Making an Impact

How you impact students, the value of your degree, education. The World.
I hope you will enjoy this issue of NIU Business. Our theme this year is you—and the many ways you have and can have an impact on our students, faculty, programs, and even the value of your own NIU business degree. You will read stories of recent NIU graduates and current students who were able to come to NIU because of your scholarship support. You will learn how professorships—secured with your help—attract and retain the best faculty and why that makes a difference to students and our college. We highlight two of our outstanding programs—professional sales and accountancy—so you can see how such legacy programs grow and prosper with strong financial commitment, as well as the time and talent of your service on the college’s many advisory boards. We highlight the continual contributions you make as guests in our classes, sponsors of student classroom projects, speakers for student organizations, participants in internship programs, and even recruiters of our graduates.

Throughout this magazine, you will also see how the NIU College of Business lives its positioning statement—*Where the Classroom Meets the Business World*—and how you help us deliver on that promise. As we created this publication, I saw the many ways our college has grown because of your involvement with us. We are the college we are today because of you. Thank you!

The NIU College of Business is poised to leverage its great faculty, strong students, innovative programs, and unique relationships with the business community to truly position us as an international force in business education. You helped us get to this point, and I hope we can count on you again. As our story "A Wise Investment" explains, the college needs to secure its own resources to build its future. We rely on endowment as well as private and corporate program funding for all of the successes you will read about in this issue of *NIU Business*. The next great academic program, the next great faculty member, the next great scholarship student depends completely on your help. Help us shape the future today by making a profound impact in the lives of our students, the value of your degree, education. Indeed, the world.

Denise D. Schoenbachler, Dean
NIU College of Business

*Where the Classroom Meets the Business World*
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Produced by the Northern Illinois University Offices of Publications and Document Services.

Printed by the authority of the State of Illinois.
www.niu.edu 6/09 45M 44397

NIU Business is published on an annual basis.

Postmaster, send address changes to:
Office of the Dean
College of Business
Northern Illinois University
1425 W. Lincoln Hwy.
DeKalb, IL  60115-2828

If the students and alumni of an academic institution could personify a “can do” spirit, they would surely call NIU their alma mater. NIU business students are as pragmatic and determined as they are intelligent and creative. They rise to the occasion—through difficulties and successes—and they remain authentic in the process. Here are some examples of the great personal effort and the scholarship programs that allow so many NIU learners to transform not only their future potential, but also the entire course of their lives.
When I was 15 years old, my mother had the painful task of telling me that if I wanted to go to college, I would have to get there on my own. I am one of seven children in a family with significant financial obstacles. While my parents fully supported my decision to go to school, they didn’t have the means to pay for it—but would have in a heartbeat if they could. Instead I took the best advice I ever received from them and began to “save my nickels.”

From that point forward, I began searching for schools in Illinois, knowing I wanted to major in marketing and minor in Spanish. I learned that the business program at Northern Illinois University was ranked nationally among the top business schools, so I visited campus. Everyone was so welcoming and nice, and the newly developed Barsema Hall facility was beautiful. It turned out that deciding where to go was not difficult.

The challenge of paying for school would not be so easy, but I was not going to let the issue of money stand in my way. I had to prove something to myself and to others. I knew that if I wanted to make something of my life, I had to put myself through college. I knew that I could graduate with honors and make the most out of the university experience. This is what drove me, and so along with my academics, I held five jobs while in high school and played on three sports teams. I served meals to hospital patients, made gift baskets at a gift shop, and managed food service at a local pool. At the same time, I applied for scholarships and wrote countless essays describing my community service, athletics and school activities, and my G.P.A. I filled out at least five applications every day. In total, I had applied for more than 1,000 scholarships, both locally and nationally. To my surprise, I received 13 scholarships. So with the money I had saved from my jobs and the scholarships, I went through four years at NIU. But the reality is that these awards changed my life.

NIU has made me stronger, more mature, and a better person. Through all of my jobs, activities, clubs, and classes, I learned the importance of education. And because of my scholarships, I also experienced many life-changing opportunities. Campus Crusade for Christ, a Christian-based student group, allowed me to assist the American Red Cross in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. I want to share with you an incident that occurred while I was in Louisiana, helping to gut a house about one month after the hurricane hit. To our understanding, the family had fled before it hit and had yet to return to their home. We were told to salvage anything that we thought might have some sentimental value. As I walked to the shed to place a ceramic figure that I had found and saved for the owners, the woman who lived there walked up to me. It was the first time she had seen her home since the tragedy. She started crying as she took the figurine out of my hands and thanked me, saying that this was the one thing she had hoped was not gone. She whispered in my ear that I was an angel sent from heaven. Experiences like this have had such a huge impact on the way I view the world.

Through the college’s social entrepreneurship course, I also received the opportunity to learn about the impact of microfinance on the world’s poor. It is astounding to know that with only $50 an entrepreneur can begin to lift their family out of poverty, and in November 2007, I saw that first hand. Stacey and Dennis Barsema generously sponsored our class trip to Guadalajara, Mexico, to meet with the clients of Opportunity International, a non-profit microfinance organization. This trip made me realize that I do not even deserve to be called hard working. The effort and strength given every day by these poor people have made me so much more grateful for everything I have been given in my life.

When I received the Wesley J. Welch Memorial Award from the Department of Marketing, I realized that not only did I get this community service award for my efforts to serve the less fortunate, but also because NIU gave me the tools and opportunities to live the life I always wanted. Because of my extreme family circumstances, I had also received an award from the Department of Marketing and Professor Geoff Gordon, who directs the college’s OTA/ Off the Record Marketing Research Program. The many organizations I had been involved with—such as serving on the Executive Board for the American Marketing Association, and participating in the study abroad program in Dublin—allowed me to utilize the skills and creativity that I developed at Northern Illinois University.

I am so grateful for the endless opportunities given to me at NIU’s College of Business, none of which I would have experienced were it not for the generosity of my scholarship investors, all of whom I greatly respect. Without them I wouldn’t be where I am today, and I wouldn’t have learned how capable I am of accomplishing anything I put my heart into. I want to describe to my scholarship investors what has so far been the best day of my life. The day I graduated (with honors) from NIU’s College of Business, I stopped and looked around campus and started to cry. At that moment, although I had spent my entire life savings to attend Northern, I truly felt that it was the best investment I had ever made. Thanks to the awards I received—and my own hard work—I graduated with only two loans to repay! When I look back on that day when I was 15 . . . I smile, and think about how I made it.
In 1998, the NIU Executive Club established a scholarship fund to help attract and recruit high school seniors interested in business to the NIU College of Business. Co-founders Bob Adducci (B.S. Management 1980) and David Wilson (B.S. Marketing 1980) envisioned awarding that first scholarship to someone who not only was an extraordinary student and an exceptional person, but someone who also would set a high standard of achievement for future candidates. Mission accomplished!

Monica Wallace (B.S. Management 2002) has more than delivered on the promise and potential of that inaugural scholarship award. Monica was the salutatorian at her high school graduation. At the NIU College of Business she graduated summa cum laude and first in her class after three-and-one-half years. She continued her education at the University of Iowa, graduating first in her class in the College of Public Health’s Department of Health, Management and Policy program and with distinction from the College of Law in an accelerated joint degree program in 2006. Today, Monica is a second-year attorney in the Health Law Department at Chicago-based McDermott, Will & Emery LLP, counseling clients in every major sector of the health care industry on regulatory issues and business transactions.

How and why did this classic overachiever decide to attend NIU?

While a senior at Burlington Central High School in Burlington, Illinois, Monica received scholarship offers from the University of Illinois, University of Iowa, and Illinois Wesleyan University, among many others. Through campus recruiters, she learned about a new scholarship available from the Northern Illinois University Executive Club and subsequently met with Lynn Neeley, professor of management, and members of the Office of the Dean. What immediately sparked her interest in NIU’s business school wasn’t the prospect of a full scholarship—it was the promise of all the supplemental support from a network of alumni who genuinely wanted to help incoming students advance as far and as fast in their careers as possible. For Monica, it wasn’t about the money; it was about the richness and potential value of her collegiate experience. The die was cast for Northern.

Shortly after accepting the scholarship award, Monica met the co-founders of the Executive Club over lunch at the popular Catch 35 in downtown Chicago. Joining the group was Monica’s mother, Linda, who teaches in the Health Science Program at Bartlett High School and now serves on the Board of Directors of Sherman Hospital in Elgin, Illinois. It was Linda who inspired Monica to pursue a career in the health care industry and instilled the core values that Monica holds dear.

Based on that wide-ranging luncheon conversation, Monica immediately knew that she had made the right decision in selecting the NIU College of Business. NIU Executive Club co-founders Bob Adducci and Dave Wilson had done well in business for themselves and felt great about their educational experience and ties to NIU. They wanted to help students and give back to the university in some very specific ways—not only through a scholarship fund but also through active involvement with student scholars.

Reflecting on those initial conversations, Monica believes that NIU has more than delivered on its promise. Through the Executive Club, she gained opportunities for summer internships, participated in the club’s business and social activities, and met numerous business alumni, many of whom she considers close friends today. Her educational experiences inside and outside of the classroom also were superb. She specifically cited the high degree of interaction with NIU business professors (she never had a class taught by a teaching assistant), a common practice at other large universities), and she fondly recalled a faculty-led, month-long, four-country business trip to Europe during her junior year.

One of the lessons that Monica learned from her parents early on in life is the importance of volunteering and giving back. Monica herself is giving back to the NIU Executive Club, her community, and her firm in countless ways. She is a board member of the Executive Club, serves on the Scholarship Committee, and is personally involved in pitching to the best and brightest candidates the value of an NIU College of Business education. She also somehow finds the time in a demanding monthly work schedule to do campus recruiting for McDermott, Will & Emery LLP, participate in a Partners in Reading program through the Chicago Public School System, and plan her upcoming September wedding.

Somewhat too, later this year, Monica will be helping the Executive Club plan and execute its annual job shadowing program for COB students. There is no question that this consummate overachiever will handle that well, with her characteristic enthusiasm and cheerful smile.

Pay for Performance
The Right Stuff and the Right Incentives

Big Ten universities as well as private and public institutions from across the nation have been recruiting from the excellent high schools in the northern Illinois area for nearly 30 years. Yet despite the current economic climate, competition for the best and brightest students shows no sign of letting up.

In 2006, NIU College of Business dean Denise Schoenbachler created the Dean's Scholars program, which is designed to attract top-level students who display the potential to reach a high degree of achievement in their university studies. The program was created with the help of finance professor Bob Miller, who serves as the faculty advisor.

Each year, Miller invites into the program high school seniors who have been accepted by NIU with an ACT of 30 or higher and who have indicated business as their major. Typically, these bright students have high expectations of both their academic experience and themselves. They expect a variety of challenging learning opportunities, and they also expect to perform well. The Dean's Scholars program is structured in such a way as to meet both of those expectations. The program takes a “pay for performance” approach. Every Dean's Scholar has the potential to receive $25,000 over four years, with scholarship monies tied to annual performance as follows: $3,000 freshman year, based upon an ACT of 30 or higher; $5,000 sophomore year, based upon a freshman year G.P.A. of 3.40; $7,000 junior year, based upon a sophomore year G.P.A. of 3.50; and $10,000 senior year, based upon a junior year G.P.A. of 3.60.

When they first enter the program as freshmen, the Dean's Scholars enroll into an exclusive section of an introduction to business course that is taught by Professor Miller. The class is held in a conference room setting and provides an overview of all business areas. Each week, the students bring to class and discuss two articles on business. The articles run the gamut of business disciplines, from finance, leadership, and business law to global commerce and interactive technologies, as examples. The scholars also receive priority housing in the university's Business Career House and are assigned a personal academic advisor, Director of Undergraduate Studies Lori Marcellus. Throughout their participation in the program, Dean's Scholars receive priority enrollment in all business classes. In their junior and senior years, they are given first priority to participate in an array of international experiences, and they also receive priority for internship assignments. For those scholars who are interested in the full rigor of the academic experience, they are afforded opportunities to work side by side with faculty on complex scholarly research projects. On the business side, the scholars are provided numerous opportunities to interact with accomplished business executives at a variety of NIU College of Business-hosted functions.

In its first year (2007), the Dean's Scholars program accepted two freshmen with ACT scores of 30 or higher. In 2008, that number increased fivefold to 10 freshmen with ACT scores of 30 or higher. In early 2009, the number nearly doubled again to 19 freshmen who met the criterion. Each of these students had applied at a number of universities across the country, including Iowa and U of I, most notably. When asked why they ultimately chose NIU over these other institutions, the students said that the strength of NIU's business school—coupled with the Dean's Scholars program—was the deciding factor for them. These scholars knew that they would be receiving an outstanding education as well as a personalized university experience. They also appreciated the fact that their acknowledgement and rewards would be earned and not handouts, and would therefore function much like the majority of performance compensation systems used in business.

Not surprisingly, business professionals who learn about this young program very much appreciate the pay for performance approach. It reinforces the knowledge that reward is earned and not a luxury. The Dean's Scholars program brings to the forefront the fact that an NIU business student is not only intelligent and creative, but also hardworking, dedicated, and able to hit the ground running.

The Dean's Scholars program ensures the recruitment and retention of the best and brightest from a variety of backgrounds, communities, and schools. The program deepens the quality level of the students who possess the ability and the character to succeed in the college's comprehensive programs. These students, during their academic tenure and after graduation, become exemplar stewards of the NIU College of Business academic experience.

~ Michelle De Jean
Distinguished Alumnus

Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer and Managing Director, Huron Consulting Group

Gary Burge began his professional career in 1976 when—upon graduating from NIU with a degree in accountancy and earning the C.P.A. credential—he accepted employment with Haskins & Sells (now Deloitte & Touche).

Burge has spent the majority of his 30-year career in senior financial positions in the telecommunications, cable television, and financial services industries, primarily with startup and early-stage growth companies. His business experience also includes managing mergers and acquisitions, information technology, and engineering functions. As Burge helped companies to progress from startup into the growth phase of their business cycles, he also acquired substantial experience raising capital in the debt and equity markets. Career highlights include private equity fundraising for three companies as well as taking three companies public. In addition to Huron and Deloitte, Burge has worked for Centel, Sprint, 360 Communications, PrimeCo Wireless, and Morningstar.

During the 2008 NIU College of Business Alumni Luncheon, Burge described values he had learned from his parents that he also saw in place within the NIU College of Business: commitment to others, leadership, and hard work. He considers NIU's business curriculum outstanding and shared that, in every day of his 30-year career, he has encountered a concept or theory that he could relate to his lessons as a student at NIU.

Burge is a member of the Financial Executives Institute and the Illinois C.P.A. Society. Along with receiving the 2008 NIU College of Business Distinguished Alumnus designation, Gary Burge had been recognized as the NIU Department of Accountancy Outstanding Alumnus in 2004-2005.

Rockford Area Distinguished Alumnus

Jeffrey P. Wallem, C.F.P.
(B.S. Management 1979)
Investment Advisor Representative
InterSecurities Inc.

With over 20 years of corporate and small business experience, Jeffrey Wallem focuses on investment management through long-term strategies. He also works with small business pension plans and assists holders of employee stock options in exercising and diversifying their holdings.

A graduate of both NIU and Northwestern University (M.B.A., Kellogg School of Management), Wallem is a certified financial planner (C.F.P.) and holds the following securities licenses: Series 6, Series 7, Series 24, and Series 63. In addition, he is an investment advisor representative, a registered representative of InterSecurities Inc., and is licensed for life insurance sales in Illinois.

Wallem is a past president of the NIU Rockford Club, and currently serves on both the Board of Directors and the Scholarship Committee. He serves on the NIU College of Business Dean’s Board of Executive Advisors and leads the curriculum committee. Wallem also holds leadership positions in Christ United Methodist Church and is an active member of Kiwanis.
Outstanding Young Alumnus
Senior Operations Manager, Tech and Telecom Group
OTA Off the Record Research

As senior operations manager for OTA Off the Record Research, Brian Gillet is responsible for creating and maintaining a structure within a globally dispersed group that scales for growth; helping research employees devote their time toward source development and client engagement; executing employee review and goal setting sessions; and developing a communications platform for the entire global group.

Gillet has been employed with the company since 2001. The positions he has held in the firm range from project manager for online research and associate editor for the Tech and Telecom Group to business development for the firm’s Lead Generation Group. As a business developer for the Lead Generation Group, Gillet defines and puts into practice a lead generation process to increase the quantity and quality of prospect meetings. Prior to working at OTA Off The Record Research, Gillet was employed by Richardson Electronics as a broadcast salesperson.

During the 2008 Alumni Luncheon, Gillet praised NIU business faculty and curriculum and cited his marketing research course as one of the many standout courses he took. In that course, he served on a student team that surveyed employees of a Fortune 500 firm and subsequently presented team recommendations to key executives within that Fortune 500 company.

One of the strongest memories Gillet has of his NIU College of Business experience is the mentoring he received from marketing professor Geoff Gordon. “When I was a student, and even now, Geoff would tell me to always give back more than I ever could receive. I carry this idea with me every day and make sure that I implement it on a daily basis.” Indeed, immediately upon graduation, Gillet and three of his NIU friends and classmates each chipped in $250 to fund a scholarship for outstanding NIU business students. As a newly minted graduate, Brian Gillet was also the engine behind the creation of a new NIU College of Business alumni group, the Young Professionals Network, for which he also serves as president.

Honorary Alumnus
Harry Wright
Retired Director
NIU College of Business M.B.A. Programs

Harry Wright began his career at NIU in 1971, after earning his B.A. degree in 1967 and his J.D. in 1970 from the University of Illinois. Over his 37-year tenure at NIU, Wright served in various roles including that of professor, associate dean, and program director. However, he is perhaps best remembered as a teacher, mentor, and friend to his many students.

Beginning as an instructor in the Department of Management, Wright taught business law; in 1973, he began teaching in the C.P.A. Review program. Wright authored the scripts for the law portion of Wiley’s C.P.A. Examination Review Audio Tapes, and over the years he taught numerous C.P.A. Review courses for NIU, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Arthur Andersen. He has frequently been invited to speak at a number of forums on various legal topics including contracts, bankruptcy, wills, trusts, and estates. Wright has made presentations to organizations such as the National Contract Managers Association, the National Association of Accountants, the Illinois Agricultural Leadership Foundation, the Illinois C.P.A. Society, the Association of Financial Planners, as well as countless businesses.

In 1988, Wright served as acting associate dean of the NIU College of Business, and from 1989 to 1995, he served as associate dean. In 1989, he was appointed director of the Executive M.B.A. program. He held this position and taught in the E.M.B.A. program until his retirement in 2008. Throughout his NIU career, Wright served on many university and college committees, most recently chairing the University Honors Committee.

Without a doubt, former students fondly remember Wright’s classroom lectures and the infamous “Herb Huskie” and “Ike Illini” stories. Wright’s passion for teaching is most evidenced by the numerous teaching awards he has received, among these, the Executive M.B.A. Golden Apple Award and the University Excellence in Teaching Award. During the 2008 Alumni Luncheon, he described NIU business alumni and students as the “difference-makers”: extremely bright, hardworking, good people who make a very real impact in business and in life. The NIU College of Business is proud to acknowledge another difference-maker: Harry Wright.
A stroll through Barsema Hall provides NIU business students and guests with any number of visual cues that the college is actively engaged with industry. Visits by executives are announced on a series of flat screen monitors positioned at the front and back entrances, and placed throughout the three-story atrium and the hallways. From just about anywhere in the building, NIU business students see the names, titles, and company affiliations of a minimum of four different visitors each week. That translates, over the course of a year, into more than 100 business executives who speak in the classroom. But, because of the many ways our classrooms merge with the business world, the number of weekly face-to-face interactions between business professionals and NIU business students is undoubtedly much higher than what the college is able to track.

“Since its inception in 1961, the very foundation of this college has always been its commitment to theory and practice. The college has a long-standing history of demonstrating that philosophy in many ways, but all of those ways rely on our strong relationships with the business community,” says Denise Schoenbachler, dean of the NIU College of Business. “We’re 60 miles from Chicago, a major business city in this country and increasingly an international city. We’re 30 miles from the many corporate parks that line countless Chicago suburbs. Not only are we in the same neighborhood with Fortune companies, mid-size and small businesses . . . we’re active partners with them.”

There’s substantial proof to this claim. On any given day, you’ll find the college involved with a number of activities linked to the business world. A small sample of this ranges from analyzing a business problem in an existing company, firm-specific student team projects, and executives speaking in the classroom, to e-mentoring activities and executive advisory board gatherings.

Executive Advisory Boards. The college’s Board of Executive Advisors (BOEA), which collaborates directly with the dean, is noteworthy on a number of levels. Consider that the BOEA has existed since 1979—a full 30 years before the world’s most influential accrediting body, AACSB International, began looking at the benefits of having executive advisory boards working with schools of commerce. But because of its ongoing commitment to narrow the gap between thinking and doing, the NIU College of Business has been well ahead on this idea. Formalized just 18 years after the college’s founding, the BOEA’s purpose, then and now, is to advise the dean on best business practices and on ways to incorporate those practices into learning situations for NIU business students. The 60 BOEA participants—executives of global, mid-size, and small firms—also make recommendations on improving, even innovating, college operations.

While most schools are now in the process of creating an advisory board to the dean, NIU’s business college has gone beyond forming a board at the top of the organization. Over the years, the college also has created advisory boards for each academic discipline, for several programmatic units, and for its alumni clubs. With more than eight executive boards, then, and more than 200 business executives participating, the college’s advisory boards prove to be incredibly powerful vehicles of collaboration that harness a world of business knowledge.

But tapping into that wealth of expertise is something that occurs beyond the top of the organization. It also occurs directly between business professionals, students, and faculty. Highlighted on the following pages are several examples of how the NIU College of Business has fully embraced this concept of collaboration.
M.B.A.—Building a Business Case. In its M.B.A. program, the college turns dated, textbook-based case studies on their head by requiring M.B.A. students to analyze and solve existing, real-stakes business issues. The students meet with company executives of a participating client firm, analyze the company’s situation, and, over the course of a semester, develop a business case that recommends a new product or service for the firm. By the end of the semester, the client receives lengthy, thorough, intense analysis and a series of actionable suggestions from the student teams. The students come away from the class with the potential to make a real impact on a firm’s bottom line and its future. Of no less significance, the students also come away with the experience of developing a fully articulated business plan, complete with market research, product/service research, competitive analysis, management plans, operations plans, financial plans, and target goals. That this project is, indeed, real-stakes is evidenced by the fact that the client provides the students with full access to the company’s financial records and full access to their client representative. Throughout the process, the students receive faculty guidance and instruction on all elements of business plan development. They also participate in a “challenge panel” review of their work, with critique provided during the review. The class culminates with the teams making formal presentations to a panel that consists of the business client, NIU business faculty, and two or three outside business executives who listen objectively on behalf of the client and who challenge the merit, soundness, and completeness of the students’ recommendations.

“We retained a consultant for bringing us through Round A of funding, who is using a lot of the information compiled by your students as a tool in creating the books we’re writing for the venture capital firms. All of the things you taught your students shined in their deliverables to us. The results from their work have proved to be invaluable to us as we enter this funding round.”

Eric Hines, GCIA, CISSP, formerly CEO and president, Applied Watch Technologies, which he has since sold for $5 million

Executives in Residence. Each semester, the boardroom comes into the classroom when CEOs, presidents, and senior vice presidents provide guest lectures. Oftentimes the guest lectures are less a formal presentation of fact and more a conversation of discovery between college students and very worldly, as well as accomplished, executives. Some of the conversations have ranged from global marketing strategies to social entrepreneurship and the culture of giving back. But no matter the topic, the aim for these executives is to provide the students with a co-pilot’s seat to the 35,000-ft. view of an organization’s strategy. Out of necessity, those strategies vary based upon the size/type of organization, its industry, and a host of other factors. Consider that some of the visiting executives are responsible for charting a course for large conglomerations, such as James Marino (B.S. Marketing 1972), Alberto Culver president and CEO. Others—such as Marc Werner (B.S. Accountancy
Experiential Learning Center (ELC). The college’s ELC connects teams of NIU students with organizations to tackle existing business issues. While more schools are in the process of creating experiential learning models like this, NIU’s ELC has been in place since 2000. Moreover, the college is one of the first—and remains one of the few—in the country to offer this type of immersive learning situation to undergraduates. Over the course of 16 weeks, teams of students from different majors collaborate and learn from each other as they take on the role of consultants and address a real-world business problem. This real-stakes challenge is always a non-mission critical business issue but often impacts the client organization in multiple areas. Throughout the effort, the students are assisted by an organizational sponsor and guided by a faculty coach. Along with applying a project methodology to each client problem, the students also utilize the business skills and theories they learn in the classroom as well as “street lessons” they learn onsite from the business client. To date, more than 350 NIU students have participated in the ELC program. They have analyzed more than 68 projects—ranging from software evaluation to emerging market analysis, among many others—for 38 sponsoring organizations.

1978), founder of Nature’s Sleep—envision the organization’s future from an entrepreneurial perspective. But what all the Executives in Residence have in common is the ability to think big, to translate ideas into action, to achieve goals, and to learn. Perhaps more importantly to the speakers themselves, they all share a genuine desire to talk candidly with the students about roads travelled, roads envisioned, and the critically important lessons learned.
E-mentoring. A network of mentors is an invaluable tool for business people to use throughout their careers. And what experienced business professionals have always known, research backs up. Early on, the college’s Department of Management had the foresight to include such mentor networks into the learning process. So with the expertise of working professionals literally at their fingertips, students in one management course are learning how to build—and actually building—a network of contacts before they even graduate. As part of the department’s organizational behavior course, students gain exposure to business relationships electronically, through e-mentoring activities that are incorporated into the course. Along with the theoretical aspects of the class, the e-mentoring component directly engages students with business professionals (more than 30 over the course of the semester) who then help them understand how the business concepts discussed in class can play themselves out in existing firms. The mentors also share challenges they’ve faced and describe how they’ve chosen to handle various workplace issues. Beyond discussion of business processes and practices, the e-mentoring program creates authentic relationships between the students and the professionals, many of whom are NIU Department of Management alumni. As is often the case, opportunities result from these mentoring relationships, both in the near term and over time. At least one case in point: e-mentors made available internship positions for two students whom they mentored through the course.

“Sometimes you make mistakes you could have avoided making,” said Robert Rothkopf (B.S. Management, M.S. Management), who is now the president and CEO of Semblex, a $60-million manufacturing company. “I think everybody needs a mentor, whether it’s good parents, a pastor or a good friend.”

e-excerpt from Daily Chronicle article on NIU’s e-mentoring effort, “Mentors offer support, guidance to others.”

Perhaps now more than ever before, no one can go it alone. Not only is change exponential, but as the economic shift indicates, it can also be chaotic. Such uncertainty demands that academia and businesses be nimble . . . that they not only seize opportunity but that they actively create opportunity. By melding academic rigor and business realities, the college strives to create opportunities for its stakeholders—particularly, the students—to shape and realize a better future . . . even in the face of volatile change.

“Where the Classroom Meets the Business World” is not just the college’s brand statement. This has been, and remains, the very core of the NIU College of Business experience.

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“The ELC presents a tremendous opportunity to have a fresh set of eyes on our business problems. It’s a great chance to build a foundation of young leaders in our organization. It’s extremely energizing for all those involved. We continue to get value and new ideas necessary to appeal to our customers and employees.”

Chris Millington, chief technology officer, McDonald’s Corporation
Great business schools are measured, in large part, by the long-term excellence of their academic programs. They increase the marketplace prestige of the degree itself and, in turn, the career potential of the alumni who hold the degree. But how do some universities earn this cachet when other universities don’t? While endowments factor heavily into an institution’s perceived marketplace value, the untold story is the relationship between a college’s faculty and the college’s culture or DNA. This relationship, which is unique to each institution, significantly impacts the faculty’s ability to create—and, more importantly, to sustain—outstanding programs.

Since the college’s founding in 1961, its DNA compels the merging of academic theory with actual business implementation. This is the core of the NIU business culture. This is what fosters collaborative “learning and doing” on multiple dimensions: students, faculty, business professionals, institutions, organizations, marketplace. In this issue and over the years, we’ve shared the many ways in which our classrooms and the larger business world intersect...from immersive real-stakes learning situations, executives in residence, and advisory boards in existence for 30 years, to the college’s strategy process now in its 15th year. Such a highly flexible, knowledge-rich, and knowledge-sharing environment like this enables our faculty to innovate and build outstanding programs that are well respected for years and far beyond our borders. These esteemed programs and activities range from the college’s finance research excellence, Experiential Learning Center, and M.B.A. programs, to an emerging and comprehensive focus on the field of entrepreneurship and certificate programs in leadership, among many others. And no conversation on this topic would be complete without acknowledging the college’s longest standing programs of renown: its accountancy and sales programs.

The following vignettes present the story of how both of these programs embody the NIU business culture. But it is important to recognize that the unifying thread of “thinking and doing” goes beyond any college program or department. Instead, it reflects the DNA of the NIU business college and the NIU business faculty body...an 80-person group of outstanding scholar-teachers that the named professors pictured in this story are honored to represent.
The road to prominence for the college’s Department of Accountancy was not an express lane.

In fact, back in the early 1960s, when the infant program was struggling to get on the map, that path included many a side trip. Back then none of those jaunts led to nationally prominent accounting firms or Fortune 500 corporations. Instead, they were much more likely to be stopovers at meetings of local chapters of the Illinois C.P.A. Society or the Financial Executive Institute.

“We all spent an awful lot of nights away from home during those early years, going out and speaking to chapters of those groups throughout Illinois,” says Don Kieso, who joined the department one year after its inception and retired in 1992. “We worked to get into Chicago, but we gave speeches anywhere people asked us to speak.”

It was grueling, Kieso recalls, but he and the rest of the faculty—all six of them at that time—shared the belief that to truly serve the profession they needed to know the practitioners, and so they took to the meeting circuit.

Denise Schoenbachler, dean of the college, says that the accountancy program was a trailblazer for the college.

“Intuitively, our faculty at that time—and all of our faculty since then—lived the spirit of our brand statement, ‘Where the classroom meets the business world.’ For decades, the college’s accountancy program has been a great example of this,” she says. “The college realized years ago that the relationships our faculty develop, the contacts they make are an important part of what make us so well-respected in so many areas. Accountancy is a perfect illustration of how those relationships made that program great.”

That dedication to spreading the word about the program, combined with an
Relationships pay dividends for accountancy

Some might look at the web of relationships that the NIU Department of Accountancy has built with prestigious C.P.A. firms, Fortune 500 companies, and professional organizations and say, “That’s nice, But what’s in it for the students?”

Quite a lot, actually, and for many students it doesn’t take long to learn that.

For instance, a new student attending his or her first Meet the Firm Night or Meet the Intern Night would quickly notice the presence of not only all of the Big Four firms, but also an entire collection of smaller (but still prestigious) C.P.A. firms anxious to meet them—as well as representatives from companies such as Caterpillar, Sears, John Deere, Illinois Tool Works, Kraft, and other household names.

Relationships with many of those companies have been groomed over a period of decades, with some hiring NIU interns and graduates since the 1960s, returning year after year due to the quality of the students they find.

All of those companies recruit NIU students year after year because they know that they graduate with a keen understanding of the current workings of the business world, not outdated notions from a textbook. That knowledge is the result of frequent guest lectures by working professionals (often alumni) who are invited in to share what they know and demonstrate for students how theory is being put into practice.

“Interns and graduates that come to us from other schools usually haven’t had those kinds of opportunities,” says Lance Smith (B.S. Accountancy 1984), a partner with Ernst & Young. Smith has returned often to the NIU College of Business to speak to classes and to help recruit graduates to the firm. “We know that when we recruit a student from NIU they have a good working knowledge of business and accounting, and they aren’t afraid to roll up their sleeves. They hit the ground running.”

Another way the department’s massive Rolodex of contacts helps keep the program relevant is through the NIU Accountancy Advisory Council. Formed more than 20 years ago, that body is populated by alumni representing accounting firms and corporations who offer advice and insight about ways the program may want to alter its curriculum to keep it relevant.

“We are constantly asking our board of advisors if our curriculum is headed in the right direction,” says John Simon, who formally retired from the faculty after 27 years in 2000, but has continued teaching as a professor emeritus ever since. “For example, a few years ago, members of the advisory board noted a need for new accountants entering the field to be better equipped to take on leadership roles. The faculty reviewed the curriculum and identified areas to incorporate leadership training. Listening to them helps us stay ahead of the curve.”

Those relationships also pay more tangible dividends. Sometimes those dividends take the form of brick and mortar (like KPMG’s naming of the Department of Accountancy Suite in Barsema Hall) or named professorships. Currently there are 15 named (non-endowed) professorships in the college, many in accountancy, with sponsors offsetting a portion of those salaries to help the college recruit and retain some of the best minds.
extraordinary group of professors who excelled in the classroom and at writing text books (many of which became bestsellers), along with the publicity generated by the consistently excellent performance of NIU graduates on the C.P.A. exam, helped boost the NIU College of Business to prominence in the accounting world by the 1970s. To this day the program remains part of any conversation about top accountancy programs in the nation.

As it approaches its 50th anniversary, the program remains true to its roots. Professors still make the rounds, often visiting the same organizations their predecessors visited in the 1960s, sometimes even visiting the same chapters. However, today they are just as likely to be extending their contacts to groups like the Educator’s Advisor Panel serving the Comptroller General of the United States (Don Tidrick), working as an educational consultant to KPMG (Pam Smith), or serving on the board of directors for the Illinois C.P.A. Society (Debra Hopkins).

“We remain committed to keeping in touch with accounting organizations throughout our region. However, these days we also have strong relationships with the big accounting firms in Chicago, in major corporations at the state and national level of accounting organizations,” says Jim Young, chair of the department.

So strong is the college’s commitment to sustaining relationships with industry, that anyone with hopes of teaching accounting at NIU had better have an appreciation for the importance of building such relationships, Young says. “The majority of faculty in the college worked in industry before they became professors. And faculty in accountancy are evaluated on their commitment to develop relationships with professional organizations, just like we assess their teaching, research, and service activities.”

Such a policy may seem like common sense, but it is unique enough that when the world’s most highly prestigious accreditation body—the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business—evaluated the program in 2006, they identified the professional interaction as one of the program’s most unique aspects. Indeed, they cited it as a best practice, the depth of which is virtually unrivaled by any other college or university in the nation.

While such contacts help improve the profile of the program, that is only a small part of the value that those relationships yield, says Greg Carnes, who was chair of the department from 1999 until 2005.
Carnes took over the program as it reached a crossroads. The generation of professors who had brought the department to national prominence was retiring. At that same time, the accounting field was in the midst of tremendous upheaval, adjusting to the new rules and regulations of the post-Enron era and adopting new technologies.

“What allowed us to successfully respond to the tremendous changes in the industry in the mid-to-late 1990s was our connection to the profession,” says Carnes, who currently holds an endowed chair at North Alabama State, where he splits time between teaching and helping set strategic direction for the business school. “Our faculty were right there in the front lines with tax groups, financial accounting groups and other professional organizations, and they knew what was coming down the road. We weren’t caught by surprise.”

It is an attitude that Carnes is encouraging North Alabama State to adopt, and one he wishes other accountancy programs would embrace. Sadly, he says, few seem to see the value.

“A lot of programs have moved away from cultivating relationships with accounting professionals,” says Carnes. “That’s a shame, because I believe a lot of faculty would love to work somewhere that places a priority on those relationships. Not only is NIU’s accountancy program one of the few that does so, but the entire NIU business college places strong emphasis on academia–industry collaboration.”

That is not likely to change any time soon. “Interaction with the profession continues to influence the type of professors we recruit and hire to this day,” says Young, chair of the department. “We place a premium on people who have a commitment to engage with professionals and who have actually worked in the field.”

For Schoenbachler, that type of selectivity is just fine and aligned with the overall college philosophy. “There’s an old saying that you are judged by the company you keep. Well, we are decidedly proud of the company kept by all of our departments,” Schoenbachler said. “Accountancy is just one example of how building strong relationships with business professionals enhances the value of an NIU business degree, and that is our ongoing focus across the board.”
Reputation Matters

For professors in NIU’s Professional Sales Program, the surest sign of a new academic year isn’t the change of seasons, but rather when their phone starts ringing with the request, “When do I get my 450 kids?”

The question refers to students enrolled in Marketing 450, the capstone of the Professional Sales Program in the NIU College of Business Department of Marketing. Since its inception, the program has earned a reputation as one of the best in the country at preparing students for careers in business-to-business sales. Each year, students in Marketing 450 take internships with some of the biggest companies in the nation, putting to work skills they have learned in a grueling and unique program.

“Marketing 450 became a brand,” says Dan Weilbaker, the McKesson Pharmaceutical Group professor of sales, who directs the program. “The companies that we have worked with for years have learned that they can expect excellence from students in that class and they can’t wait to meet them.”

As a marketing professor herself, Dean Denise Schoenbachler understands the value that an outstanding brand can generate for the college, particularly one that reinforces the college’s reputation as a place where real-world learning is paramount.

“Without a doubt it’s a program that brings the business world and the classroom together,” says Schoenbachler. “It is one of those high profile programs that reflect very well on the college as a whole, and we are proud to claim it as our own.”

The roster of companies that recruit out of the program reads like a Who’s Who of midwestern businesses: Enterprise Rent-a-Car, McKesson Pharmaceutical, United Parcel Service, United Airlines, Sherwin-Williams, and Eli Lilly, just to name a few. More importantly, says Weilbaker, those companies don’t just come to campus to recruit, they are also active contributors to the program’s success.

“Many of those companies are members of our Sales Advisory Board [a program-specific board modeled after the college-level advisory board, which was created 30 years ago], a group of sales professionals that are our reality check,” Weilbaker explains. “They help us ensure that our curriculum is up to date and that we continue to graduate students who are prepared to excel.”

The value of that group can hardly be overstated, says Rick Ridnour, the Enterprise-Rent-a-Car professor of sales, who has been one of the lead faculty in the program since he arrived at NIU in 1988.

“We fully embrace the college brand, ‘Where the classroom meets the business world,’” says Ridnour. “Our business partners are an important part of that, and our relationships with them form one of our greatest strengths.”

The Sales Advisory Board was much smaller and less organized when Weilbaker arrived in 1992. Back then there were fewer than 10 companies represented. Even getting a quorum at meetings was difficult. The strategy to remedy the problem was to grow the group and then show some results. It worked. Today the group has grown to about 40 members, with nearly half of them representing Fortune 500 companies.

Innovations:

One of the ways that NIU’s Professional Sales Program has built its reputation is by staying out in front of the pack, showing a willingness to innovate:

• Early adopter. The NIU College of Business was one of the very first in the nation to develop a program devoted to professional sales.

• Seal of approval. The NIU Professional Sales Program was the first collegiate program in the nation to be certified by the Professional Society for Sales and Marketing Training.

• Book it. The program is currently home to the only scholarly journal devoted to sales. The Journal of Selling and Major Account Management focuses on collaboration between practitioners and academics for the advancement and professionalization of the field.

• Going global. NIU claims one of the only study abroad programs devoted to exposing students to the complexity of selling in an international marketplace. Past programs have included trips to (and hosted groups from) Ireland and Austria.

• Advisory Board. The program was one of the first to recruit an advisory board, and it remains a model for such interactions.

• Fore! While other programs have adopted the idea of teaching the etiquette of doing business on the golf course, the idea was first teed up at NIU.
"I’ve noticed that graduates of the program are very good at socializing with potential employers, much more so than typical college students. They are much more at ease and confident."

Rick Gunther, senior vice president for sales, Surepayroll, Inc.

Many of the individuals sitting on the board today are alumni of the program, but it isn’t just love for their alma mater that brings them back. In many cases, their companies long ago recognized the quality of the program and now have a vested interest in perpetuating its success.

“The students who come to us from NIU understand what sales, and business, is about,” says Drew Butts, group human resources manager for Enterprise, who has been recruiting NIU sales students for eight years. “They know that sales isn’t just about closing the deal, but about making introductions, building relationships, fact finding, research—and then closing the sale.”

The company likes NIU students so much that nearly one third of the 90 interns Butts hired last year (out of a pool of 700 applicants) came from the NIU Professional Sales Program. Butts hopes that many of those interns choose to start their career at Enterprise after they graduate. Several alumni who have followed that path in the past are already in the management ranks with the company, he says.

The experience has been the same at McKesson Pharmaceutical, which began recruiting from the program about five years ago when company leadership realized that much of its sales force was nearing retirement age and that they needed to replenish its ranks.

“We ran ads, but many of the people we were interviewing didn’t have the consultative selling skills we look for,” explains Larry Secrest, vice president and general manager for the company’s Chicago and Michigan Region. “However, an hour into my first conversation with Dan and Rick, I knew that the Professional Sales Program would be a great match for us. I knew that they got it.”

A few years later, that first impression has proven true, Secrest says. “The people we have hired from NIU are replacing people with decades of experience, but our customers are excited to work with them. They are smart, they know how to build relationships, and they know how to get things done.”
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Faculty pictured in photos:

Dan Weilbaker, McKesson Pharmaceutical Group Professor of Sales
Rick Ridnour, Professor, Enterprise Rent-A-Car Professor of Sales
Chih-Chen Lee, Associate Professor, Michael and Patricia Strachan Professor
Kate Mantzke, Associate Professor, Kieso Professor
Debra Zahay, Assistant Professor, Acxiom Corporation Professor of Interactive Marketing
Doug Clinton, Professor, Alta Via Consulting Professor, Burge Family Faculty Fellow
Natalie Churyk, Associate Professor, Caterpillar Professor
Jim Young, Associate Professor, Caterpillar Professor
Don Tidrick, Professor, Deloitte Professor
Pam Smith, Professor, KPMG Professor
Rebecca Shortridge, Associate Professor, Gaylen and Joanne Larson Professor
Geoff Gordon, OTA/Off The Record Research Professor of Investment Research
Nancy Russo, Professor, Pavlovic Professor of Information Systems
Dave Sinason, Professor, PricewaterhouseCoopers Professor
Charles Downing, Wal-Mart Professor in Enterprise Technology Innovation

Secrest was so taken with the program that he jumped at a chance to sit on the advisory board, and representatives from McKesson can be found on campus contributing their expertise to the program on a regular basis.

“Our students benefit from that type of involvement nearly every day, and it enriches the quality of the education they receive,” says Weilbaker, explaining that sales professionals regularly attend Meet the Firm Nights, conduct mock interviews, and speak to classes about what really goes on in business. While such activities have become an integral part of almost every program in the NIU College of Business, the Professional Sales Program takes things to a higher level with events like:

• A day on the links. Each fall, companies vie to sponsor foursomes at the program’s annual golf outing, where students spend the morning learning how to turn a day on the links into a sales meeting, and then put those skills to work, spending the afternoon on the course with sales professionals.

• A night on the lanes. Participating companies sponsor a night of bowling, where students get the opportunity to interact with professionals in a social situation and practice their networking skills.

• Dinner and a lesson. On a more formal note, each year the program recruits a company to host a dinner where students are taught the finer points of dining out with a client, and then put their new skills to work sharing a meal with sales professionals.

Those who sign on to the advisory board also agree to mentor students. That commitment includes at least one phone call per semester to speak in depth with a student about life in the field. Some even invite students to tag along with them for a day—to see what working in sales is really like.

All of those interactions have an academic purpose, says Weilbaker, but the real payoff is in the greater level of self assurance that students develop in dealing with professionals.

“I’ve noticed that graduates of the program are very good at socializing with potential employers, much more so than typical college students. They are much more at ease and confident,” said Rick Gunther, the senior vice president for sales at Surepayroll, Inc., who has hired many graduates of the program. “Beyond that, they come to us with solid business skills—good computer skills, and written and verbal skills that are well above average.”

Many of the companies that share their time and expertise with the program are also generous with financial support. A corporate partnership program created in 2005 enables companies to sponsor the program at various levels. In return they receive first dibs on attendance at departmental events, outings, and speaking engagements.

The money allows the program to retain top-flight faculty (both Weilbaker and Ridnour hold named professorships, supported by McKesson Pharmaceutical and Enterprise Rent-a-Car, respectively) and to keep its state-of-the-art technology up to date. That technology includes a fully functioning call center to teach students about inside sales, a mock office equipped with video cameras where students role-play sales calls, and laptops loaded with the latest contact management software, which are issued to all Marketing 450 students.

The combination of business acumen, selling skills, interpersonal skills, and technological expertise that students leave with have allowed the program to remain a popular stop on the recruiting trail, despite tough economic times.

“We’re a good source of hungry young graduates who come out of school equipped to quickly excel and contribute to the success of a business more quickly,” says Ridnour. “And a lot of those companies find that hiring one of our grads is a good long-term investment. They aren’t equipped just to succeed in sales, but are well-rounded business people and many of them quickly move into management positions.”

In summary, the Professional Sales Program at NIU College of Business is a model of how to create a dynamic and successful sales education program, using real-world involvement and financial support to enrich the educational experience and prepare graduates for success in the field.
Nationally ranked for a Third Consecutive Year!

Since its inception in 2006, BusinessWeek's 2009 ranking of the best undergraduate business schools continues to place the NIU business college within an elite group of b-schools nationwide.

NIU’s ranking on BusinessWeek’s 2009 listing of Best Undergraduate Business Schools – 73

- Number of AACSB accredited B-Schools worldwide – 560
- Number of AACSB schools invited to participate in the BusinessWeek rankings – 137
- Number of schools that made the rankings of Best Business Schools – 101

High Marks from NIU Students

“The professors invite CEOs, presidents and high-level executives into the classroom to talk about the business world. Most of the professors have real-world experience that is brought into the classroom. The dean provides us with many opportunities to meet and talk with executives. Professors even look over your resumes, find jobs and even offer tips in finding jobs. I am proud to say that I was educated by the best at Northern Illinois University.”

“The access to business contacts is extensive. I interact with alumni on a weekly basis and have opportunities to tour businesses regularly. Professors are also well connected in the Chicago business arena and are generally coming to teach with several years of real business experience to complement their educational accomplishments.”

“The teachers in the business program are all very knowledgeable. They are available during office hours and can be very helpful and approachable.”

“Every time I walk into the NIU College of Business I feel like I am part of a big family. I feel really welcomed. The classroom sizes are not too small and not too big. I feel like all of the professors are very approachable and willing to help out with everything. Most of our classes are also taught by actual professors and not TAs or GAs. We get that one-on-one interaction with someone who has expertise in the field of business. Some professors also have worked in the corporate world before teaching, so they have a lot of real-life experiences to pass onto the students.”
NIU College of Business: A Wise Investment

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. ~ Norman MacEwan

During a time of huge economic uncertainty, choosing where and how to invest in the future is critical. By the same token, turbulent times require boldness of vision in order to make a meaningful impact. Very rarely, if ever, is this achieved alone. Getting there takes individuals who think and work together toward a compelling, shared purpose.

One such compelling purpose: strengthening the resources that will allow NIU's College of Business to continue to provide the exemplary academic experience that it does and to continue the process of becoming a nationally recognized, world-class academic institution that bridges the gap between thinking and doing, between envisioning and realizing.

In today's difficult environment, many employees are, or will be, returning to the university to expand their skill set. Their goal is immediate and marked with urgency. They seek to increase their competitive advantage in an extremely tight labor market. Traditional students are no less serious about realizing their potential. High school graduates enroll in NIU's business college for the same reasons as returning professionals. They enroll because of the college's outstanding reputation for combining academic rigor with real-world application. As importantly, students know that the faculty and staff at NIU's business college will go the distance to help dedicated students graduate with the ability to understand difficult concepts, to think creatively, and to hit the ground running in a very tough business environment.

While NIU remains resolute in its commitment to provide a transformative educational experience for every willing student, state funding for higher education has wavered. State funding now represents less than 30 percent of NIU's budget. Worse still, it is declining each year, with pocketbooks tightening everywhere. It is within the context of these harsh economic times that endowment has been redefined. It can no longer be viewed as synonymous with Ivy League schools or as a luxury. Endowment has, in fact, become the financial bedrock of every institution of higher learning, public and private. It is also one of the key measures, among others, of a university's vibrancy, potential, and perceived market value as determined by extremely powerful and widely influential national rankings.

In a recent State of the University address, NIU President John Peters described NIU's culture:

The single most amazing thing I've discovered about NIU is that its greatest triumphs come out of a culture that encourages new ideas and rewards innovation. Our belief in the power of opportunity is visible everywhere, from the composition of our student body to the often-unexpected pockets of world-class expertise in scholarly and artistic endeavors. As we finish this decade, I see continuing success . . . if we continue to invest in people and ideas . . . and if we provide opportunity.

Increasing opportunities for the NIU College of Business community requires a much larger endowment. For every NIU stakeholder—from potential students, existing students, and faculty, to alumni and treasured friends—the payback of a strong endowment is an educational experience that: remains transformative even in the face of a rapidly changing and often chaotic environment; appreciates significantly in terms of its value-add; and carries genuine prestige over the long run in all communities—family, academic, and business. This is how lives are transformed. This is how reputations are created. This is how legacies weather even the worst of economic storms.

For the NIU College of Business student, greater endowment means the difference between a good education and an outstanding one . . . one that also opens up a wider sphere of opportunities for graduates to realize their potential. Endowment provides vital scholarships, hands-on learning experiences with faculty and executives on non-mission critical business problems, and perhaps most importantly, engaging and inspiring professors . . . those who support and challenge students, who discover students' potential and ignite their desire to learn, to grow, and to make a positive, meaningful impact in the world around them . . . through good times and through challenging times.

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AACSB Reaccreditation. NIU President John Peters, College of Business Dean Denise Schoenbachler, and the administration and faculty of NIU’s College of Business are pleased to announce that, in 2008, AACSB International—the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business—reaffirmed its accreditation of the college’s undergraduate, accountancy, and master’s degree program in business. AACSB International is the largest and most prestigious accrediting authority of schools of business around the world. NIU’s College of Business has held continuous AACSB accreditation since 1969, just eight years after the school’s founding.
Thought leadership in the Chicago business community.
The NIU College of Business has partnered with SmartBusiness magazine to provide thought leadership on high-level business issues to 19,000 CEOs and founders of fast-growth, middle-market, and large companies located in Chicago. Every month, an NIU College of Business faculty member is interviewed by the magazine and provides insight on a wide range of strategic-level business concerns such as building ethics into the culture of an organization, the U.S. financial bailout, interactive technology strategies that address Web 2.0 tools and beyond, CEO succession strategies, and the relationship between Fed policy and stock market performance, among many others.

Ranked among the best for the third consecutive year.
BusinessWeek's 2009 ranking of best undergraduate business schools continues to place the NIU business college within an elite group of b-schools nationwide. In 2009, the NIU College of Business ranked 73rd nationally out of a very small group of 101 elite business schools that made BusinessWeek's final short-list of programs designated as The Best Undergrad B-Schools in the Country. Of the 560 AACSB-accredited business colleges worldwide, 137—NIU among them—were invited to participate in the BusinessWeek ranking survey. NIU’s College of Business has been ranked among the best by BusinessWeek since the inception of the publication’s undergraduate ranking in 2006.

M.B.A. program ranked among tops in Chicago for the third consecutive year.
In fall 2008, Crain’s Chicago Business continued to rank NIU’s M.B.A. program and its Executive M.B.A. program among the very best graduate-level business programs in the Chicago market. This ranking represents the third consecutive year that Crain’s placed the NIU M.B.A. program among the very best, out of a pool of 30 competing M.B.A. programs in the Chicago market.

Department of Accountancy.
Professors across the nation have once again rated Northern Illinois University’s accountancy program among the elite in the nation. The Public Accounting Report’s 27th Annual Professor’s Survey (published in 2008), ranked NIU’s program 13th in the United States—and one of only four non-Ph.D. programs in the top 15. NIU’s accountancy program is the highest ranked non-Ph.D.-granting public university program in the country. Inclusion in the rankings places NIU among such highly regarded company as Notre Dame and six Big Ten schools, including Illinois.

NIU accountancy students' pass rate on the C.P.A. exam has ranked among the best in the nation for the past three decades.
In January 2009, the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy released pass rates for candidates taking the C.P.A. exam in 2007. NIU Department of Accountancy graduate students placed 12th in the country (out of more than 900 institutions). NIU is the only Illinois university to have student performance ranked in the top 20 nationally. In addition, our students placed second in the country on the auditing section of the C.P.A. exam (with a 90 percent pass rate).

ELC showcased as an Innovative Program.
The college’s Experiential Learning Center (ELC) was showcased in fall 2008 at the AACSB Innovative Programs Conference, which had in attendance deans and associate deans from accredited business schools around the world. AACSB chose to highlight the NIU ELC program because of the college’s approach to melding theory and practice by assigning a faculty-guided student team to consult with an actual firm on a firm-specific business problem. NIU’s ELC program is unique among business schools across the country in that it is one of very few that provide undergraduate and graduate students with a semester-long experiential learning situation involving an actual firm.

Target Leadership Grant.
In fall 2008, Target selected the NIU College of Business to receive a $25,000 Target Campus Grant. Those NIU business programs to receive the Target grant funding include the Department of Management, Department of Operations Management and Information Systems, the Professional Sales Program out of the Department of Marketing, and two NIU student chapters: the Society for Human Resource Management and the American Marketing Association. Each year Target reviews all the schools from which they recruit and selects those schools with which the corporation has formed a long-term professional and educational relationship. Target’s designation of the NIU College of Business as a Leadership School reflects the corporation’s ongoing commitment to the college and its outstanding, nationally regarded academic programs.
Executives in Residence

Each semester, high profile executives guest lecture in NIU’s classrooms to share vast expertise on a number of topics ranging from global business issues and relationship building to giving back and making a difference. These executives are highly respected within industry, and are typically CEOs, company founders/owners, or senior-level executives. The 2008 and 2009 roster of executives in the classroom follows.

More than 100 Business Executives

The college expresses appreciation to the more than 100 guest speakers who last year shared their insights with business students, faculty, and alumni, including:

Howard Jaffe (B.S. Accountancy 1974), president and CEO, Inland Bancorp. Guest speaker in the college’s financial markets and institutions class.

Marc Werner (B.S. Accountancy 1978), founder, Nature’s Sleep. Guest speaker in the college’s entrepreneurship class.

Bryan Nelson (B.S. Finance 1980), retired from Microsoft. Guest speaker in the college’s international marketing class.

Sheila Talton (B.S. Management 1980), vice president of globalization strategy, Cisco. November 19, 2008, keynote address: “Competition in a Globally Integrated Economy.” As vice president of globalization strategy, Sheila Talton is part of Cisco’s aggressive new effort to focus on up-and-coming emerging markets worldwide. She supports Cisco’s overall globalization strategy of enabling growth, leading innovation, and capturing talent, and sits on the Emerging Country Solutions Council. Talton is a founding member of the Information Technology Senior Management Forum (ITSMF), an organization of IT leaders from Fortune 500 corporations, and serves on their advisory board. Talton’s honors include selection as one of Enterprising Women’s Top
10 Women in Technology, and Entrepreneur of the Year by the National Federation of Black Women Business Owners. She is also a recipient of the Entrepreneurial Excellence Award from Working Woman magazine.

Most recently Talton was named a 2007 Woman Worth Watching by Profiles in Diversity Journal, and received the Egretha Award for achievement and conduct inspiring to African American Women, from the African American Women's Business and Career Conference. She is a graduate of Northern Illinois University and Harvard Business School's Advanced Management Program.

Edward H. Rensi, retired president and CEO of McDonald's USA and owner, Team Rensi Motorsports. March 25, 2008, keynote address during an M.B.A. Colloquium Speaker Series event: "Everything I know about leadership and management I learned from McDonald's." Rensi has devoted his entire professional career to McDonald's, beginning in 1966 as a grill man and eventually rising to become president and CEO. His accomplishments are many and include developing the first Ronald McDonald House, a program which has grown to 165 houses in 12 countries. The Ronald McDonald Houses help families of children with serious illnesses by providing temporary residences for them. Retiring after 14 years as McDonald's president and CEO, Rensi has created and owns Team Rensi Motorsports.


Jessica Flannery, nationally acclaimed social entrepreneur and co-founder of Kiva.org. October 6, 2008, presentation on giving back. Kiva.org is the world's first person-to-person micro-lending website that empowers individuals to lend directly to unique entrepreneurs in developing worlds. Flannery is an acclaimed speaker on poverty, micro-lending, and social entrepreneurship and has appeared as a guest on the "Oprah Winfrey Show." Kiva has been named the “Most Successful Non-Profit Organization in History,” and has been written about by former President Bill Clinton in his book Giving.

Matt Thompson (B.S. Marketing 1980), senior vice president of worldwide field operations, Adobe. March 6, 2008, presentation as a guest speaker in the college's professional sales classes.


Tim Jerzyk (B.S. Finance 1974, M.B.A. 1977), senior vice president, treasurer, investor relations, Yum! Brands, Inc. Guest speaker in the college's marketing strategy, strategic management, treasury and credit management classes.
Executive M.B.A. Class of 2008 student paper wins award at national conference. A research paper written by group members of the 2008 E.M.B.A. class recently won the Donald Shawver Award for Outstanding Paper, Marketing Education Track, at the 2009 Marketing Management Association Spring Conference held in Chicago. The paper—“Teaching Brand Strategy: Using NASCAR as an Example of a Well-Branded Organization”—was written as part of a class assignment for the E.M.B.A. course Marketing 654, Marketing Management. Members of the 2008 E.M.B.A. group who received this honor are Nick Gerovac, David and Dawn Keding, Kristina Mattson, Kurt Paquin, Leonetta Rizzi, and Charles Sellers. Founded in 1977, the Marketing Management Association (MMA) is an international association with more than 400 academic members worldwide.

OM&IS major Justin Kuryliw was one of five NIU students to be awarded the first-ever Forward, Together Forward Scholarship. The students received the scholarship based upon their “strong character and values, grand ambitions, and intellectual curiosity.” As one of the five scholars, business major Justin Kuryliw received a $4,000 scholarship. But more importantly, he and his fellow scholars received the responsibility of carrying on the memory of the five outstanding students who lost their lives during the February 14, 2008, tragedy. Among his many university activities, including serving on the Dean’s Student Advisory Council, Kuryliw is co-creator of Huskies United, a university-wide student organization that Justin and friends formed in the immediate aftermath of 2.14. Huskies United dedicates itself to performing community outreach in memory of the five students who lost their lives. In his reaction to receiving the scholarship, Kuryliw revealed both his commitment to honoring the five students as well as his own depth of character. “It’s an amazing honor to be seen as carrying on someone’s memory, and I can’t think of anything better,” he said.

NIU accountancy graduate students John Garama, Helena Phan, Tracy Cione, Suqin Chen, and Dave Siebold received a national Honorable Mention for their team effort in the 2008 Deloitte Tax Case Competition. Over 60 undergraduate and graduate teams from 44 colleges and universities worked to complete a complex, hypothetical case study that drew upon students’ knowledge of tax and business topics. This is the third time in five years that an NIU College of Business team placed in the top 10 in the graduate division of this competition.

During the last semester of their senior year, freshly minted graduates (pictured above) John Hall (B.S. OM&IS 2008), Michael Rendak (B.S.B.A. 2008), and Sindre Ronningen (communication major) won $250 for their video production of the inventory management process at Eagle Ridge Resort and Spa, a 68,000-acre resort in Galena, Illinois, that has four golf courses and five major restaurants on its premises. The three students visited Eagle Ridge several times, spoke with employees about the firm’s inventory system, and, afterwards, made business recommendations to the company representatives. The national video contest was sponsored by John Wiley & Sons, and required students about the firm’s inventory system, and, afterwards, made business recommendations to the company representatives. The national video contest was sponsored by John Wiley & Sons, and required students to create a 3- to 5-minute video clip that demonstrated an operations management principle. The video entries were reviewed and judged by an advisory panel comprised of operations management professors throughout the U.S. For the NIU students, the video contest coincided well with their group project in the service operations class, which also
Faculty and Staff Achievements

As in previous years, faculty and staff continue to make significant impact in academia and in the business environment. Along with excelling in teaching and research, NIU business professors continue to provide thought leadership to media and professional associations and companies. NIU business faculty research was even cited in a U.S. Congressional report on TARP funds. This year, we honor the following faculty and staff for their achievements: Jim Johnson, professor of finance; Mark Riley, assistant professor of accountancy; Marc Simpson, professor and chair of finance; Pam Smith, KPMG professor of accountancy; Dan Weilbaker, McKesson Pharmaceutical Group professor of sales; Jim Young, Crowe Horwath professor of accountancy; Debra Zahay, Acxiom Corporation professor of interactive marketing;

Natalie Churyk, Caterpillar professor of accountancy; Tim Aurand, associate professor of marketing; Kathleen McFadden, professor of operations management and information systems; Lei Zhou, assistant professor of finance.

We invite you to read details of faculty and staff achievements on the NIU College of Business webpage: www.cob.niu.edu/highlights/achievements.asp

Student Achievements (Continued)

required student teams to describe the implementation of an operations management concept within a specific company.

Joseph Petitti, a finance major, was awarded $15,000 through a prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship for study in China in fall 2008. The Gilman International Scholarship Program offers grants to qualified undergraduate students to pursue academic studies abroad. Such international study is intended to better prepare U.S. students to assume significant roles in a global economy.

Making the Grade: Four NIU students earn Certified Treasury Professional (C.T.P.) credential. Joel D’souza, Gregory Flynn, Ryan Foelske, and Steven Galloway, all NIU finance students, sat for and passed the Certified Treasury Professional (C.T.P.) exam in the summer of 2008. Of the approximately 50 universities partnered with the Association for Financial Management (AFP), only five universities had successful candidates. A very elite group of eight students passed the C.T.P. exam, which means that in 2008, 50% of the successful candidates who passed and now carry the C.T.P. credential come from NIU. NIU continues to have the largest and most successful treasury program at any of the 50 AFP-affiliated universities.

The NIU Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) student chapter was honored with a Superior Merit Award for 2007-2008. The award recognizes the highest achieving student chapters in the country for their exceptional ability in operations, the professional development of chapter members, and promotion of the profession. In another event, an NIU SHRM student team competed and placed sixth out of 20 participating teams at the 2008 SHRM Conference for the North Central Region.

NIU Internship/Co-op Student Award Winners. Spring 2008 Award Winner Cody Smith, accountancy major, interned with Lindgren Callihan Van Osdol & Co. Ltd. Summer 2008 Award Winner and Year 2008 Winner Paul Berkes, OM&IS major, interned with Nissan Forklift as a supply chain analyst. Fall 2008 Award Winner Davorka Zeba, management major, interned with Kohl’s. NIU Career Services established the Student of the Month and Student of the Year Awards to recognize outstanding internship/co-op students for excellence in applying their academic training in an internship or co-op setting. They are chosen on the basis of the following criteria: scholarship, writing sample, and letters of recommendation from their internship/co-op employer and an NIU faculty member.

NIU business student team places in top 16 of Idea to Product (I2P) regional competition. Team members are: Derek Baker, organizational management major; Myia Burgreen, human resource management major; Kevin Naleck, organizational management major; Michael Shuff, finance major; and Mike Smith, accountancy major. The I2P regional contest is open to all Illinois and Missouri colleges and universities at both the graduate and undergraduate level. The NIU team’s entry went head-to-head with 26 submissions from seven Illinois-based and Missouri-based universities, including submissions from graduate-level students. According to the I2P homepage (www.ideatoproduct.org/), “are early-stage technology commercialization plan competitions that aim for unique product ideas with clear market demand that use innovative technologies. The goal is educating and developing the next generation of technology entrepreneurs. The program is particularly interested in matching technologies resulting from a university’s fundamental research programs with potential markets.”
Marc Simpson was named chair of the Department of Finance and joined the NIU finance faculty in July 2008. Simpson earned his Ph.D. in economics from Fordham University in New York City. The Ph.D. in economics requires qualification in three fields. Simpson qualified in finance, international economics, and monetary economics. Simpson also earned an M.A. in international political economy and development from Fordham University. He holds two baccalaureate degrees, one in history and one in political science, from Oregon State University. Simpson has published over 20 scholarly articles in peer-reviewed finance journals and is a chartered financial analyst (C.F.A.). Simpson's research is broadly related to investments. Many of his articles deal with hedging foreign exchange risk and with the impact of macroeconomic credit, equity, and real estate markets. Simpson's research has been published or is forthcoming in some of the finance field's most widely respected journals, including the Journal of Empirical Finance, Journal of International Money and Finance, Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics, Journal of Futures Markets, and Financial Review. In addition to being an accomplished scholar, Simpson is well regarded as a teacher. In 2005, Simpson won the Outstanding Professor of the Year award for his teaching in the Ph.D. in business administration program at the University of Texas–Pan American. A year later, Simpson was appointed director of the program and served as the dissertation chair for a number of finance students who now hold assistant professorships at universities around the country. As chair of the NIU Department of Finance, Simpson plans to use the department's strong reputation and experience in producing quality academic research to strengthen ties to financial professionals, thereby expanding opportunities for NIU finance students and graduates.

Department of Accountancy

Tammy Waymire, C.P.A., Assistant Professor

Tammy Waymire joined the NIU business faculty ranks in August 2008 following completion of her Ph.D. at the University of Arkansas. While a doctoral student, Waymire held the Distinguished Doctoral Fellow Award, presented papers at national meetings, and was nominated for the Walton College of Business Graduate Student Teaching Award. Prior to beginning an academic career, Waymire worked in public accounting for five years and for the State of Arkansas for seven years. Her experience with the State of Arkansas included investigating Medicaid fraud for three years and serving as a public utility regulator for four years. In these capacities, she served as an expert witness in criminal, civil, and administrative proceedings. In addition, Waymire has been a licensed C.P.A. in the State of Arkansas since 1994. Waymire’s research interests include the impact of control mechanisms on performance, and she has specific interest in these effects within governmental and nonprofit entities. She has presented her work at the American Accounting Association national meetings. Waymire teaches governmental and nonprofit accounting to both undergraduate and graduate NIU students.

Tim West, C.P.A., Associate Professor

Tim West joined the NIU business faculty ranks in August 2008, after serving on the faculty of the University of Arkansas–Fayetteville. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Missouri–Columbia in 1976 and joined the Kansas City office of Touche Ross & Company as a staff auditor. He received his C.P.A. in 1977 and his license to practice in 1978. He left Touche Ross as an audit manager in 1983 to become director of finance at a manufacturing firm in northwest Missouri. In 1990, West entered the doctoral program at the University of Tennessee and graduated in 1993 with a Ph.D. in accounting and a support area of industrial engineering. West also has been on the faculty of Iowa State University and Washington University–St. Louis. He has won numerous teaching awards and recently began investigating the impact of academic dishonesty in the classroom. His work in this area has been featured in The New York Times, USA Today, and BusinessWeek. Primarily, however, his research focuses on cost prediction and performance measurement in two industries: health care and manufacturing. For
the past 10 years, West has worked closely with the U.S. Army Medical Command to assess the operational efficiency of Army medicine. He has authored numerous research papers including publications in the *Journal of Management Accounting Research, Journal of Accounting and Public Policy, Advances in Management Accounting, Journal of Business Ethics, Business and Professional Ethics Journal, Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), Journal of Healthcare Finance,* and *American Journal of Managed Care.* At NIU, West teaches intermediate cost accounting and introduction to assurance services.

**Department of Management**

**Bart Sharp, Assistant Professor**

Bart Sharp is completing the dissertation requirement for his Ph.D. in strategic management from Purdue University. Sharp comes to academics by way of a background in aerospace engineering, which has informed his research interests in innovation, organizational learning, and entrepreneurship. Previously, Sharp taught strategic management at both the undergraduate and Executive M.B.A. levels, as well as undergraduate courses in operations management and principles of management. In his leisure time, he enjoys woodworking, motorcycles, and spending time with his wife and two beautiful daughters.

**Department of Operations Management and Information Systems**

**Shailesh Godambe, Instructor**

Shailesh Godambe is a supply chain executive with extensive global experience. He has been recognized for developing supply chain strategies, reducing costs, and achieving best in class customer responsive operations. Godambe joined Motorola in 1974 in the Operations Research Group. He successfully progressed through increasing responsibilities in various functions and ultimately was the senior vice president of integrated supply chain, supporting all of Motorola’s global businesses. After retiring from Motorola he formed a consulting company, Optimal Supply Chain Incorporated. Godambe has made several professional presentations on supply chain at universities and conferences, and has participated in industry panel discussions. He brings his real-world experience to the courses he teaches and believes that the classroom experience is enriched by relating it to actual case studies in business and industry. Godambe holds a Ph.D. and a master’s degree in industrial and systems engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology and a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology. Godambe is on the Board of Advisors at Northwestern University’s industrial engineering department, Mercy College–NY Internet Business Systems M.B.A. department, and Information Integrity Coalition group.

**Alumni and Corporate Relations**

**Lia Kizilbash Gillet**

Lia Kizilbash Gillet joined NIU’s College of Business in fall 2008 when she was named director of alumni relations for the college. Gillet replaces Sue Braffet, who served for many years as the college’s alumni director and who is now focusing her attention on the important tasks associated with event planning for the NIU College of Business and its many alumni. Gillet earned a B.A. in communication studies, with a minor in business administration, from the University of Iowa. Prior to joining Northern Illinois University, Gillet worked for The Allant Group, where she gained database marketing and project management experience. In 2008, The Allant Group presented her with the Pinnacle Award for her outstanding service to both clients and staff. Gillet also worked for CDW Corporation as a media coordinator and in sales as a corporate account manager. Gillet’s focus on quality and service has resulted in long-lasting client relationships. Gillet is no stranger to NIU. Her father, the late A. H. “Cary” Kizilbash, was a highly respected marketing professor in the NIU College of Business for 30 years. Gillet is a native of DeKalb and currently lives in North Aurora with her husband.
Curt Behrens retired in August after nearly 30 years of service to NIU. Behrens played an important role in the human resource management program in the Department of Management. Over those years, Behrens taught courses in human resource management, compensation, employment law, collective bargaining, public sector labor relations, and management principles. He also taught courses in labor relations and collective bargaining in NIU’s Division of Public Administration. He was awarded the NIU Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award, one of the highest forms of recognition awarded by NIU for teaching excellence. He worked closely with the Society for Human Resource Management, one of the student organizations in the Department of Management, guiding and mentoring many students during his many years of service to the organization. Behrens’s comprehensive and constantly updated knowledge of the world of labor and industrial relations was a valuable resource to his students, alumni, and his colleagues. In addition to his teaching and departmental service, Behrens worked in NIU’s Office of the President as a special advisor to the president, was executive secretary of the University Council and president of Faculty Senate, and served as the faculty personnel advisor. Outside the university, Behrens served as a labor arbitrator, mostly in public sector cases, and worked with a number of external agencies as trainer and consultant, including the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers and the Regional Transportation Authority in the Chicago area. We are grateful to Curt for all his contributions to the human resource program, the management department, the college, the university, and the profession.

Sue Goad (B.S. Business Education 1978, M.B.A. 1990, Ed.D 1998), academic advisor in the Department of Operations Management and Information Systems, retired in December 2008. Goad had been employed by the NIU College of Business for nearly 20 years, beginning in 1989 when she was a graduate assistant in the Department of Marketing. Goad stayed with the college after she graduated from NIU in 1990 with an M.B.A., at which time she moved from the student ranks to become an advisor. During her 18 years as an academic advisor in NIU’s Department of OM&IS, Goad not only guided OM&IS majors through the program requirements, but she also developed friendships with many of them after they graduated. It was not unusual for OM&IS alumni to stay in touch with Goad, and vice versa, over the years to share where life had taken them and how they were doing in their careers. Many former students credit Goad’s attentiveness, positive attitude, resourcefulness, and strong work ethic with helping them navigate college academics and guiding them on the best strategies for beginning their careers. Along with her advising duties, Goad developed and taught a careers course for all OM&IS majors, compiled an electronic resume book of all OM&IS majors to distribute to companies, marketed the program to the business community, guided students through their internship efforts, and served on numerous college and university committees, most notably the college’s Strategic Planning Council. Sue Goad’s positive disposition, clear and friendly thinking, and many contributions continue to be felt by alumni, students, faculty, and staff alike. We wish Sue much happiness in her new adventures.

Harry Wright. Harry’s 37-year tenure with NIU and the significant impact he has had on the NIU College of Business are described in his 2008 Honorary Alumnus designation on page 9.
In Memoriam

Sally Ann Webber
(1953-2008)

Colleague, friend, teacher, and mentor, Sally Webber, HSBC professor of accountancy, passed away peacefully on October 30 after a three-year battle with cancer.

Sally joined the Department of Accountancy in 1999 as an assistant professor, was promoted to associate professor in 2002, and became a full professor in 2008. She earned her undergraduate and master’s degrees from Northern Illinois University and her doctoral degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. She was an active and involved member of the American Accounting Association and most recently served as chair of the Education Committee of the Information Systems section in 2005.

Sally won a number of teaching and research awards while at NIU and in 2008 was awarded NIU’s Outstanding Mentor Award in honor of her work mentoring colleagues and students over the years. Sally was also a passionate advocate for Beta Alpha Psi, serving as faculty advisor for NIU’s chapter and director of the Midwest Region. Sally was presented with Beta Alpha Psi’s National President’s Award in 2007 for the contributions she made to students and to the professionalism and service ideals espoused by Beta Alpha Psi. The President’s Award is Beta Alpha Psi’s highest and most prestigious award. Sally was named an NIU Department of Accountancy outstanding alumnus in 2006 for her ongoing commitment to the department.

We will miss Sally both professionally and personally.

Sally Webber Memorial Scholarship

To carry Sally’s dedication to students into the future, Northern Illinois University has established the Sally Webber Scholarship in Accountancy. In lieu of flowers and gifts, Sally and the Webber family request that contributions be directed to the scholarship fund. Checks should be made payable to the “NIU Foundation,” with indication made that the gift is for the Sally Webber Scholarship Fund. Checks can be mailed to:

Anthony D’Andrea
Director of Development
College of Business
Northern Illinois University
1425 W. Lincoln Hwy
DeKalb, IL 60115-2828
Editorial correction to the 2008 NIU Business. Within the “Alumni Updates 1960” section, we inadvertently listed an incorrect first name for Judy Kleeman (B.S. Nursing 1971), the wife of Robert E. Kleeman, Jr. (B.S. Accountancy 1969). Our sincere apologies to Robert and Judy, and friends.

Howard C. Buitla (M.S. Finance 1967) passed away on June 1, 2008. He served as a U.S. Army officer during the Vietnam War, and was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service with the Fourth Infantry Division. Howard was born in Lawton, Oklahoma, and raised in Minonk, Illinois. He graduated from the University of Illinois and received an M.B.A. from Northern Illinois University. Howard is survived by his wife, Claudia; children Jeffrey and Lindsey; grandchildren Makenzee and John; brother John; sister Rev. Cynthia Taylor; and his devoted parents, Howard P. and Alice.

Dick Anderson (M.B.A. 1973) retired in June 2008 from PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, where he was a partner and national leader of the Internal Audit Advisory Services (IAS) practice and also a member of the global executive committee for the IAS practice. Anderson plans to continue many of his current activities including serving on the Board of Trustees of the IIA Research Foundation, lecturing at NIU and DePaul, and writing. His articles have appeared in many publications, including the Journal of Accountancy, Financial Executive, Internal Auditor, and Directors Monthly. In recognition of his activities with NIU’s Department of Accountancy, Anderson was inducted into Beta Alpha Psi during
their spring 2008 dinner. He and his wife, Mary, are DeKalb natives and are active in a number of organizations, including the Oak Park River Forest Infant Welfare Society and the Chicago Sinfonietta. Dick and Mary enjoy traveling and split their time between homes in Oak Park, Illinois, and New Buffalo, Michigan.

1980

Ken Ahlers (B.S. Accountancy 1980) recently accepted a leadership position with Plas-Tech Engineering, a high-quality injection molding operation that is based in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. In his new position, Ahlers serves as the company’s vice president of finance and administration.

Steven M. Rosenberg (B.S. Accountancy 1983), C.P.A., is managing partner at Rosenberg and Fecci Consulting LLC in Fair Haven, New Jersey. Rosenberg has authored several works on the subject of field examinations, including his most recent article for the April 2009 issue of The Secured Lender, “How Has the Use, Content and Conduct of Field Examinations Changed Over the Last 20 Years?”

2000

Brian Crow (B.S. Marketing 2005) co-founded Loop Apparel, a clothing company that designs and sells apparel with a Chicago theme. Loop Apparel strives to sell not only theme-based clothing but also lifestyle. The company creates merchandise that reflects the Chicago nightlife. Check out Loop Apparel’s items at www.loopapparel.com/catalog/.

Nick Del Monaco (B.S. Management 2008) began his career as an assistant store manager of the Kohl’s department store located in Schaumburg, Illinois.

Mark Fita (B.S. Management 2008) began his career two days after graduation when he signed on to work as a benefits specialist for Tandem HR, a mid-sized human resources outsourcing/consulting firm located in Oak Brook, Illinois. Fita serves as the main contact to discuss/resolve benefit issues for 34 clients, or approximately 750 employees.

J. Paul Fricilone (B.S. Finance 2006) graduated from MIT Sloan School of Management in 2008 with an M.B.A. He works with Lane Berry & Company International in the investment banking field and focuses his energy on upper/middle market M&A. Fricilone is now also a resident of Boston, and undoubtedly enjoys Red Sox and Patriots games, along with the rich history of the city.

Kyle Klaisner (B.S. Management 2008) began his career as assistant department manager for Menards Incorporated in Shelby, Iowa.

Chad LaMont (B.S. Operations Management 2008) began his career as a financial representative with Northwestern Mutual Financial Network, located in Crystal Lake, Illinois.

David Nyquist (B.S. Operations Management 2006) wrote an outstanding paper on the airline industry’s boarding problem when he was a student in Professor Kathleen McFadden’s service operations management class. So impressed was McFadden with Nyquist’s work that she encouraged him to work with her to develop the paper further and to coauthor the expanded work for publication. Over the course of two semesters, Nyquist met with McFadden and worked on the paper. In early 2009, their finalized paper was published in the Journal of Air Transport Management. Soon after, the Discovery Channel contacted McFadden for an interview about the paper, and McFadden suggested they contact Nyquist instead. The result of Nyquist’s interview with the Discovery Channel is the story entitled “Problem Solved: The Best Way to Board a Plane.” The coauthors’ findings indicate that by using a different airplane boarding procedure, airlines could save approximately $200 million a year. After graduating from NIU, Nyquist did a summer internship in Washington D.C. with the FBI, which has led to the recent offer of a full-time position. Currently, Nyquist is working on his master’s degree at Texas A&M University.

We’re connected!

NIU’s business college utilizes a number of online social applications to reach out to those using social networks. Users can get their NIU College of Business news and information via Twitter, as well as photos of campus and students on Flickr. Many departments in the college have created accounts on Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Currently, you’ll find us at:

Twitter (NIU Business)
Flickr (NIU Business)
Facebook
LinkedIn (NIU Management)
YouTube (ELC)
Headliners—Scholarships

NIU Executive Club
2008 Scholarship Recipient

Kevin Cech

Kevin Cech was selected as the 2008 NIU Executive Club Scholar based on his record of academic achievement, leadership, community involvement, work ethic, and potential to become an influential business leader.

Kevin graduated in May 2008 from Rochelle High School in Rochelle, Illinois. He participated in basketball, track, and soccer during his high school career. He was a three-year academic all-conference player in soccer as well as team captain and MVP.

In addition to his sports activities, he worked hard to achieve Eagle Scout status, the highest rank in Scouting. He was a member of the National Honor Society, an Illinois State Scholar, and the recipient of the Wendy's Heisman High School Award. He was also appointed Youth Elder at his church, where he participated in a mission trip to Mexico and offered many volunteer hours of mowing, snow removal, and nursery assistance. Kevin has been employed with Cappel Certified Seeds since his freshman year.

Kevin has proven his ability to work to achieve high goals. His achievement as an Eagle Scout and a marathon runner are a testament to his commitment to achieving his goals. He believes that a finance degree from the NIU College of Business will challenge him and provide him with the tools to become a successful financial advisor.

For additional information on the NIU College of Business alumni clubs and additional club-sponsored student scholarship recipients, please visit the following web pages.

Rockford Club
www.cob.niu.edu/rockfordclub
Robert J. Jonas, president
B.S. Marketing 1968, M.B.A. 1975

Executive Club
www.cob.niu.edu/executiveclub
Roy C. Schultz III, president
B.S. Finance 2000

Young Professionals Network
www.cob.niu.edu/ypn
Brian F. Gillet, president
Joseph Krey
Joseph served in the United States Navy. He was deployed to the Arabian Gulf in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. Following his honorable discharge and graduation from Rock Valley College, Joseph is transferring into the NIU B.S.B.A. program in Rockford. He plans to use his business degree to help achieve his long-term goal of becoming a theoretical astrophysicist.

Jenner Sio
Jenner graduated from Christian Life High School in Rockford, Illinois, with numerous academic and athletic awards. In addition to her many athletic achievements, Jenner received a Congressional Citation for participation in the 2006 “21st Century Leaders” Conference. She participated in and organized several volunteer service projects in the Rockford area. Jenner plans to major in business management and minor in coaching. Her ultimate career goal is to open and manage a small business.

Michael Severt
Michael is a graduate of Hononegah Community High School in Rockton, Illinois. He was involved in the Future Business Leaders of America organization, and placed 12th in a regional accounting competition. His group was first runner up in a Global Economics Summit sponsored by Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) in 2008. Michael plans to major in accountancy at NIU, and obtain a law degree. His goal is to become a chief financial officer.

The Rockford Alumni Club is pleased to announce three recipients for the 2008 David and Diane Graf Rockford Endowed Scholarship. Two scholarships are awarded to incoming freshmen entering the NIU College of Business and one scholarship is awarded to a student transferring into the Rockford B.S.B.A. program.
Designed to generate scholarships for outstanding students, the NIU Executive Club’s 10th Annual Endowed Scholarship Gala provided a lively evening of dinner, dancing, networking, and enjoyment for all attendees. More than $52,000 was raised in support of exceptional NIU business students who aspire to stand out in their careers and who qualify to receive the scholarship funds. The Executive Club scholarship endowment has grown significantly over the years, allowing for the creation of the NIU Young Professionals Network scholarship.

Ryan Lotich, marketing major and the 2005 Executive Club Scholarship recipient, explained to attendees how the scholarship program changed his life and his college career. The scholarship not only provided financial support, it also offered Lotich professional relationships with business executives for mentoring, internships, and career guidance.

This year’s scholarship recipients—Kevin Cech, the 2008 NIU Executive Club scholarship recipient, and Nicholas Pikor, the NIU Young Professionals Network scholarship recipient—both discussed their career goals and how the scholarship will help them reach those goals. Both Cech and Pikor were selected based upon their outstanding academic, extracurricular, and service records, as well as their potential to become successful business leaders. Pikor also has the distinction of being the first recipient of the NIU Young Professionals Network scholarship, in partnership with the NIU Executive Club.

Bill Boston (B.S. Marketing 1970, M.B.A. 1971), chairman and CEO of DynamicSignals LLC, was honored with the Founders’ Award for his leadership, vision, and commitment to the success of the Executive Club. Over many years, Boston has contributed significantly to helping the club establish a structure that identifies and leverages new ideas, as well as engages the experience and expertise of the club’s members. A 2004 recipient of the NIU College of Business Distinguished Alumnus Award, Bill Boston was also one of the first alumni to serve on the NIU Executive Club Board of Directors.

The 2008 Endowed Scholarship Gala was made possible by the generous support of event sponsors. The NIU College of Business and the NIU Executive Club sincerely appreciate the generous commitment demonstrated by alumni and corporations, all of whom made this important scholarship possible.

Make an Impact in the Lives of Outstanding NIU Business Students

Plan to participate in the 2009 Endowed Scholarship Dinner Dance by saving the date now: Saturday, November 7, 2009. For more information about getting involved as a sponsor, attendee, auction donor, or as a member of the gala committee, please contact Lia Gillet at 815-753-5794, or Sue Braffet at 815-753-1433.
NIU’s College of Business is known for bridging the gap between thinking and doing. For more than 40 years, NIU’s business school has forged meaningful relationships with industry, both by providing thought leadership to firms as well as by teaching emerging business practices to students. Nearly 42,000 NIU business graduates make a difference, not only in firms but in their communities. You’ll recognize NIU business alumni by their leadership, ability to synthesize ideas, adaptability, undeniable work ethic, and team effectiveness.

That’s why Crain’s Chicago Business has ranked our M.B.A. programs among the tops in Chicago for the past three years. And BusinessWeek has ranked the college among the very best undergraduate business schools in the nation for the past three years.
Huskie-bred For Success

Jeffrey Yordon’s 38 years of pharmaceutical experience includes senior level positions with a number of major pharmaceutical companies, as well as a founding member of Gensia Laboratories, Faulding Pharmaceuticals, LyphoMed, and American Pharmaceutical Partners.

Sagent Pharmaceuticals, his most recent entrepreneurial success, is a forward-thinking specialty injectables company located in Schaumburg, IL.

Owing much of his success to the solid foundation he built while at NIU, Jeff’s loyalty is evident by his continuing philanthropy to the university as well as his membership on the Foundation Board, the Board of Directors of the Northern Illinois Executive Club, and an Alumni Advisor to NIU’s Athletic Department.

Jeffrey Yordon
Founder, Chairman and CEO
SAGENT Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
BA, ’70

Share Your News!

What’s happening in your life that you’d like to celebrate? Have you switched jobs, been promoted, relocated, or received an award? What about other life-changing events such as marriage, new babies, adoptions, retirements? Share the news with your fellow alumni and your alma mater.

Visit www.cob.niu.edu/alumni and fill out the online form. Or email your news and address information to braffet@niu.edu. We will publish the news you share in next year’s issue of NIU Business.
2009 EVENTS

College Events

May 1
Alumni Luncheon
Hilton Lisle/Naperville—11:30 a.m.

October 3
Homecoming
vs. Western Michigan
Pregame tailgating
NIU DeKalb

Alumni Club Events

May 14
Young Professionals Network (YPN) Educational Event
Using Technology to Market You and Your Company
Naperville (tentative)

May 20
Rockford Alumni Club Business Over Easy
NIU Rockford—7:30–9:30 a.m.

May 28 (TBD)
Rockford Alumni Club Golf Outing
Aldeen Golf Course, Rockford—3 p.m.

June 18
YPN Networking: Top Golf
Wood Dale—6 p.m.

June 24
Rockford Alumni Club Scholarship Fundraiser
Japanese Gardens

August 20
YPN Skill Development Networking Skills/Speed Networking
NIU Naperville

September 21
Executive Club 14th Annual Golf Outing
Kishwaukee Country Club, DeKalb—11 a.m.

September 17
Rockford Alumni Club Business Over Easy
NIU Rockford—7:30–9:30 a.m.

October 6
Executive Club/YPN Fall “Face to Face”
Hilton Lisle/Naperville—6 p.m.

November 7
Endowed Scholarship Dinner Dance Gala and Silent Auction

November 19
YPN Wine Tasting
Tasting deVine, Naperville—6:30 p.m.

Financial Stakeholders

The NIU College of Business sincerely appreciates all investments made by alumni and friends. Your investments truly do make a genuine impact in the lives of the students. The college thanks each and every one of you.
NIU commits itself to developing new leaders who not only think differently but who also act effectively on those new ideas...even in difficult and uncertain times. To do so requires fundamental business acumen combined with a fresh perspective for envisioning new possibilities.

Over the course of our 18-month Executive M.B.A. program, you will challenge the status quo and reevaluate the conventional wisdom. You will work in partnership with nationally regarded NIU business faculty to explore meaningful possibilities for issues that span the business spectrum and affect the global marketplace. You will look at the world of business through first-hand, immersive experiential learning situations at home and abroad, and through the thorough analysis of complex and integrated business principles.

NIU’s Executive M.B.A. program is consistently ranked among the top M.B.A. offerings in the Chicago area by Crain’s Chicago Business—and there’s a reason for this. At NIU, our already knowledgeable learners expand their expertise by developing the capability to narrow the gap between innovative thinking and meaningful action.

Northern Illinois University College of Business
Where the Classroom Meets the Business World
Congratulations...

to all 2008-2009 graduates of the NIU College of Business!