insight into brand marketing. **Paul Traub** MBA ’92, senior business economist, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, presented the 2015 Economics Advisory Board Fall lecture.

CREDIT ANALYSIS AND RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

The Department of Accounting and Finance in Oakland’s b-school held the Fourth International Conference on Credit Analysis and Risk Management at the University of Basel in Switzerland. After alternating between Oakland University and the University of Basel every other year, plans are in the works to hold the next conference in Singapore.

NEW FACULTY

Caitlyn Demskey, Ph.D., joined the business school as Assistant Professor of Management. Her research interests include workplace aggression, recovery from work demands, work-life balance, occupational health psychology, and employee stress and well-being. She was recently selected as a 2016 Early Career Fellow for the Work and Family Researchers Network. This Early Career Fellowship Program provides support for promising recent doctoral recipients to advance their research, teaching, and long-term career prospects.



TEDxOaklandUniversity

x = independently organized TED event

TEDx OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

OU held its second TEDx conference this fall, led by MIS Instructor Amy Rutledge. The event featured 15 minute “talks,” performances, as well as interactive lab exhibits from more than 20 of the best and brightest minds sharing their passion, wisdom and innovations. Marketing Professor Kim Serota as well as corporate business leaders, entrepreneurs, dancers and musicians, physicians and attorneys and motivational speakers shared their ideas to energize, inspire and motivate the audience.

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Thanks to Nicholas Kristock HRM ’13, MBA ’14 the week of Christmas more than 1,000 sick children in ten hospitals across Michigan received a colorful, fleece blanket. In late 2015 Kristock launched Fleece & Thank You, a non-profit dedicated to making the hospital room a little warmer and friendlier, after meeting a little girl battling cancer through his volunteer work at a therapy camp when he played semi-professional soccer in Australia. Many in the OU community have gotten involved including Jenna Taylor MGT ’15 who encouraged the young athletes she coaches to make blankets for sick children, the Oakland’s Men’s Hockey Team, and the Phi Sigma Sigma sorority. Learn more at fleeceandthankyou.org.



Nicholas Kristock with WDIV-TV4’s Lauren Podell. Photo courtesy of WDIV-TV4.

WINTER 2016
insight

PAYING IT FORWARD
B-school alums make
\$5 million commitment
SEE INSIDE, PAGE 1

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