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SBA graduate credits Scholars program for igniting passion for research

Benjamin Smith, SBA 08, says the SBA Scholars program gave him the opportunity to experience one of the greatest and most demanding learning experiences and challenge in his OU career.

Selected as one of the SBA's first Research Scholars in 2007-08 during his senior year, Smith worked with Mark Simon, associate professor, management, on an original research project suitable for publication or presentation examining how accounting firms use information for decision making.

"As the project grew more intense, the OU Research Committee generously awarded me a \$1,500 research stipend to defer some of the expenses," Smith says. "Quite honestly, this let me focus on the project rather than pick up an additional part-time job."

Smith completed the paper before he graduated and presented at Meeting of the Minds in 2008. "I was so excited by the actual research process, I continued to work on it with Professor Simon well after graduation to increase the probability a respected academic journal would accept it," Smith says.

Smith's persistence paid off. After revising and resubmitting it, it was recently accepted for publication by *Journal of Small Business Strategy*.

"Needless to say I'm thrilled," Smith says. "Professor Simon says this is a well-respected journal – blind refereed, a strong review board and an acceptance rate of less than 30 percent. I consider this one of my biggest accomplishments and am now considering getting a PhD."

"This was one of the greatest and most demanding learning experiences and challenge I have had at OU," Smith wrote in an e-mail to SBA Dean Mohan Tanniru. "And I can't thank you all enough for facilitating this process through the Research Scholars program. Thank you for the wonderful opportunity you all provided me."

SUMMARY

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