



SPRING 2009

# insight

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

## Global teams open up new world for SBA students

### Message from the Dean



The borders of today's business world extend across the globe. The business research, education and outreach activities within OU's School of Business Administration also move far beyond regional borders to improve understanding of cultural and business differences.

With many local, regional, national and international projects underway in our school, the SBA's new Center for Integrated Business Research and Education plays an important role in bringing our activities into focus and allowing us to proactively disseminate the knowledge we gain throughout our curriculum as well as conduct business research with partners throughout the world.

In this issue of *SBA Insight*, you'll read about how the SBA prepares graduates who can function well in a global environment. Our education programs are tailored to provide students with the chance to gain international experience in a variety of settings – face to face, virtual, small groups and other combinations. We're also modifying existing programs and developing new ones to recruit more international students and scholars here to participate in programs and work on projects.

You'll also discover the depth of understanding our faculty members have and share on international issues. With partnerships at 40 universities in 17 countries, you'll read about a few specific projects and how the discoveries they make will help influence the future of business.

Our activities are not limited to education and research. Sharing and disseminating knowledge is a critical role any business school must accept – and we do so with enthusiasm. In this issue, you'll see how the SBA is already engaged in international activities that bring researchers and practitioners together to better understand business, improve it and help it evolve.

While this issue is focused on international activities, integrating business education, research and outreach under our new CIBRE brings a fresh focus on how the SBA is helping transform the economy, addressing contemporary organizational issues, and educating business professionals and leaders. I encourage you to learn more about CIBRE and find out how you can get involved by visiting [www.sba.oakland.edu/cibre](http://www.sba.oakland.edu/cibre). While there you can also read a special issue of *SBA Insight Online* that highlights SBA's CIBRE.

Mohan Tanniru  
Dean, School of Business Administration, Oakland University



To gain true business success, students must think outside the box AND outside the classroom.

Through its new international learning experience programs, Oakland University's School of Business Administration (SBA) moves beyond the traditional classroom by offering virtual classrooms, global team projects with international students, and study abroad opportunities to expose undergraduate and graduate students to relevant international business experiences.

"To expand on our SBA mission of global understanding and leadership, the SBA's Center for Integrated Business Research and Education (CIBRE) is piloting three models to enable our students to work on real business-driven projects with international student teams," explains SBA Dean Mohan Tanniru.

The all-virtual model allows OU and international students to work together on business projects through a virtual classroom. Under the hybrid model, OU and foreign students meet face-to-face overseas for the initial project startup, then utilize the virtual classroom for the remainder of the semester. The international immersion model affords students the opportunity to study abroad for an entire semester working on global projects.

The global team component makes OU's business program unique.

"Certainly many schools immerse their students in study-abroad programs and use technology to connect students internationally – but our programs, whether virtual or face-to-face, leverage our business connections to add value to the program which will differentiate our students and program from others," adds Tanniru.

#### COLLABORATION THROUGH VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

With the assistance of a Chrysler Foundation grant, SBA's new virtual classroom became a reality in Winter 2009. The pilot all-virtual class linked five OU students and four students from Hohai University in Nanjing, China, together to work on a challenging business project provided by the Ford Motor Company.

"Ford's representative, Alan Fisk, encouraged students to think out of the box in conducting the project," says Associate Professor, MIS, Xiaodong Deng, who facilitates the course. "He asked students to treat the project as their own and take a more active role to move the project forward." Deng was encouraged by the student's enthusiasm and initiative as they presented initial project ideas and molded them into workable concepts.

Yet another project creates five teams, each comprised of one SBA graduate student and five undergraduate students from the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade international business program, to complete a project analyzing the automotive market needs in China.

#### HYBRID PROJECT BLENDS INTERNATIONAL VISITS, VIRTUAL TEAMS

The SBA will partner with Beijing Jiaotong University in Beijing, China, on a new summer program this year, where SBA and engineering students will visit China for three weeks to launch a global project. Upon their return, they will complete the project with the same team in the virtual classroom.

*With the assistance of a Chrysler Foundation grant, SBA's new global room – a virtual classroom – became a reality in Winter 2009.*

"As they become immersed in another culture and work with their foreign counterparts, they will need to build trust and cooperation," explains Associate Dean Ron Tracy. "The students will discover that process is a bit more complicated within an international environment. It's an important experience which will enrich their university experience and their professional life."

While the SBA is starting out with a small group for the pilot, it will expand quickly as other universities in China and India have expressed interest in joining the program.

#### TOTAL IMMERSION TEAM PROJECTS

The third all face-to-face model will engage OU students in global team projects while they visit another country for the full length of the project. Still in development, this model will take shape in the 2009-10 academic year.

Several other SBA total immersion programs allow students to visit other countries for extended periods of time. For example, the SBA has joined the Consortium of Universities for International Studies as a sponsor of CIMBA, a study-abroad program located in Italy, where OU students can earn transferable credits by taking undergraduate or MBA courses at CIMBA.

OU MBA students in Management 681 also get a unique European perspective on business. The summer class, instructed by Frank Cardiman, will tour Germany, France and the United Kingdom to learn not only high-level management skills, but how the culture, language, history and economic conditions of other countries have an impact on international business.

This year, the group will visit the U.S. Embassy and the European Parliament, as well as companies such as Daimler, Siemens, Harley Davison and AT&T. Not the typical sightseeing excursion, the students complete extensive research and elaborate coursework prior to the trip.

#### EXCEEDING EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS

"We're meeting a business need," says Tanniru. "Our graduates will be even more effective in the workplace, and thus more desired by employers, thanks to these experiences."

"Long term it will attract more students to OU and our international universities," he adds. "A partnership such as this is always a win-win for all parties involved." ■



**Excitement is building** as OU's SBA gears up to celebrate its 40th anniversary throughout the 2009-10 academic year. Thanks to the work of its expert faculty members and the success of its graduates over the years, the SBA has experienced tremendous growth in its reputation in the business and research communities.

We want to hear from you. Please share a memory of your special time at OU's SBA on our 40th anniversary Web page at: <http://www.sba.oakland.edu/root/40th/>

Plan to take part in this celebratory year. Mark your calendar for these special events:

- Thursday, Oct. 8: SBA Alumni, Faculty and Friends Golf Outing
- Friday, Oct. 9: Business Conference offering sessions in ethics, international business, strategy and technology, and new approaches to business education.
- Saturday, Oct. 10: 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration dinner



## International collaborations enhance global understanding



As faculty members at OU's School of Business Administration continue to collaborate with international experts in their fields through the SBA's Center for Integrated Business Research and Education (CIBRE), they bring new perspectives to complex, global business topics and a broader, worldly teaching and learning experience to the university. Below are just a few examples of how an exchange of ideas and faculty enhances global understanding.



Sherman Folland, economics professor

### WHO IS RICH IN SOCIAL CAPITAL?

Economics Professor Sherman Folland's research poses that question on a national scale.

Folland recently received a research grant from the Norwegian Research Council for 600,000 Kroner to study

Social Capital (SC) in Bergen, Norway, over the next three summers. SC is the value of a culture's social connectedness, measured by attributes such as the quality and quantity of social interactions, and levels of trust and caring for others. (As a country, Norway ranks among the highest in SC while the U.S., currently in the middle of the pack, suffers from declining SC.)

Specifically, Folland asks the question: "Does social capital contribute to less health-risky behaviors?" Folland's preliminary findings, published in the *Health Economic* journal, indicates that smoking, excessive drinking and overeating tend to diminish when a person has a strong social network.

"Improving social capital could mean a health revolution," says Folland, who has published two additional papers on SC. "I do think that what health care providers have been saying for a long time is true – that a lot of our health comes down to healing ourselves with our choices."

### COMPARING SOURCES OF INNOVATION BETWEEN COUNTRIES

Mukesh Bhargava, marketing professor, was excited by data related to innovation and adoption his German colleagues at the Center for European Economic Research (ZEW) shared with him and Professor Fuad Hasanov. The researchers at ZEW, a non-profit research institute in Mannheim surveyed German companies to discover patterns and influences of innovation. This information is then shared with counterparts in Europe to help encourage innovation through national funding and incentives.

"They have a good innovation incentive plan in Europe but we have no such policies," Bhargava says. "We tried to incorporate a similar survey here but U.S. companies treat this as proprietary and are not open to sharing information."

Although the team could not duplicate similar results in the U.S., the collaborative research continues and Bhargava remains optimistic.

"The data is still encouraging," he says. "We can make generalizations based on the ZEW research so the work is still relevant. We hope to create a need for cooperation and government funding as we continue to research in this area."

### FINDING THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE ... AND HIGHEST PERFORMANCE

Research scholar Ding Yuan, of Hohai University, Nanjing, China, visited OU this winter, bringing a body of research on the motivations, paths of expansion and performance of foreign companies. As a visiting scholar, he worked with Joy Jiang, assistant professor of management, and Ravi Parameswaran, chair, management and marketing, on analyzing data on multinational corporations within China.

"Prior studies in foreign investment have focused more on why and where companies establish themselves and less on how they actually expand once they enter a country," Jiang says. "We try to move beyond the entry-point to examine the process of foreign expansion and determine if different paths will lead to differences in performance."



Ravi Parameswaran, SBA chair, management and marketing, visiting research scholar Ding Yuan, of Hohai University, Nanjing, China, and Joy Jiang, assistant professor of management.

The three professors will submit their findings at an international business conference and present a paper to the *Journal of Business Research*.

### ENVISION SOFTWARE LIKE A FINE-TUNED MACHINE

If it's true what they say – every business decision triggers an IT event – then Vijayan Sugumaran, professor, MIS, Decision and Information Science, believes every IT event must trigger well-researched, well-developed IT planning and engineering.

For the last eight years, Sugumaran has collaborated with Professor Sooyong Park, from the Department of Computer Science, Sogang University, South Korea, on software engineering issues.

"We look at how to manage the process of producing new versions of software," he explains. "This is important because just like any product, companies need to continually update and re-engineer their software



JongJin Kim, business planning and senior specialist, engineering service; KwiHan Chae, director, Automotive Electronics Software Center; SBA MIS Professor Vijay Sugumaran; YoungSoo Yoo, senior vice president, engineering service, at AutoEver Systems in Korea.

product lines. When manufactured goods, such as cars, are updated, industry standards make it easier to write specs. It's not the same for software, which has different standards throughout the industry. As we work to develop base architecture, it will be easier for software to evolve."

According to Sugumaran, working with international partners helps bring industries together. "It gives us access to different markets and allows us to see different approaches. For example, Park has contacts at Kia and Hyundai; we have our U.S. automotive contacts. We're able to bring these people together for greater knowledge transfer," he says.

Sugumaran visits Korea every year, just as Park frequently visits OU. Together they have published nine articles, nine conference papers and one book chapter.

### "SECOND LIFE" ENJOYING A BETTER LIFESTYLE THAN YOU?

Virtual worlds offer more than fantasy games, group blogs and homemade videos. For Balaji Rajagopalan, associate professor, MIS, and his international colleagues, they represent an opportunity to analyze social interactions and lifestyle choices of individuals who interact within virtual worlds such as "Second Life," the three-dimensional world where cyber visitors create their own virtual world and characters, called Avatars.

Along with Ye Qiang, professor, Harbin Institute of Technology in China, Rajagopalan is gathering common underlying attributes of virtual world visitors and categorizing them into clusters based on lifestyle choices. He is also researching "Knowledge Sharing in Virtual Communities" with T.P. Liang, dean and MIS professor, National Sun Yat-sen University (NSYSU), in Taiwan.

In addition, he is organizing a mini-track on Virtual Communities and Virtual Worlds at the Americas Conference on Information Systems (AMCIS) with two German professors: Sebastian Richter, Universität der Bundeswehr München; and Jan Marco Leimeister, Universität Kassel.

"Virtual communities offer an opportunity for researchers to study social and political interaction patterns, economic transaction processes, organizational behaviors, management aspects, business models and design concepts exhibited by visitors of virtual communities," Rajagopalan says in reference to the mini-track. ■



## Earned excellence: SBA maintains elite accreditation in business, accounting

Following an intensive peer review process, Oakland University's School of Business Administration received reaccreditation for both its business and accounting programs from the world's most widely recognized and most-sought after organization, AACSB International.

With that, the SBA maintains its standing as part of an elite group of business schools that meet the AACSB's rigorous standards. Less than one-third of U.S. business school programs and only 15 percent of business programs worldwide meet these standards. The separate accounting accreditation is even rarer. Less than five percent of the world's business schools have earned the business and/or accounting accreditation.

"It takes a great deal of commitment and determination to earn AACSB accreditation," says Jerry Trapnell,

executive vice president and chief accreditation officer of AACSB International. "Schools not only must meet specific standards of excellence, but their deans, faculties and staffs make a commitment to ongoing improvement to ensure that the institution will continue to deliver high quality education to students."

To achieve the business accreditation and separate accounting program accreditation, the SBA's programs must meet the 21 AACSB standards requiring a high-quality teaching environment, a commitment to continuous improvement and curricula responsive to the needs of business. The accounting accreditation requires the satisfaction of an additional 15 standards specific to the discipline and profession.

"We are pleased to have both programs reaccredited by the AACSB and to continue to be recognized for the outstanding work and accomplishments of the students,

faculty and staff in the SBA," says Mohan Tanniru, SBA dean. "The reaccreditation is truly a testament to everyone's hard work and dedication to our mission. And it reinforces what we know: The SBA prepares graduates to make meaningful contributions in the business world."

The School of Business Administration is one of 560 business schools in the world to earn AACSB accreditation. Oakland is one of 168 schools that hold the separate AACSB International accounting accreditation.

Founded by 17 of the most prominent business schools in the U.S. – including Columbia University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College and Harvard – AACSB International is the premier accrediting agency and service organization for business schools. ■

## Bringing dreams alive: endowment honors professor's passion for international travel



Teaching and traveling were Catherine (Kate) Tyler's passions. That's why her husband and children established the Catherine Tyler Memorial International Award Endowment shortly after she died in a scuba diving accident in 2007.

As an assistant professor of management in Oakland University's School of Business Administration since fall 2001, Kate influenced students' lives by sharing her international expertise and encouraging them to explore the world.

"Kate knew that a U.S.-centric focus was not going to serve her students very well. She also realized that international expertise couldn't be learned from a textbook or a filmstrip. She wanted students to experience it firsthand," says Mike, Kate's husband. "Until students walk through the slums of Mumbai or wander through a Chinese Hutong, they can't really appreciate the differences."

Kate led by example when it came to immersing herself in other cultures. She traveled extensively with family, friends and students. She also taught at the Vienna University of Technology in Austria, and the University for Business and Technology in Pristina, Kosovo. Moreover, she was recognized for her international aspects of teaching and



Assistant Professor of Management Catherine (Kate) Tyler (front row, second from left) with students in India.

management, as demonstrated by her published works in respected publications.

"When the funeral home asked if we'd like to receive donations in lieu of flowers, it only took a couple of seconds for us to think of Oakland University," Mike says. As support from family, friends and colleagues flowed in, Mike worked with OU SBA to create an endowment, which provides continuous income for an annual student award.

"Outside her family, teaching and traveling were Kate's passions," says Mike. "She was all about being with the students, whether it was in the classroom or in a foreign country. That's what makes this award so appropriate."

Kate's colleague agrees. "I think the award is just what she would have wanted. It combines two of her favorite things – teaching and travel," says Mark Simon, associate professor of management, SBA.

Thanks to this endowment, Kate's passion for teaching and traveling will continue to impact OU SBA students for years to come. Specifically, the award will provide support for undergraduate and graduate students who participate in university-approved international internships or study abroad experiences. Awards may be used for tuition, air fare, lodging or other related expenses.

"I am grateful for the many people who have donated money so her name can live on at the university," Mike says. "It's meaningful for her parents, our children, and me to know she won't be forgotten."

To contribute to the memorial endowment online at [www.sba.oakland.edu/give](http://www.sba.oakland.edu/give) or contact Robin Michel, SBA development officer, at [michel@oakland.edu](mailto:michel@oakland.edu) or (248) 370-2121. ■

## Outreach activities, events bring global understanding to the community



Expanding global activities into the community through outreach is another way the SBA and its Center for Integrated Business Research and Education (CIBRE) builds global understanding within the community. The following highlights global outreach activities through the SBA's CIBRE.

### EVENTS EXPAND UNDERSTANDING FOR BUSINESS COMMUNITY

A series of events addressed international economic and organizational challenges for business professionals, faculty members and students.

With a focus on the global business market from the perspective of lean thinking, information systems leadership and health care, the SBA hosted a business conference last October offering attendees valuable information and insight. The conference brought business practitioners and academic leaders from across the country together to collaboratively identify and answer questions challenging businesses today to advance business, research and education. In all, more than 30 academic and business leaders in various industries shared their insight and expertise with more than 150 attendees.

During the conference, high school students from the International Academy in Bloomfield Hills presented posters under the guidance of Dr. Yash Lakra, M.D. and general surgeon from Pontiac Oakwood Hospital. For the session, the students analyzed health care policies from 23 countries ranging from Andorra and Argentina to Spain and the UK on affordability, availability and quality.

Additional events throughout the year highlighted the importance of cultivating global understanding. From the 2009 Gorlin Lecture by Michael Mussa of the Petersen Institute for International Economics titled "The Global Nature of the Current Economic and Financial Crisis" to the sponsoring the World Trade Week topic "Brazil: Emerging Market in the South," and discussions with delegations from Taiwan covering product quality, the events crossed the globe.

Others invited exploration into compelling topics, such as "Does International Diversification Matter?" and the "Global Employees in a World of Cultural Differences" panel discussion in partnership with the Auburn Hills Chamber of Commerce that presented strategies for successful participation in the global marketplace.

While still more imparted insight into complex matters, from the future of manufacturing in the CIBRE's Business Futures Council meeting to the Back to Business breakfast that focused on "Michigan in the 21st Century Globalized Economy: A Requiem or a Renaissance?" offering a keynote by senior economist Thomas Klier of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, on the impact of globalization on the U.S. auto industry and a panel discussion offering insight into how to succeed in the global market.

### FUTURE EVENTS PROMISE INSIGHT AND IMPACT

With a focus on the future and the increasing importance of the global marketplace, the SBA's CIBRE is in the midst of planning events and activities to expand international understanding for business professionals, students, youth and others.

A fall business conference set for Friday, Oct. 9, will offer sessions in ethics, international business, strategy and technology, and new approaches to business education. An expanded summer program for youth that includes business development in multiple disciplines, including integrating the global perspective, is under development.

Plus, the CIBRE at SBA played an instrumental role in bringing the Americas' Conference on Information Systems (AMCIS) – an international IS conference – to Detroit in August 2011. This conference, organized by

the Association for Information Systems, is one of the leading conferences for presenting the broadest variety of research done by and for IS and IT academicians in the Western Hemisphere.

### CASE COMPETITION JOINS STUDENTS FROM LEADING MBA AND MIS PROGRAMS

Together with the Computer Associates, Indiana University at Bloomington and University of Arizona, OU's SBA sponsored the first International Case Competition on the strategic value of IT management in Las Vegas last November.

Bringing together students from leading MBA and MIS programs from around the world, the competition enabled students to evaluate and demonstrate the strategic value of IT management for the success of global organizations. The student teams were provided with a case study – the HHS-Connect project for the City of New York – of an organization in the throes of change, and evaluate its IT department and infrastructure and give recommendations on how to align the IT department to better support the changing business environment.

*"By presenting the students with a real-world IT management challenge, they gained an experience not unlike those they may face after graduation."*

Connie Smallwood  
senior director of university relations, CA

"By presenting the students with a real-world IT management challenge, they gained an experience not unlike those they may face after graduation," said Connie Smallwood, senior director of University Relations at Computer Associates. "We were incredibly pleased with the quality of work and dedication demonstrated by all the participants. As the need for skilled IT professionals continues to rise and IT systems become increasingly more complex, the outstanding efforts exhibited by the students will be well received in today's business environment."

Plans include an annual competition, with the next one slated for April 2010. ■



The Indiana University team took first place at the SBA-sponsored International Case Competition on the strategic value of IT.

## New certificate programs strengthen skills, credentials

The SBA's Center for Integrated Business Research and Education (CIBRE) offers individuals and business partners a variety of programs to help those looking to enhance or learn new skills to advance in their careers or expand their career possibilities.

This summer, CIBRE will offer classes for new certificate programs:

- **Project Management Certificate and PMI Exam Review** – Each Friday and Saturday in August, students will gain the expertise to set themselves apart from the competition by earning a certificate in project management and prepare for the PMI exam to gain additional credentials from the Project Management Institute.
- **Credit Analysis in Today's Economy** – Through this six-week program, finance and business professionals gain a solid working knowledge of credit analysis that will equip them to meet the economic challenges in today's markets.
- **Web 2.0 Interface Development** – This professional certificate program provides workers with the technical background to create sophisticated Web 2.0 applications using the capabilities of today's browsers.
- **Financial Distress and Corporate Restructuring** – This course will examine important issues in corporate bankruptcy and distressed restructuring, including discussing the interplay between various stakeholders, investment banking techniques and alternative methods of reorganizing.



Existing certificate programs include: Certified Financial Planning, Paralegal and Automotive Product Development Management. Review programs and workshops now available include Quantitative Methods, Project Management and Appraisal.

For more information about CIBRE's new and existing programs or to register, please visit the SBA's Professional and Community Education Web site at [www.sba.oakland.edu/ce/](http://www.sba.oakland.edu/ce/) or call (248) 370-3177. ■

## Passing along the fortune of a good life

Jon and Gwyn Hartman have shown that one doesn't need a lot of money to make a difference. They shy away from the word philanthropy, preferring to describe what they do as just "giving back." As Jon retired from OU at the end of the term in December, he left behind an endowed Accounting and Finance Department Enrichment Fund that will do just that.

"Life has been pretty good for me and my wife, and I just want to pay it back," says the retired Kmart finance executive and consultant.

As he talks, it becomes clear how important making a difference is in his life. When Jon started teaching Introduction to Managerial Finance in the fall of 1999, he wanted to be the sort of teacher who was always there to help, one who knew your name and gave timely feedback. When he saw an article that stated for every \$1 spent on education, \$1.25 was spent on corrections, he told his wife, "This is wrong, and we have to do something about it."

They decided to create a three-year, \$5,000 scholarship for the SBA, which would significantly help an accounting or finance student. Rather than focus on economic need,

the scholarship is awarded based on scholarship, service to the university and service to the community.

The first scholarship was given last year to Ashley Eichoff, a young woman who had lost her mother to cancer. It allowed her to take more classes and graduate earlier.

Recalling that first award, Jon's face brightens and his voice gets quieter. "Ashley was so thankful. That's what makes it all worthwhile. It's just the right thing to do."

As he prepared to segue fully into retirement, he began to look for ways to make a lasting difference for the Accounting and Finance Department. He saw decreasing state support for the school and increased difficulty in finding qualified finance teachers. Jon and his wife decided to create an endowed fund that would support research, encourage creativity in recruiting faculty and provide enrichment for the department. "My hope was to create a fund that would help things grow and provide some guidance, without too many strings attached."

Jon and Gwyn have a long history of making a difference, giving to their alma maters (Albion and MSU), Leader Dogs School and the local library. Oakland is special,

*"My hope was to create a fund that would help things grow and provide some guidance, without too many strings attached."*

Jon Hartman

though, for Jon. "I always knew I was going to like it (teaching at OU), I just didn't know how much." The difference for Jon was the ability to make a larger impact with their gift to a smaller school like Oakland.

In his quiet way, Jon concludes, "I'd like to challenge everyone to look at their good fortune, to pick an organization, and to give back." ■

## High standards yield internships, jobs for SBA accounting students

With an increased focus on the field of accounting – an industry that's hot in good and bad economic times – accounting firm recruiters continue to look to Oakland University's School of Business Administration as a key school for potential hires.

A solid program focused on a strong knowledge of accounting standards, the ability to analyze business transactions and the ability to identify risks within an organization and recommend controls, and more, combined with a separate accounting accreditation from the AACSB means OU's SBA accounting graduates are prepared to make meaningful contributions in the workplace upon entering the door.

Pam Strohmeier, director, campus recruitment, for Rehmann, a large Midwest CPA and business-consulting firm, says in her 15 years as a recruiter, OU is consistently a very important school to recruit accounting students.

"When I interview (at OU), I know I am speaking to bright students who are focused on starting their careers in public accounting. They know the value of their education, have critical-thinking skills, can adapt to change, and know how to build relationships with others, which are some of the necessary skills to being successful," she says.

For Mike Dingwall (SBA '92), senior manager for recruiting at KPMG, OU students have the advantage of smaller class sizes and personal contact with instructors. "When I started here, there was one person from OU,

now we have about seven working in the Detroit office," says Dingwall, who represents the global accounting firm at many recruiting events on campus.

In very few other majors are students in the unique position accounting majors are – the majority have jobs waiting for them upon graduation. Internships in an industry that's still hiring despite tough economic times are a significant reason for this, according to Brenda Paine, from OU's Career Services.

When students like senior Maher Faik participate in paid internships, they learn about public accounting and have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills to potential employers. "They say each firm has its own personality," says Faik, the OU accounting club president who completed an internship with Ernst & Young. "For me Ernst & Young is a good fit. I was offered a job the last day of my internship." Faik starts his job in September.

Faik says opportunities such as job fairs, one-on-one interviews, workshops and meetings with OASIS and OU accounting organizations including Beta Alpha Psi and NABA, were key to his educational success. "I stress to students that they should attend OASIS/NABA/BAP events which are instrumental in getting to know the firms, and show that you are an active participator," says Faik.

Students can access career services information via the Oakland Web site, and all services – from job fairs, on-campus interviews, online resume posting and student-alumni workshops – are free for students. "Our role is to

help students prepare for a successful career," says Paine, who estimates that nearly 90 percent of accounting undergraduates have jobs upon graduation.

In her 30 years in public accounting, Strohmeier has seen the profession change, and notes that today's accounting student has a wealth of opportunities. "It is an exciting profession where people continue to learn and grow and can make a difference in our world today," she says.

And despite the sagging economy, Dingwall says last year was one of KPMG's biggest ever. "There are new regulations and rules that companies have to follow and that drives up our auditing hours and services we provide," he says. "In bankruptcy, you need professional service advisers even more." ■

*SBA Accounting senior Maher Faik with Mohinder Parkash, chair of SBA's Accounting and Finance department.*



## Inspirational giving: the Elliott-Stinson Challenge match update

Last fall, SBA Dean Mohan Tanniru and I met with R. Hugh Elliott, a longtime OU supporter, and Craig Stinson (SBA '84) to discuss how OU's School of Business Administration is on the cusp of transformation. Based on their own leadership roles in the business community, they both knew that making this transformation wasn't a matter of one or two people making a difference, but an entire movement of people. In this case alumni, faculty and students are the ones pivotal to shifting the SBA from a good school to a great one.

That's why Elliott and Stinson were so enthusiastic about matching each gift to individual donor's passions at the SBA. They will do this through their \$500,000 challenge match that began November 1, 2008, and runs through October 31, 2009.



In one case, some of Professor Frank Cardimen's former students believe so strongly in the value his MBA international travel course offers that they have contributed enough money to underwrite a number of \$1,000 scholarships for this year's participants, as well as written testimonials about their experiences.

In another case, an alumna in Hong Kong e-mailed about his desire to personally help three SBA students travel to China and participate in the study-abroad program the SBA is offering with OU's School of Engineering and Computer Science.

Those are only two examples of how SBA alumni are taking advantage of the Elliott-Stinson Challenge to transform students' lives.

As you read through this issue of *SBA Insight*, take time to remember your own experiences at the SBA and consider how you can personally get involved at a level that is meaningful to you. I invite you to experience



Robin Michel

the new SBA and become part of the transformation. One great way is through the SBA's ACHIEVE program, which connects students to alumni in the community. Through your participation, you'll see the caliber of students the SBA is attracting and how the SBA program has grown over the years. Contact me at

(248) 370-2121 or michel@oakland.edu and I will be your personal ambassador to the SBA or campus.

To take advantage of the Elliott-Stinson Match Challenge, contribute online at [www.sba.oakland.edu/give](http://www.sba.oakland.edu/give) or contact Robin Michel, SBA development officer, at michel@oakland.edu or (248) 370-2121. ■

## Curiosity jumpstarts unique HR career

It's been said that choosing a university can make or break a career. Reflecting on 20 successful years in the human resources profession, Pipier Bewlay (SBA '86) is glad she made the right decision. She applied and was accepted to Cornell University, General Motors Institute, and her school of choice, Oakland University.

"OU is as good – or better – than the name-brand schools out there," Bewlay says. "People take for granted that there is a great university in their own backyard."

Born and raised in Pontiac, Mich., Bewlay lived in the residence halls her freshman year to fulfill a scholarship requirement. She says it gave her the freedom to figure out who she was and the opportunity to experience living on her own. It also gave her the chance to immerse herself in campus activities.

Bewlay decided to commute the following years. To her surprise, giving up her campus residence didn't make her feel like an outsider. "As a commuter, I was still offered engaging activities and opportunities to enhance my education," Bewlay says.

Take, for instance, the Alpha Kappa Psi Business Fraternity. As one of the founding members and active participants, Bewlay says it helped shape who she is today.

"It instilled a drive within me, and I learned the process of getting something off the ground. I learned how to work with people different than myself, while building camaraderie. I also learned the importance of commitment to achieving success," she says.

The fraternity provided her with relevant, hands-on experience to complement her human resources management degree. As chairperson of new pledges during her second year with Alpha Kappa Psi, she dabbled in recruiting and training. "I didn't realize it then, but looking back, it was my first role in human resources."



Pipier Bewlay, SBA '86

She's come a long way since her fraternity experience, though she still keeps in touch with the friends she made there.

General Motors – often the pinnacle of a person's career – was just the beginning of Bewlay's professional journey. "It's a great company,

but I couldn't stop wondering about the opportunities outside Michigan's automotive industry," Bewlay says.

That curiosity led Bewlay's career path through four states, two industries, and multiple promotions. Her resume boasts positions with Kraft Foods, Target and Home Depot.

Today, Bewlay is senior vice president of human resources, training and development for INROADS Inc. in Atlanta. The nonprofit's mission is to develop and place talented minority youth in business and industry, and prepare them for corporate and community leadership. This process often starts at the college level, placing interns in professional settings.

When the position at INROADS first came across her desk, she passed it along to a colleague. "I didn't think I was interested in working for a nonprofit," Bewlay says. "My colleague passed it right back, telling me to rethink the opportunity." Upon closer consideration, Bewlay decided the role was a perfect match to her credentials and ideals.

"It feels good to give something back," Bewlay says. "Especially to those who aspire to reach their goals." ■

## SBA's CIBRE integrates voice of customer, creates value

The more than 100 guests who joined Oakland University's School of Business Administration to celebrate the opening of its new Center for Integrated Business Research and Education (CIBRE) at a spring open house were impressed with its vision and focus on the business community and students.

"Congratulations on getting it right," says Ray Gunn, (SBA '80) member of the SBA Board of Visitors and managing partner for Wingspan Capital Partners. "With CIBRE, the SBA integrates the voice of the customer and all stakeholders to create value for the business community and its students."

"The CIBRE model breaks the mold," says Satish Dharwadkar, a financial investment manager at Merrill Lynch.

### SUPPORTING ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Through CIBRE, established last November, the SBA has put a mechanism in place so area businesses have a place to build the region's economic future together with other professionals and researchers, while educating a work force that's fully prepared to succeed.

While the CIBRE itself is new, it's built on the success of existing SBA programs, which have expanded to encompass the full spectrum of business and industry. With a focus on integrating three key areas – research, education, and business and community education – the CIBRE at OU's SBA helps business today, while looking ahead to prepare for, and influence, the future.

"The SBA's partnership with the business community (through CIBRE) is a huge plus," says Dennis Drenikowski of Merrill Lynch. "Employers benefit greatly from the chance to work with your student base."

### ENHANCING EDUCATION

SBA students also welcome the opportunity CIBRE offers to enhance their business education.

"Through CIBRE's Experiential Learning and Innovation (ELI) program, I had a chance to enhance my project management and presentation skills, and to learn about specific business issues in the non-profit sector," says Dean Pryzmusinski, SBA graduate assistant and student in the Master in Technology and Information Management program. "It was a great way to augment my classroom experience."

"In these challenging times, it's great to be part of something positive and to press forward with initiatives that will make such an impact," agrees MBA student Kasey Dittmer.

### INTEGRATION IS KEY

OU Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Virinder Moudgil attended the event and commended the SBA, the dean and faculty team for its leadership in creating an education environment that integrates the knowledge of faculty research with the reality of business issues to offer relevant curriculum and serve as a key partner in the transformation of the southeast Michigan community.

"Everyone had a chance to see how the CIBRE will represent us as a school and showcase all of its accomplishments in research and teaching, and partner with us as we help change the regional economy," adds SBA Dean Mohan Tanniru.

Learn more about CIBRE at [www.sba.oakland.edu/cibre](http://www.sba.oakland.edu/cibre). ■

Ray Gunn, SBA '80, managing partner, Wingspan Capital Partners, and member of the SBA Board of Visitors, at the CIBRE open house.




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## SBA's Executive MBA program gives graduates competitive advantage

As the many sectors of business evolve, so must business leaders. That's where Oakland University's Executive MBA (EMBA) in Health Care Management or Information Systems Leadership comes in.

This intense program prepares highly motivated professionals to be successful in a dynamic global business environment by helping them better understand all aspects of business. Launched in 2000, the SBA's EMBA program is one of very few in the country and the only one in Michigan to offer two different but complementary concentrations.

The EMBA boasts many successful alumni in leadership positions. And students and employers talk up the advantages of the program.

"Students are well prepared in both the theoretical basis of management and leadership and in the practical application. The curriculum is creative and prepares graduates to be successful in a wide variety of positions," says Dr. Ernest Yoder, vice president, medical affairs, St. John Health System. "I have personally seen the success of two OU EMBA graduates within St. John Health."

"The multifaceted approach of OU's EMBA in Health Care Management provides an exceptionally valuable learning experience, as well as creates new industry

relationships through dynamic interactions amongst students, facilitators, guest speakers and alumni," adds Scott Cowsill, an entrepreneur specializing in practice management and health care contracting, and recent EMBA - Health Care Management alumni.

"From Six Sigma and health care legal issues to writing presentations, OU's EMBA program has brought me up to a certain level of polish that has had profound benefits on my career," says Donna Mimikos, administrative manager, Beaumont Hospitals employee health plan and integrative health services. "As a nurse, I had the health care experience, but I needed the business component. I got it through the EMBA program."

The program is accepting applications for the fall 2009 term. Prospective EMBA students are encouraged to explore program details at <http://emba.oakland.edu> or attend the information session on **Friday, June 19, 4 – 6 p.m.** For more information or to reserve your spot, call (248) 370-3287 or e-mail [emba@lists.oakland.edu](mailto:emba@lists.oakland.edu). ■

*"As a nurse, I had the health care experience, but I needed the business component. I got it through the EMBA program."*

Donna Mimikos



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Beaumont Hospitals  
administrative manager, employee health plan  
and integrative health services