

FALL 2012

insight

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY



Experiential learning fuels success

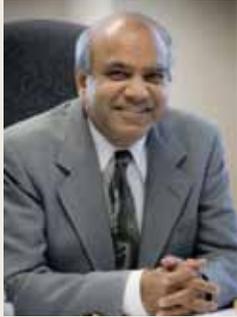
inside this issue

Strengthening experience • Boosting careers
• Building skills • Expanding horizons



Student-centered learning is springboard to success

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Fall 2012 represents another building block in how the Oakland University School of Business Administration is creating a student-centered environment that integrates hands-on experiences with strong curricular foundations to prepare SBA graduates to make meaningful contributions on day one of their professional careers.

We continue our focus on providing students with a range of opportunities to practice leadership, connect theory and practice, gain competitive differentiating skills, and build a career-enriching foundation beginning with their freshman year — through classroom experiences, and co- and extra-curricular activities.

The articles in this issue offer a look into just how powerful these programs are for our students while they are here and long after they graduate. Here you'll read about the far-reaching impact of the SBA's ATiB program from one of the program's first graduates, as well as from more graduates who took advantage of the myriad of other SBA experiential learning programs — like ACHIEVE, Scholars, internships, consultancy projects, trips abroad and student organizations — to excel on their chosen path.

As two recent graduates shared in their stories in this issue:

"Oakland University is a rising star. OU's School of Business Administration played a key role in helping me grow and presenting opportunities for me."

"You can make your own experience at Oakland University. It's a small school, so you have great opportunities everywhere you turn."

You can see — in their words — the difference a business education at Oakland University makes.

It's a difference the SBA is committed to strengthening and sustaining for business students in the years to come. Together, with the continued involvement of our expert faculty, dedicated staff, committed partners and involved alumni, we can sustain student excellence at the SBA.

Mohan Tanniru
 Dean, School of Business Administration
 Oakland University

in this issue

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 Alice Rhein
 Rene Wisely



Elena Popova, SBA/CAS '11



Eric Tawney, SBA '12

Doing it all

Full spectrum of SBA's experiential learning programs fuels two alums' success

Elena Popova, SBA/CAS '11, found opportunity in her mailbox.

Nearly packed and seemingly committed, the then-Adams High senior in Rochester, Mich., was heading to the University of Notre Dame for her undergrad degree until a life-changing letter arrived.

"I received a letter offering me a full ride — the Presidential Scholarship — to Oakland University," Popova explains. "Given the situation for me at the time and knowing my parents weren't going to pay for school, it was truly a godsend."

The true value of the scholarship turned out to be priceless, Popova says. She squeezed every bit of learning into her four years at Oakland University. She earned three majors — finance, economics and math, taking 26 credits her final semester to fit it all in.

DIVING IN

Oakland University's strong curricular foundation was only a part of her experience. In her sophomore year, she made a concentrated effort to take full advantage of the wealth of hands-on experiences OU's School of Business Administration offers its students to help her cement the foundation she was building for her future.

She became president of the Women's Economic Society, president of the SBA's Scholars, chair of the SBA Dean's Scholar Board, financial reporter for the SBA's new Society for Applied Investing and Financial Education, member of the Financial Management Association, and a student representative for the Executive Committee of the SBA Faculty Assembly and the Judicial Conduct Committee for the Dean of Students.

She also interned twice: in product research at Chrysler Group LLC, and in portfolio management at Copper Beech Wealth Management.

Her activities outside OU included the Detroit Association of Business Economists, the Detroit Economic Club and Omicron Delta Epsilon, an international economics honor society.

VALUE-ADDED EDUCATION

"I learned so many valuable skills from these opportunities," she says, many of which she uses daily at her job as an investment analyst at The Kresge Foundation in Troy, Mich., a job fellow alumni Robert Manilla, Finance '85, offered before she even graduated.

Thanks to the real-world experience she gained in these programs, she learned how to lead, strategize, run a meeting, motivate, plan, talk in front of a crowd, network, multitask, organize and more.

"I was able to make a contribution quickly because of all my hands-on experience," she says. "There's so much value in that."

Popova feels the trust Kresge has in her skill set because not only do they give her responsibility to nurture the endowment's \$3 billion value, but also because they let her travel solo for business. "I've learned through everything I did at Oakland University that you have to take the initiative and lead, so I know how to represent myself and The Kresge Foundation," she says.

Another believer in soaking up all that OU's SBA has to offer is Eric Tawney, SBA '12, who graduated with a dual major in finance and economics, as well as a minor in applied technology in business (ATiB).

He leveraged his participation in student organizations, teamwork in class projects, and engagement in community and business internships to round out his coursework, a move that helped him gain acceptance into some of the country's most competitive graduate school programs.

Tawney began his Master of Public Policy (MPP) at the University of Chicago in September, where he is concentrating in economic policy and public finance. His dream job is to work in institutional investments.

OPENING THE DOOR ON OPPORTUNITY

"I really want to set myself apart," says Tawney, explaining his choice to continue his education despite receiving a dozen job offers to launch his career. "The business world is very competitive, and I want to stand out."

Tawney stood out at OU. He was president of both the Society for Applied Investing and Financial Education and the Economic Students Association, chair of the Dean's Advisory Board and Financial Management Institution, and completed six internships, including working for Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, where he helped develop the legislative agenda with the governor's leadership team.

His involvement helped teach him critical thinking skills, the ability to work as part of a team, event planning, and the importance of enthusiasm, professionalism and leadership.

"Oakland University is a rising star," Tawney explains. "I'm very happy that I chose Oakland. OU's School of Business Administration played a key role in helping me grow and presenting opportunities for me."

Popova agrees. "You can make your own experience at Oakland University," she says. "It's a small school, so you have great opportunities everywhere you turn." ■

By Rene Wisely



Health care benefits

Graduate student contributions help move organization forward

For St. Joseph Mercy Oakland (SJMO), the decision to sponsor top Oakland University graduate business students through the School of Business Administration's Experiential Learning and Innovation (ELI) program three years ago was an easy one — as good community outreach.

Making the decision to continue the partnership since was even easier, thanks to the contributions and expertise ELI students deliver.

IMMEDIATE BENEFITS

Three years ago, SJMO became one of the SBA's first ELI partners and quickly recognized the benefits.

The ELI program pairs top graduate students with organizations to help them solve complex business problems. In this case, students played a major role in a large-scale information technology (IT) initiative.



"Health care IT is continually expanding the need for data to make decisions," says Jack Weiner, Pharm.D, FACHE, president and CEO of SJMO. "The systems are getting more sophisticated, and it's going to take people with unique skill sets and combined educational backgrounds to understand how they work and how to deploy them."

That, he says, is exactly what the SBA graduate students provide. ELI students worked directly with the SJMO IT team to develop its internal electronic real-time reporting system, known as Dashboard.

Before Dashboard, SJMO managers received stacks of printed reports, which, by their nature,

were outdated by the time they were distributed. Dashboard's goal: to convert the printed reports into data that managers could access quickly and easily, then use to make timely decisions.

AN ELITE FORMATION

The partnership created an elite team that leveraged the system's deployment and maintenance expertise of SJMO's internal team with the ELI students' advanced knowledge in programming and data analytics.

The students and staff collaborated on moving, organizing and presenting the data to optimize it for informed decision making. The result was a success. Thanks to the ELI students' expertise in data systems, SJMO was able to deploy Dashboard in a broader, more efficient manner.

"It would have taken us quite a while longer to do it without the ELI students' expertise," says Weiner.

St. Joseph Mercy Oakland's main campus is located on Woodward Avenue in Pontiac.



“Oakland University’s SBA students come to us very well prepared. ... (They) bring enthusiasm to our organization, and can look at things a bit differently.”

Jack Weiner



Jack Weiner

ADVANTAGES FOR EVERYONE

The success of the first sponsored project has led to an ongoing partnership. “ELI students have become important to our business,” he says.

“It’s a cost-effective way for us to approach a major project,” Weiner explains. “But we think it’s also good corporate business to

participate in the education of our community — and Oakland University’s SBA students come to us very well prepared.

“Oakland University’s SBA students bring enthusiasm to our organization, and can look at things a bit differently,” Weiner adds. “We encourage them to actively participate in the process, and it’s worked well.”

The SBA’s ELI program not only works for SJMO. It works well for promising young people preparing to enter the workforce.

“We provide an outstanding learning environment for students, which gives them the real-world experience beyond what they could learn in a book,” says Weiner. “Working in an environment where they’re interacting with people and applying their knowledge to achieve results is exactly what the educational process should be.”

PREPARING A SKILLED WORKFORCE

As the health care industry becomes more IT-dependent and the need the skilled for workers increases, SJMO’s involvement in the ELI program helps the hospital meet another critical need: preparing future employees for careers in health care organizations.

“And, the SBA students get a good experience they can put on their résumé and demonstrate their value to another company,” says Weiner. ■

Experience success

What do students gain from the Experiential Learning and Innovation (ELI) program? Keep reading:

“I had a very good experience. The most important thing was the real-time exposure I got beyond book knowledge. The program gave me a wonderful opportunity to explore just how it is to be in a real work environment,” says Vidya Dayalu, SBA MBA ‘10, who spent two semesters in the ELI program working at Takata, an automotive parts supplier, where she was actively involved in the information technology (IT) department.

Abishake Subramanian, MSITM ‘10, recognized the program as a valuable opportunity to gain real-world experience.

“The ELI program is very competitive, and not everyone would get a chance to be part of it,” says Subramanian, whose ELI experience included an internship with Physician HealthCare. Subramanian interacted directly with physicians to better understand the reporting capabilities available to them and what the organization needed.

“I applied the business analysis skills I learned in class to capture ‘as is’ reporting capabilities, do a gap analysis exercise to determine what was missing and develop specifications for custom reports,” he says. “I had the opportunity to work on this project end to end.”

The experience helped him be more effective in his current role as a retail consultant for Cognizant Business Consulting, he adds.

BUSINESS UNDERSTANDING

“It is very important for MSITM graduates to understand the true business problem before we jump in to making recommendations,” Subramanian says. “This is where we, as MSITM grads, make a difference in the IT world.”

As an ELI participant, Dean Przymusinski, MSITM ‘10, developed a Web-based application to track physician gifts at SJMO.

“Participating in the ELI program was very worthwhile because it allowed me to work with industry professionals and actively apply concepts from classes such as IT project management, systems analysis and systems design in a business setting,” says Przymusinski, who worked closely with SJMO’s medical administration and compliance departments.

“ELI afforded me invaluable opportunities to conduct requirements gathering, manage projects and analyze business processes with the support of OU faculty and industry professionals,” adds Przymusinski, now a senior consultant for ChannelVantage. “Integrating coursework in a business setting allowed me to practically apply and develop these skills, all of which have proved valuable in my career.” ■



Abishake Subramanian
MSITM ‘10



Razzaaq McConner, SBA (Marketing) '01

Alumnus counts ATiB experience as a key to successful career

When Razzaaq McConner, SBA (Marketing) '01, has the opportunity to talk to OU students, he consistently urges them to look for opportunities to set themselves apart.

"I always tell them to get as much experience as they can while they're in college," says McConner, an executive business planner with Chrysler. "I tell them to work in teams, to demonstrate leadership. When they get in the workplace, the expectation is they already have experience."

McConner says he still benefits today from the experiences he gained through the SBA's Applied Technology in Business (ATiB) program, which educates juniors and seniors in information technology applications through corporate-sponsored projects.

"It gave me indispensable experience that helped me transition to the corporate world," he says.

STRONG START

McConner, who was raised in Charlotte, N.C., and in Pontiac, Mich., was offered academic scholarships to several universities by his senior year of high school. It was the encouragement of his father, retired GM employee Ronald McConner, CAS '82, who convinced him Oakland University was the right choice. He went on to receive 10 scholarships and student awards during his years there.

When the marketing major was a student, ATiB was a fairly new program. Founded in 1997 by Mohan Tanniru, now the SBA dean, the program was the first of its kind in Michigan. Tanniru, then-MIS professor, served as the program's director for five years. Mohammad Dadashzadeh, DIS chair, led the program as its director for seven years. Kieran

Mathieson, associate professor, information systems, is the program's director now. Today, ATiB boasts a high graduate employment rate.

When McConner learned about ATiB, the business minor program immediately drew his attention. First, there was the practical benefit of scholarship money. But the program also appealed to his competitive nature. "It seemed all of the top business students were in the program, and I wanted to be considered one of the top students."

The IT side of the program intrigued McConner, too. To him, ATiB looked like a great way to broaden his horizons.

He was right. During his years with the program, McConner worked on IT projects for Fanuc Robotics, RGIS Inventory Specialists, Comerica and EDS.

During each project, McConner found himself exercising his presentation skills. "I still remember my first presentation. It bombed so badly. Presenting to executives can be nerve wracking. I've gotten better since then."

Looking back, McConner also can see the benefits of the teamwork the program required.

"Everything you do in the corporate world is in teams; you rarely do anything alone. Being able to work in teams definitely gave me an advantage in my professional career."

And it was during his time in ATiB when McConner started familiarizing himself with the technologies he would be using in the workplace. That practical foundation proved to be invaluable, he says. "Whenever my company introduces something new, I can learn it and jump on it quickly."

MANY HATS

McConner, who was recruited by Chrysler before he graduated, now serves two primary roles there. As a business planner for purchasing and supplier quality, he collaborates with contacts around the globe. During any given day he could be working on strategy sessions, helping the communications team with presentations, or organizing volunteer and charity events.

In addition, McConner represents Chrysler as the executive-on-loan for the Michigan Minority Supply Development Council, a nonprofit organization advocating for minority businesses.

GIVING BACK

Throughout his professional career, McConner has maintained strong ties with Oakland University's SBA. In the last 12 months alone he was the keynote speaker for the SBA's first Undergraduate Student Recognition Dinner, served as an alumni panelist during OU's Go Business Day, and participated in a video interview for ACHIEVE, the SBA's professional and career development program.

"I wouldn't be where I am today without Oakland University," McConner says. "I owe it to the university to be an ambassador and give back."

As an SBA alum, McConner says, he's able to connect with students on a different level than their professors. "They want to see someone who's in the field doing what they hope to do one day.

"And I enjoy interacting with the students. It keeps you on your toes." ■

By Flori Meeks

Prepared to soar

Required ACHIEVE program provides career-boosting skills

Quick — you've got two minutes to provide a potential employer with enough information about you to convince him or her that you are the right person for the job. What do you say?

If you're a student or recent graduate from Oakland University's School of Business Administration, you know because you've practiced your two-minute "elevator pitch" and have a polished resume to offer.

Introduced to incoming freshmen in 2008 as a mandatory series of non-credit courses, ACHIEVE is the SBA's professional development program that provides undergraduate students with career support — from their freshman year to their senior year. ACHIEVE introduces various business sectors, explores employment trends, helps students develop job acquisition skills, and prepares them for their professional career.

MAKING AN INVESTMENT

Students aren't the only ones making an investment in the program. SBA alumni and other area business leaders think the experiences students gain in the program are so valuable that nearly 30 volunteer to work as mentors or speak at professional development events for the program each year.

The SBA believes so strongly in the value of the program, it offers the courses, programs and events at no charge to students.

Judy Martin, education coordinator for SBA's Center for Integrated Business and Research Education (CIBRE), says when students start the program they are often not enthusiastic about completing work for no credit. "Yet, they often come back later and thank me for what they had to do. It's a real confidence builder," she says.

VALUE AT EVERY TURN

Starting with orientation and continuing through their senior year, Oakland University's School of Business Administration students glean powerful and vital information on how to find their niche and succeed in their chosen profession.



Natalie Juronoc
marketing major

Natalie Juronoc, marketing major, shares how her first ACHIEVE event shaped her Oakland University experience.

"At the orientation for ACHIEVE, and before I even attended a class, there was a student assistant for the program who was dressed professionally, spoke with confidence, and was involved with the school," says Juronoc.



Mock interviews help ACHIEVE students such as management major Salvatore Serra prepare to excel in a competitive job market.

From that moment, Juronoc was determined to seek out opportunities to enhance her business acumen. Her determination paid off in an internship this summer that included Juronoc serving as a role model for the ACHIEVE program by assisting at the SBA's orientation for incoming freshmen.

RESUMES, NETWORKING AND INTERVIEWING

In addition to the elevator pitch, students are required to complete a professional resume, attend two to three instructional events per year, and participate in mock interviews.



Andrew Fusco
finance major

Getting to know business professionals, including many OU alumni, has been the most valuable aspect of ACHIEVE for senior Andrew Fusco.

"Networking is key. I got to sit down with different employers and find out what they are looking for

at a professional level," says Fusco, who is majoring in finance and marketing. He feels the business enhancement events, such as the etiquette dinner where ACHIEVE students interact with business leaders and learn the finer aspects of fine dining, were interesting and valuable.

"The mock interviews are relevant because interviewers provide immediate feedback, with advice ranging from how to respond to questions, to

maintaining eye contact, to limiting 'ummmms' and 'you knows' in conversation," Fusco adds.

Juronoc appreciated that the interviewers, often OU alumni, were not people she already knew from the SBA. "It felt like I was truly being interviewed," she says. "I believe it's important to walk away from an interview knowing what you could have done better. Simple feedback and professional criticism helps."

MAKING AN IMPRESSION

While students who participated in all three courses — SBC 199, 299 and 399 — just graduated this year, hiring employers are noticing.

"I can tell you that employers who come to recruit tell us they are impressed with our student resumes," Martin says. A strong resume combined with interview skills help many students gain an internship, which can often lead to a job offer.

"I've learned not to burn any bridges and to keep networking," says Fusco, who points out that lessons learned in ACHIEVE are not the same as those in class, and are completely applicable to life and learning. "You never know when something will come your way."

Juronoc agrees. "The courses allow you to gain skills not taught in the classroom that are vital for one's success in the professional working world," she says. "I have held three internships during my time as an Oakland University student and attribute my success in the positions to the information, tips and tricks of the trade I learned during my time in ACHIEVE." ■

By Alice Rhein



From left to right: Touring Forbidden City, Beijing, China, in 2010; Trocadero Square in front of the Eiffel Tower, Paris, France, 2011; in front of Louis Pasteur statue at Institut Pasteur, Paris, France, 2008; AT&T Headquarters-Europe, Middle East, Asia, London, UK, 2011.

Passport to success

International trips offer valuable lessons in global marketplace

Oakland University special instructor Frank Cardimen has a powerful tool he uses when preparing students for today's competitive business environment: his passport.

Since 1999, Cardimen has been helping master's students get a leg up on their business education through the overseas trips he leads for graduate students in his International Management class.

The trips, to Europe and China, build global understanding, one of the pillars of the SBA's "excellence through integration" philosophy. It's a necessary lesson in this age of mergers and acquisitions, with one American job in six tied to international trade, according to NAFSA, an association of international educators.

The International Management class is a seven-week course in which the students begin homework months before the class even begins. Cardimen hosts meetings to share information with students and survey them about their professional interests.

With that information, Cardimen customizes the experience. He calls companies abroad and arranges meetings with high-ranking executives, who explain how they conduct their businesses. He also introduces the graduate students to economists, politicians and U.S. Embassy personnel.

"Business is done differently in other countries, and the understanding of those differences is essential to being successful," he says.

For five weeks, the students study the organizations on their itinerary as well as the cultures of those countries. The final two weeks is the travel.

GLOBAL AGENDA

"I always take students to the European Union (EU) in the Czech Republic," Cardimen says. "With both the EU and euro under strain, we set out to understand the effect the difficulties are having on the U.S. dollar and business."

That stop was one of the most memorable for Bryan Hargreaves, MIS (Finance) '05, who remembers meeting the Czech minister of finance in 2005.



Special Instructor Frank Cardimen (far left) gathers with Bryan Hargreaves, MIS (Finance) '05 and Kacey Muccino, Marketing '11 in Elliott Hall.

Hargreaves and 17 other OU graduate students visited 11 companies, including Bosch, Mercedes and DHL; toured Pilsner Urquell beer company; and learned about international laws, a fitting lesson that supports his current position at Plexus Corp., where he's a manager of customs and trade. The company makes electronics for various industries and has locations in seven countries, so Hargreaves' global perspective is vital to his job.

"Books can only tell you so much. Imagine how much more you learn by getting to speak to the minister of finance himself," Hargreaves says. "These are lessons you never forget."

LESSON LEARNED

An impromptu stop at a jewelry store in Paris provided another lesson.

"I went in to pick out a piece of jewelry for my wife, but I got something even more valuable. Instead of a simple conversation with the worker, I discovered the complexities of the France labor laws," he says. "I learned how the worker was limited to 32 hours a week, and how, when you have kids, you can take three years off. Businesses have a more difficult time competing on a global scale with such limitations and expenses because of these labor laws. So you can see how important these abroad trips are."

AVOIDING CULTURE CLASHES

The job interview process magnified the importance of international exposure for Kacey Muccino,

Marketing '11. "Understanding different cultures and dealing with global companies is pertinent for today's workforce," she says.

"Potential employers brought up all my study abroad experience," adds Muccino, who traveled to Europe with Cardimen in 2010.

Muccino finds the cultural exposure she received in her travels makes it easier for her to do her job as supervisor of consumer insights at Carat USA in Detroit. She notes her global knowledge makes her better able to structure meetings with workers in other countries and communicate via email.

"You wouldn't think writing an email is any different, but it is," she adds. "You want to represent your company professionally with every communication."

ONGOING VALUE

In 2008, tough economic times resulted in canceling the trip. In 2009, recognizing the importance of obtaining global understanding, a handful of donors stepped forward to provide six students with \$1,000 scholarships each that year. This led to creating an endowment to provide ongoing support to students each year.

"So many students wanted to come but couldn't find the funding," says Derek Smith, International Business '11, who traveled to China in 2010 and Europe in 2011.

"Everyone appreciates the support. It provides students with partial support that allows them to seriously consider taking part in the trip," notes Cardimen. "Certainly, if more financial support was available, more students would be able to take advantage of this opportunity."

Today, SBA students have more opportunities to expand their global understanding as other faculty members, including Xiaodong Deng (MIS), Joy Jiang (Management) and Janell Townsend (Marketing), have led trips to China and Brazil in recent years.

Smith adds, "It really is a good investment in the future of American business." ■

By Rene Wisely

The American dream

SBA graduate program helps Army veteran achieve his career aspirations

To say Matt LaDuc, MBA '12, entered Oakland University's School of Business Administration with a wide range of experience and education is an understatement.

An Army infantry officer, LaDuc spent six years in the military, including 15 months in Iraq. A native of Pennsylvania, he earned a B.A. in criminology from the University of Florida, where he did so well that Florida's Warrington School of Business Master of Science in Business Management program invited him to enroll in its cohort program, which is only open to qualified non-business majors.

But his long-term goal was to earn an MBA, then enter the business development field.

A PERFECT MATCH

The combination of the SBA's MBA and its Center for Integrated Business Research and Education (CIBRE) consultancy programs proved to be just what he needed to achieve his goal.

Thanks to his Oakland University MBA degree and the hands-on experience he gained in the program, he secured a position as the lead military business developer with Clark Power Services in North Carolina within a week of graduation.

LaDuc credits his success with the choices he made as part of the SBA's MBA program. Selecting marketing as a

concentration complemented his operations background, while the experience he gained through a market research analysis project as part of his CIBRE consultancy project gave him the opportunity to put his skills to work and provided outcomes that strengthened his resume.



Matt LaDuc, MBA '12

treatment of domestic violence and sexual assault.

REAL-WORLD SKILLS

"Even though I didn't have professional sales experience, I referred to what I accomplished in the internship in my interviews — real problem solving, focusing on the customer, being consultative in nature, finding a need and delivering on it," he says.

For HAVEN, LaDuc conducted a market research and feasibility analysis to help the organization review the possibility of opening a thrift store that would provide work experience for its clients and additional funding for the organization.

"We looked at who our base customer would be, who our target population would be, who our secondary population would be, and what their income was," LaDuc says. "Our goal was to identify and serve a particular group within the target market. We wanted to find out how we could meet their needs — which were nice products that don't cost a lot."

BENEFITS FOR EVERYONE

"Matt was a real pleasure to work with," says HAVEN President and CEO Beth Morrison. "He was very enthusiastic. He put a lot of time and effort into looking at all different angles and learning who we were and about our needs."

CIBRE's goal is to help students integrate real-world experience into their classroom learning. LaDuc's internship at HAVEN did just that.

"It personalized what I was doing in class and made it real," he says. "It drove accountability. I wasn't just learning and taking exams. I actually had a client. It made what I learned stick."

HAVEN's Morrison echoes those sentiments. "The CIBRE program is great for the student because they have a client or customer in a safe setting," she says. "They get to practice what they want to do for a living."

"Partnerships like this are really important and should aspire to be a win-win," says Morrison. "We don't have the personnel, time, money or expertise to do the leg work that Matt did for us, nor did we have the funds to hire a consultant. With Oakland University's CIBRE consultancy program, we were able to pull together valuable information in a very cost-effective way. We were definitely able to use the information to move many steps forward and help get us to the next level."

AN AWESOME EXPERIENCE

LaDuc discovered Oakland University's SBA thanks to a Michigan native he served with who spoke highly of the school, saying it is very "military friendly." LaDuc, who attended on the GI Bill, found that to be true.

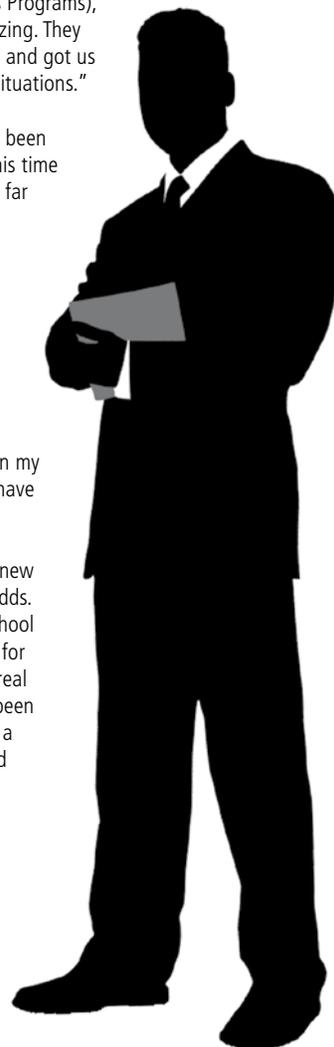
"My experience with Oakland has been awesome," he says. "The whole staff, from Dean Tanniru to the professors to Paul Trumbull (coordinator of Graduate Business Programs), have been so amazing. They showed extra time and got us through stressful situations."

Though LaDuc has been home for awhile, his time in combat is never far behind.

"After the military, I had a different perspective on life," he says. "I was so happy — I brought all my guys home alive. I was the only one in my group that didn't have anybody killed."

"I felt like I had a new start on life," he adds. "Going back to school after being in Iraq for 15 months was a real privilege, and it's been a real honor to be a student at Oakland University." ■

By Ann Marie Aliotta



Listen, learn, share

SBA's new development director focused on strengthening community support

Oakland University's School of Business Administration is pleased to welcome Michael Silverstein as director of development. He is responsible for leading the SBA's development and alumni engagement efforts.

Prior to joining the SBA this spring, Silverstein was a development officer at the Wayne State University Law School. Before WSU, he worked in sales and marketing roles at Saturn and General Motors, as well as extensively as a volunteer to help several nonprofit organizations raise money. A Grand Rapids native, Silverstein moved to Troy in 1996, where he now lives with his wife and son, who is a junior at Kalamazoo College.

After spending the summer getting to know Oakland University and its School of Business Administration, Silverstein took some time to share his thoughts.

Q: How does having a child in college influence your perspective?

A: Having a child in college definitely gives me a personal understanding of the importance of student support and the necessity of ensuring students are well-prepared to enter the job market upon graduation. It brings home the significance of what Oakland University's SBA is all about.

Q: What have you learned about the SBA at OU so far?

A: The programming at OU's SBA is creative,

diverse and very student-centered. I'm interested in hearing more from the faculty and businesses in our community who are engaged in our student-centered initiatives such as ACHIEVE, ATIB, ELI and Scholars. I look forward to helping secure financial stability for these programs.

Dean Mohan Tanniru and Interim Associate Dean Nivedita Mukherji have a lot of energy and enthusiasm for the SBA. I am enjoying getting to know them, and I know we will make a good team as we work together to forge closer relationships with our alumni and the corporate community that surrounds us.

The alumni I have met already have been very supportive of OU and the SBA and are interested in giving back in a variety of ways. They might be mentoring students, speaking to classes or student groups, or financially supporting the school; but they are all thankful for their education and well aware of the importance of their support.

Q: What is your biggest challenge at the SBA?

A: I know there are many SBA alumni who share the passion of those who are already actively involved in the SBA. However, since this position had been vacant for about nine months, many simply haven't been contacted and may not be aware of the great things happening here.

I am looking forward to reconnecting with our alumni, sharing the SBA's exciting developments,



Michael Silverstein,
development director, SBA

and discovering the meaningful experiences from their time here — such as a favorite professor or a particular class that changed their direction in life. Perhaps they received a scholarship and want to give back. Or maybe they

are enjoying the benefits of a successful career and realize their degree from the SBA at OU played a significant role in their life. Whatever it is, I'm eager to hear their stories.

Q: What's next?

A: I am excited to be part of the SBA at OU. We have an excellent faculty, quality programming and strong relationships with businesses in the community, and we provide good value for the tuition families invest in education. It strikes me that in some ways, we are a mystery to the community around us. We need to tell our success stories to the students who are evaluating us, the alumni who are thinking of becoming involved and supporting us, and the business community with whom we need deeper interactions. I am here to strengthen our existing relationships and nurture many new ones. ■

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Securing the future of SBA's experiential learning programs

The SBA at Oakland University is blessed with a number of great strengths. Among them are a strong and focused administration; a dedicated and highly respected faculty; and strong, student-centered programs.

The SBA's Center for Integrated Business Research and Education (CIBRE) is an important asset. Through CIBRE, Oakland University's SBA develops, implements and oversees programs that educate a workforce poised to find success in a dynamic global business environment.

The collection of unique experiential learning programs and activities under CIBRE creates opportunities for today's business students to develop and sharpen work skills in the real world on real projects for real organizations — skills and experiences that differentiate them as they enter a competitive job market.

The SBA's CIBRE currently offers a comprehensive set of programs that connect today's SBA students — tomorrow's business professionals — to the economic transformations underway in Southeast Michigan while better preparing them for the marketplace. These include:

- **Applied Technology in Business (ATiB)** – The SBA's first formal experiential learning program began in 1997 and continues to serve as a model for current and future programs. This business minor program educates students in the application of information technology through corporate-sponsored projects and has funded more than 250 students since 1997.
- **ACHIEVE** – Since 2008, beginning with their freshmen year, ACHIEVE indoctrinates students to the changing nature of business careers, and introduces them to financial literacy and business ethics by engaging them with regional business professionals as mentors. More than 1,177 SBA students have participated in ACHIEVE since its inception.
- **SCHOLARS** – Launched in 2007, the Scholars program uses case competitions and community projects to enhance the leadership skills of students in this competitive program. More than 150 students have participated since it began.
- **Experiential Learning and Innovation (ELI)** – A program for graduate business students that began in 2008 engages students in solving corporate-sponsored business and entrepreneurial challenges. ELI students have supported more than 15 projects.
- **International exchange program** – This program, which has served 63 students since 2008, connects SBA students to businesses and other students around the world (virtually and face-to-face) to increase global understanding.

Sustaining Excellence

*Leadership
Consulting
Economic Development
Global Understanding*

*Internships
Career Preparation
Technology
Impactful Research*

- **Ideas 2 Business (i2B) Lab** – Introduced in 2011, the I2B offers students the opportunity to assist entrepreneurs develop business plans and launch new ventures. Currently 10 students are gaining startup skills.
- **Society for Applied Investment in Finance Education (SAIFE)** – Started in 2010, this non-profit student organization engages students in investment decisions in today's complex financial markets and supports real-life investment experience. To date, 16 students have joined this organization.
- **CIBRE Consultancy** – Since 2009, more than 45 students have taken part in consultancy projects that have enabled them to put their skills to work with local partners to support civic, nonprofit and small business organizations.

As you can see — through this issue of *SBA Insight* and previous ones — the experiences SBA students gain here accelerate learning, motivate growth and facilitate the process for our students to find their direction, leading them to successful employment after graduation.

With such strong experiences behind them, SBA graduates continue to find jobs in a very competitive market. In fact, over the last five years more than 86 percent of SBA graduates secured employment within six months of graduation.

To ensure these programs are enshrined to help future students, we are focusing our fundraising efforts this academic year on raising the money necessary to guarantee these programs will exist and continue to flourish for the next five years.

With a goal to raise \$1 million, SBA Dean Mohan Tanniru has created a dollar-for-dollar match for the first \$250,000 pledged or donated to the CIBRE fund before December 31, 2012. In other words, every dollar you donate to CIBRE between now and the end of the year will support our efforts to sustain excellence in business education at OU's SBA and it will be doubled. With a number of early pledges, combined with the dean's commitment to match \$250,000, we are off to a great start. However, we need your support, and



Senior marketing major Natalie Juronoc says the SBA's ACHIEVE provides real-world experience and knowledge that is vital to her future.

I hope you will take advantage of this tremendous opportunity.

Please consider a gift to support your school and these important programs. You can reach me, Michael Silverstein, at (248) 370-2121 or silverst@oakland.edu. I will be happy to show you the valuable impact your investment will make for the SBA at Oakland University. ■

By Michael Silverstein, development director, SBA

As a senior ATiB student, Vincent Asmar, SBA '10, assurance staff, Ernst & Young, gained valuable skills performing market research for Optimize Rx.





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FALL 2012

insight

upcoming events

January 4

Second Annual Undergraduate Student Recognition Dinner
Sponsored by the OU Branch of the MSU Federal Credit Union

January 19

Executive MBA Information Session

January 25 – 27

OU Homecoming

Including a special reception for SBA alumni

March 3

Go Business Day

Prospective undergraduate students and their parents are invited to learn about the advantages of an Oakland University business education

September 5 – 6

Second International Conference on Credit Analysis and Risk Management Basel, Switzerland
Presented by the Accounting and Finance Department of Oakland University's School of Business Administration



Join the SBA Alumni Network on LinkedIn

If you're already a member of LinkedIn, be sure to take advantage of the power of the SBA alumni network by joining the SBA Alumni Network group. We're working to make this a rich community that offers value and resources to its members. By joining it, you'll reconnect with fellow classmates, strengthen your professional network and gain access to the latest events and happenings at the SBA, OU and in the business world. Join today — then invite your SBA colleagues to join the group.

Support the SBA

The SBA offers many different ways alumni can help SBA students develop into professionals through its career development programs.

- If you would like to volunteer with students, contact Judy Martin at martin23@oakland.edu.
- If you are looking for an intern or if your company wants to hire a solid graduate with academic and presentation skills, contact Michelle Serafino at serafino@oakland.edu.
- Consider making a gift to the business school. Help OU's SBA build a school that is advancing leadership in the business community with a gift that will transform lives. You can give online at www.sba.oakland.edu/give.

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