Collins College of Business Magazine Spring 2010

CAN-DO spirit!

ALUMNI BUILD CAREERS AROUND SERVICE
Fighting back
Alumnae find careers at American Cancer Society.

On the Cover
Courtney Naylor (BSBA ’06), Kristen Taylor (BSBA ’04) and Stephanie Lipscomb Madsen (BSBA ’06) began volunteering with the American Cancer Society as students at The University of Tulsa. Today, all three are building their careers around the organization’s mission. “It’s more than a job, it’s a passion,” says Taylor.

Doing good, doing well
Alumna champions “doing good” as business model.

Forget me not
Startup creates awareness about Alzheimer’s disease.

Doing good, doing well
Alumna champions “doing good” as business model.

Helping her people
Alumna gets back to her roots at Indian Health Care Center.

One wild job
Alumna discovers rewards at the Tulsa Zoo.

Paving the way
Student brings cause to Tulsa.

Big brother
Professor’s mentorship is recognized.

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Collins College of Business Mission Statement

Our mission, through creating and disseminating knowledge, is to educate and mentor business and healthcare professionals for leadership roles in the international arena.

The Mission of The University of Tulsa

The University of Tulsa is a private, independent, doctoral-degree-granting institution whose mission reflects these core values: excellence in scholarship, dedication to free inquiry, integrity of character and commitment to humanity.

The University achieves its mission by educating men and women of diverse backgrounds and cultures to become literate in the sciences, humanities and arts; think critically, and write and speak clearly; succeed in their professions and careers; behave ethically in all aspects of their lives; welcome the responsibility of citizenship and service in a changing world; and acquire the skills and aptitude for lifelong learning.

One of the things I’ve noticed when our Executive Advisory Board members meet is the rising volume in the room as they catch up and share insights. Conversations can indeed reach a fevered pitch when you have such a great mix of leaders in banking, real estate, oil and gas, retail, restaurants, accounting, finance and several other fields. It’s exciting to see such a dedicated and experienced team willing to give of their valuable time to advance the Collins College of Business.

To take full advantage of the board members’ knowledge, we’ve created committees and structured our semi-annual meetings around capturing their input and advice. The steering committee is charged with providing the dean with input on strategic planning and visioning, program initiatives and the purpose and membership of the Executive Advisory Board. The student placement committee is the sounding board to the dean and director of business career development regarding the successful placement of graduates. The development committee examines ways to enhance the fundraising activities that keep the college moving forward.

Our last two meetings have included break-out sessions, giving board members an opportunity to spend more time exploring such areas as the college’s strategic initiatives, the addition of new degree programs and the development of internships for graduate business students. The latter helps attract graduate students who gain valuable experience that would be attractive to a potential employer. The development committee recently asked each Executive Advisory Board member to identify potential donors to the dean’s annual fund; particularly those who might become annual fund challengers.

Business leaders agree to serve on the Executive Advisory Board at the Collins College of Business for several reasons. Many of the board members are alumni and view their service as an opportunity to give back to their alma mater. Many have TU ties and, therefore, offer valuable input on the practical aspects of curriculum and programs. They all believe that having a strong, private university is a key to the economic vitality of the area. By channeling the energy and talent of the board, we are making strides toward higher aspirations for the college and TU.

Sincerely,

Dax Craig
Chair, Executive Advisory Board
Entrepreneurial spirit runs deep in Collins family

Roger B. Collins likes to hire employees who are bright, inquisitive and always ready for a challenge. As it turns out, he doesn’t have to look very far to find these individuals.

“The University of Tulsa turns out some outstanding business graduates, and the Tulsa business community is a better place because of it,” said Collins, a long-time Executive Advisory Board member of the college and the owner of two Tulsa companies.

Members of the Collins family have been devoted supporters of The University of Tulsa, particularly the Collins College of Business. Roger’s brother, Fulton Collins (1943-2008) served for 12 years as chairman of the TU Board of Trustees. Fulton and his wife, Francy, have supported pivotal initiatives that have lifted TU into the ranks of the nation’s top 100 universities.

Roger and his wife, Françoise, have supported numerous university programs. In 1996, the family established the Collins Professorships to attract and retain top business faculty. In May 2008, the college was renamed the Collins College of Business.

With his term on the Executive Advisory Board coming to a close this spring, Roger has been elected to join the TU Board of Trustees.

“What I’ve done pales in comparison to Fulton’s work, but I feel like I need to do my part to help the university and Tulsa,” said Roger, who, like his brother, is not a graduate of TU. He graduated cum laude from Princeton University and subsequently obtained an MBA from the Wharton School of Business.

The Collins family’s connection to Tulsa dates back to the early 1900s when Roger’s great-grandfather moved to the area from Kansas. He came with the salvaged assets of a burned down glass factory and started Sapulpa’s Liberty Glass Company, which was run by the family until it was sold in 1994.

Roger is chairman and CEO of LinkAmerica, a trucking company with more than 1,000 employees who serve areas in the southeast and southeast.

He also owns Muirfield Resources Company, an exploration company based in Tulsa. As a businessman, Collins sees The University of Tulsa as an excellent resource for strengthening the region’s economy.

“We want to make TU a shining star that attracts businesses to expand or relocate to Tulsa,” said Collins. “An active university can do wonders for that.”

Longtime board member brings wealth of experience

Roger the stereotypes of overworked bean counters in green visors hunched over desks. James D. Miller (BSBA ’66) is living proof that a career in accounting can result in world travel, high-profile positions and a wealth of business insights.

Miller began his education at The University of Tulsa majoring in engineering and working part-time jobs. He soon switched to accounting, which led to a job with Arthur Andersen in Tulsa where he stayed for several years until he was given the opportunity to manage an office in Lisbon, Portugal.

“I was having to make all kinds of decisions I had never made before,” said Miller, who suddenly found himself responsible for legal and personnel issues, all while learning to navigate in a different language and culture.

This international perspective catapulted his career. Two years after he returned to Tulsa, Arthur Andersen named him a partner, and he later was named managing partner for Oklahoma and Arkansas.

The Chicago-based accounting firm, known as one of the “Big Five,” had offices in every state and many countries, several of which he visited over the course of his 34-year career.

“TU was probably the best thing that ever happened to me,” said Miller, who is an original member of the Executive Advisory Board at the Collins College of Business. “I’m trying to pay them back. I think I bring a useful perspective and add some value.”

While managing partner for Oklahoma and Arkansas with Arthur Andersen, Miller would visit functions held by the TU accounting fraternity and make mental notes of students he thought would make good employees. He looked for intelligence, a willingness to work hard and interpersonal skills.

Along with many other TU accounting graduates, Miller recruited Brad Stoots. Now, coincidentally, Stoots is himself an Executive Advisory Board member and managing partner of Grant Thornton, one of the successors to Arthur Andersen.

Miller and Stoots have both witnessed the physical transformation on campus over the last several years, but Miller says the single most important improvement is in the caliber of faculty. As a member of the steering committee of the Executive Advisory Board, he believes the pursuit of funding to attract more top faculty is paramount.

“That’s probably the last piece they need to become a top-tier business school in the nation.”

Alumni and seniors honored at banquet

Three alumni and four seniors were honored at the Collins College of Business Honors and Awards Banquet in the Allen Chapman Activity Center on April 9, 2010.

Christopher Wolking, senior executive vice president and chief financial officer at Old National Bancorp, and Robert C. Dennis, managing partner at KPMG, were named 2010 Outstanding Alumni. Novah Steinhouse, vice president and foreign exchange trader for BOK Financial Corporation, received the 2010 Fast-Track Alumna Award.

“With their tremendous professional achievements and strong leadership skills, these alumni serve as shining examples of success for all of us, especially for those who are just beginning their careers,” said Gale Sullenger, dean of TU’s Collins College of Business. “Their ambitious work ethic and tireless passion for service are inspiring.”

Wolking (BSBA ’72) joined Old National with 11 years of experience in various roles in the treasury and wealth management units of Old Kent Financial Corporation. Prior to joining Old Kent, Wolking was the manager of treasury operations at First National Bank of Tulsa. He began his career as a consultant with the accounting firm, Arthur Andersen and Co., in 1982.

Dennis (BSBA ’85) has served as KPMG Managing Partner in Tulsa since 2003 and is currently in the process of transferring to KPMG’s Denver office to head up the office’s Energy and Natural Resources practice. Dennis joined KPMG, then known as PwC, in March 1985. He was promoted to manager in 1988. He was subsequently elected to the partnership in 1998.

Steinhouse (BSBA ’10) has received four promotions in the 10 years she has worked at BOK Financial Corporation. During that time, she has been instrumental in rapidly expanding the company’s foreign exchange customer base and increasing foreign exchange revenue by 450 percent. She specializes in assisting clients with their foreign exchange hedging needs by providing strategies that best suit their specific business objectives.

The college also honored the 2010 Outstanding Seniors: Katie Largent, accounting; Ryan Starbell, finance; Nathan Olson, exercise science; and Alison Bertram, accounting. The students were honored for exemplary academic performance and character as well as for campus and community involvement.

A Presidential Scholar with a near-perfect GPA, Largent has also found time to satisfy her appetite for the liberal arts by earning minors in English and religion. Currently employed by John Fausche, CPA assisting on audits of Housing and Urban Development properties, she previously worked at Quann & Nanes, LLC in Colorado and Williams in Tulsa.

Starbell has taught physical education to elementary and middle-school students since his freshman year and served as an assistant supervisor at the University School on the TU campus. This past summer, he was a finance intern at Colorado Springs-based Compassion International, a ministry for impoverished children.

Olson is a Presidential Scholar with diverse experience outside the classroom in fitness and therapy. A basketball coach for 5- and 6-year-old boys in the Tulsa Boys & Girls Club, he also works as a research assistant and has worked with individuals who have degenerative neurological disorders.

Bertram immediately began pursuing an MBA with a specialization in accounting from the Collins College of Business after graduating in December with a near-perfect GPA. She maintains her position on the President’s Honor Roll while serving as a graduate assistant in the School of Accounting and MIS.
Students walk into chaos of Chicago trading floor

In a crowded room filled with people shouting and waving wild hand signals, three students from the Collin College of Business recently immersed themselves at the Chicago Board Options Exchange, largest U.S. options exchange and creator of listed options.

During a one-day equity options seminar called “College Day 101” in March, Andrew Hrdlicka, Yuejuan Li and Stephanie Hart explored essential option principles, learned more about financial planning methods and received career counseling for today’s job market.

“There were classroom sessions and presentations by traders at CBOE, but the most interesting part by far was the simulated trading session,” said Hrdlicka, a second-year graduate student.

During the mock trading session, the students had a chance to yell orders and throw hand signals with real traders guiding them in the trading pit.

“It was very overwhelming at first, but they really tried to help us,” he said. “It was definitely the best part of the seminar.”

Students also watched the floor traders in chaotic action during live trading hours and were able to walk around asking questions.

“It was a completely new experience to see how options are traded on the floor, even if you understand it and have learned everything about it in class,” said Vajrjus, also a second-year graduate student.

Energy minor to “energize” business degrees

Based on feedback from the energy industry and the Collin College of Business Executive Advisory Board, TU business students will now have an opportunity to “energize” their degrees beginning this fall with a new minor in energy.

“Not only are the energy companies thrilled to have students add the energy minor to their already chosen accounting, finance, marketing or MIS majors, but there are other companies such as accounting firms, banks and marketing firms that recognize the value,” said Caroline Franklin, director of career development for the CBOE, but the most interesting part by far was the simulated trading session because of how well we all already understood it.”

As for working as a floor trader in the future, most found it too stressful for their liking, but would love to work around it as an analyst or in risk management someday. Because of this interest, a session was held during the trip to discuss the career options in this line of work, a great benefit for these students with graduation in the near future.

New view: Helmerich Hall’s south entrance renovated

Construction crews spent the spring semester renovating the south entrance to Helmerich Hall, home of the Collins College of Business.

“We deeply appreciate Walt Helmerich’s generosity to the college and his desire to enable this further enhancement to our building,” said Gale Sullenberger, dean of the Collins College of Business. “This latest project will create a welcoming southern entrance and raise the profile of our building on campus.”

Once complete, the exterior will consist of new steps and columns of matching stone to support an arched entry. The new entry will display the name Helmerich in stone above the doors with glass side panels. The Beta Gamma Sigma Sigma Key was removed and will be replaced later.

A new canopy will provide shelter for the entrance. Fresh landscaping will include trees and shrubs, paving bricks and benches. New bicycle racks will be installed on the east and west sides of the building.

Helmerich, a friend and supporter of the college, provided the funds for the renovation.

T-Shirt contest to aid Kendall-Whittier neighborhood

True Blue Neighbors and Studio Blue this spring teamed up for a campus-wide T-shirt design contest aimed at helping a nearby neighborhood. The winning design will be produced and sold, with proceeds benefiting True Blue Neighbors and a student emergency fund.

The shirt theme for 2010, “TU Spirit,” was chosen because it reflects the university’s dynamic student body and campus life; and TU’s commitment to involvement, connection, and service to the greater Tulsa community, embodied by the True Blue Neighbors initiative.

Meghan Gides (BS Fine Arts ’07) designed the winning entry. Organizers are gathering up for printing, distribution and an August launch party.

True Blue Neighbors was created in fall 2009 to assist the economically challenged Kendall-Whittier neighborhood of Tulsa. The median income in Kendall-Whittier is more than $10,000 below the rest of the city and 24.5 percent of residents are living below poverty level, according to organizers.

TU administrators have embraced the neighborhood adjacent to campus and encouraged students and faculty to give their time to True Blue projects. University staff are also allowed paid time off to volunteer.

Charles Wood, Studio Blue director and associate professor of marketing, said the idea for a T-shirt contest benefiting True Blue Neighbors’ efforts emerged in 2009 when a student shared the story of Notre Dame’s “Shirt Project” during a marketing brainstorm session in Studio Blue.

T-Shirt contest to aid Kendall-Whittier neighborhood
New MBA recruiter knows program well

Employers hiring interns are encouraged to consider students in the Collins College of Business MBA program.

The newly revised MBA curriculum requires an internship of students with less than two years of work experience. As of the 2010 spring semester, 35 TU MBA students will seek an internship opportunity.

“Students are genuinely interested in gaining exposure to industry practice and culture, and internships provide valuable insight that is hard to replicate in the classroom,” said J. Markham Collins, director of the Collins College of Business Graduate Programs.

“We want to make every effort to ensure our students hit the ground running upon graduation.”

Andrea Sartin, a current MBA student, just completed an internship with Grant Thornton in Dallas where she worked with the tax group in auditing. She found the hands-on experience with real business scenarios invaluable.

“They have us working directly with clients every day,” said Sartin. “We might be interns, but they don’t hold us back. We worked with the CEOs and controllers on a regular basis.”

Initially, accounting was not Sartin’s intended career path, but because of her internship, she now plans to pursue post-graduate employment in the field.

“I’m very glad to have had the opportunity to explore the industry,” she said.

Last summer, Sartin completed an internship at BKD, LLP in Tulsa. BKD recruiter Jeff Ronse said designing a well-thought-out internship program is an effective way to identify and train future employees.

“Internships are a great way to attract top students. It also provides a ‘trial run’ for the company and student before a full-time employment offer is made,” said Ronse. “Internships also help college students determine if they have chosen the correct major or career path. It is much easier for a student to change direction in college than after beginning full-time employment in the wrong field.”

BKD looks for top students to hire as interns each spring, summer and fall semesters. If the intern performs well and enjoys public accounting, BKD extends an offer for full-time employment upon graduation. For companies considering launching or expanding an internship program, Ronse said the greatest challenge lies in the development of a prescribed program.

“The best programs give the intern opportunities to see different aspects of the organization and to meet a number of full-time employees,” he said.

If you are interested in more information about the Collins College of Business MBA internship program or in posting an internship opportunity with the Collins College of Business, contact Caroline Franklin, director of business career development, at caroline.franklin@utulsa.edu or 918-631-2872.
MBA fundraising campaign needs final push

The fundraising campaign for the new MBA program at the Collins College of Business is making significant progress since kicking off in 2008 with more than 70 percent of the funds already raised. Organizers are seeking additional donations and anticipate crossing the finish line within the next 12 to 18 months.

The new MBA program is the focus of the $30 million campaign, which includes creating new endowed faculty positions, expanding business career placement services and adding scholarships for MBA students. The campaign began when Fulton Collins and Walt Helmerich offered to donate $15 million in matching funds to support the development of a new nationally competitive MBA program.

Many TU friends and alumni have furthered this initiative with gifts that were matched by Collins and Helmerich. Most recently, the college created a new endowed faculty position due to the generosity of the Edward E. and Helen T. Bartlett Foundation.

“We are deeply appreciative of the support we have received from our friends, alumni and members of the corporate community,” said Gale Sullenberger, dean of the Collins College of Business. “Businesses tell us they need MBAs with operational expertise in areas such as accounting, finance, information systems, energy management and others. In response, we have added specialization tracks to the MBA. We also have increased coverage of important topics such as business ethics, leadership and team-building.”

The bulk of the remaining campaign funds will support endowed faculty positions in finance, accounting and MIS. Bringing in additional top-caliber faculty will further raise the profile of the Collins College of Business and help develop star graduates.

With the new program, students enroll in an increased number of topic areas through a combination of half-semester and traditional full-semester courses. They also have the ability to customize their programs with concentrated studies in accounting, energy management, finance, international business, management information systems or taxation.
Alumna champions “doing good” as business model

A Golden Hurricane volleyball player and an intern at Arthur Andersen while an accounting student at TU, Jennifer Deckard (BSBA ’88) is now the chief financial officer of one of the largest producers of industrial sand in the United States and a big believer in the profitability of doing good to help the bottom line.

Deckard speaks about half her time tending to the financial side of Ohio-based Fairmount Minerals Ltd, and the other half working in sustainable corporate development, an area one might not normally associate with a CFO’s duties. But, on closer examination, it becomes clear that finance and sustainability are closely linked.

“When doesn’t cost, it pays,” said Deckard, in a phone interview from her office in Chardon, Ohio. “We feel this isn’t about just doing the right thing — although it is the right thing. We believe sustainable development is a good business model.”

The company’s motto, “Do good. Do well,” demonstrates the prominence of this concept among the leadership and employees at Fairmount Minerals. Deckard is a founding member of the company’s Sustainable Development Advisory Committee and organizer of several companywide summits since 2005 to gather employee input and generate ideas regarding the company’s future.

At Fairmount Minerals, it becomes clear that finance and sustainability are closely linked.

For instance, she oversees a companywide safety program, where the number of employees involved has increased dramatically since 2005. “When people are given the opportunity to contribute to their communities or to the environment in meaningful ways, you get Jared employees who are engaged,” said Deckard.

Did somebody say bonuses? What better way to get the attention of employees than to bring up bonuses? When it comes to sustainability, it doesn’t cost, it pays.

Outside the company walls, doing good is a big priority in the Deckard family. Daryl Deckard (BSBA ’88) also came to TU on an athletic scholarship and shares Jennifer’s desire to help others. After they married and began raising a family, they took the big step of becoming registered foster parents.

“Our eyes were opened to the need,” said Jenniffer. “We saw that there was a huge need for foster parents.”

Family committed to community

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“We wanted to elevate in a meaningful way this idea of sustainability,” she said.

Employers across all areas of the company explored how to perform their duties in ways that would positively impact the “3 Ps” (people, planet and prosperity) for company shareholders, employees, business partners and the community. What emerged were several employee-driven initiatives — ranging from community investment and conservation to health and safety — followed by the development of practices and policies designed to impact the company’s bottom line.

“When someone is passionate about a subject, you are going to get some innovative ideas,” said Deckard, indicating that one suggestion that was adopted was simply the use of reusable and recyclable bulk sandbags, resulting in an annual savings of $350,000.

The new practice benefits both the company and its environment.

In the social responsibility category, a new company policy was created that gives employees 40 hours of paid time off volunteer for charities of their choice. Employees can also request that some of the company’s community investment funds be directed to organizations which they personally support through their own time or treasure.

“When people are given the opportunity to contribute to their communities or to the environment in meaningful ways, you get more happy employees who are engaged,” she said.

Did somebody say bonuses? What better way to get the attention of employees than to bring up bonuses? When it comes to sustainability, it doesn’t cost, it pays.

“We get everyone on the same page, everyone has to be impacted equally,” Deckard said. “There is a little bit of peer pressure involved.”

“Doing the right thing — although it is the right thing. We believe sustainable development is a good business model.”

Stationery spreads word on disease

In addition to stationery sales, another function of Forgetmenot Ink is education. About twice a week, Dilley speaks to groups about early-onset Alzheimer’s, a disease that affects people under the age of 65 and is Dilley’s area of interest.

Dilley hopes her presentations will help people learn about the disease and its impacts, but she also aims to remind them that life and the relationships you develop are sacred.

“I hope people will slow down and let their loved ones know how they feel,” Dilley said. “Not just with Alzheimer’s, but in life. We all encounter the unexpected and we all go through hard times. We need to give people something tangible to hold on to. Handwritten letters can do that.”

Dilley is active with the Alzheimer’s Association in Tulsa to stay updated on research, learn new ways to help the cause and find places to speak. She donates her time and resources to the association and to other organizations.

Although she has only been able to dedicate herself to the company full time since January 2010, Dilley says Forgetmenot Ink has been successful on a personal level.

“Reaching out to people about the disease has been incredible,” Dilley said. “It’s good for people to talk who are just starting to deal with Alzheimer’s because it’s not a fun journey. It’s a very tough time for families, and they need to share experiences. That’s where I hope I can help.

This spring, Dilley is creating new products such as professional thank you notes, and other specific note-cards which she hopes to have available by May.

For more information about Forgetmenot Ink, go to www.forgetmenotink.com.
All-night fight against cancer leads to careers of service

Imagine hundreds of glowing luminaries lining the local high school track at dusk in remembrance of loved ones who have died due to cancer. Now think about hundreds of energized walkers and runners circling that track until 5 a.m., when most people are sleeping. All night, they continue the exhausting relay, until the sun rises on a new day.

The American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life event is designed to take participants through a range of emotions associated with cancer. It begins with a special lap when cancer survivors are invited to circle the track together and help everyone celebrate the victories achieved over cancer. The lighting of the luminaries in remembrance of victims. The all-night relay symbolizes a long and tireless fight against the disease that never sleeps.

“We celebrate, we remember, we fight back,” said Courtney Naylor (BSBA ’06), who first volunteered to help with the event as a TU student. “It’s really inspiring for everyone involved.” Describing the relay as a life-changing event, Naylor and two other graduates of the Collins College of Business — Kristen Taylor (BSBA ’04) and Stephanie Lipscomb Madsen (BSBA ’06) — are now employees of the American Cancer Society, building their careers around its mission.

During her junior year at TU, Taylor offered to volunteers for the American Cancer Society, but she never dreamed it would evolve into a career. She was set on a career in sports marketing. That began to change the more she became involved with the nonprofit sector. Taylor was first hooked when representatives from the American Cancer Society came to campus to recruit student volunteers. They played a video about the organization that she said touched her heart.

“At the time, I was fortunate to not have any history of cancer in my family,” she said. Still, she was compelled to give her time to the organization that is committed to eliminating cancer as a major health problem through research, education, advocacy and service. Taylor’s first assignment as a volunteer with the American Cancer Society was to help organize a Relay for Life event on the TU campus. By the time she was a senior, she was chairing that event. Then, a week before graduating from TU, she was offered a full-time job with the organization. Her passion for the cause has led to advancement opportunities within the organization, and she is now community development director for the American Cancer Society’s Eastern Oklahoma office, overseeing 34 Relay for Life events.

Relay for Life began in 1985 when Dr. Gordy Klatt, a colorectal surgeon in Tacoma, Washington, ran and walked around a track for 24 hours to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Since then, it has grown from one man’s passion to fight cancer into the world’s largest movement to end the disease. Each year, more than $5.5 million people in 3,000 communities in the United States, along with additional communities in 20 other countries, gather to take part in this global phenomenon and raise much-needed funds and awareness to save lives from cancer, according to the American Cancer Society.

Led by fellow student Taylor, as a sophomore Madsen was motivated by her grandfather’s cancer diagnosis to volunteer with TU’s Relay for Life. Two years later, Madsen was chairing the campus event as Taylor staffed it. She saw that Taylor loved her job with the organization and decided she too would like to work with the American Cancer Society.

“I really loved the cause and the event itself,” said Madsen. “I wanted to always be a part of Relay for Life.”

After graduating, she continued to volunteer with the American Cancer Society while she worked in sales at a promotional marketing company. Soon, a position opened up, and Madsen is now a community manager of income development, under the direction of Taylor. She is responsible for organizing and executing major fundraising events each year in the Tulsa area.

“I love that no two days are alike and that each day brings new challenges,” said Madsen. “Also, knowing that we are making progress toward finding a cure for cancer is a great motivator.”

The transition from volunteer to employee was simple, and none of the TU graduates were discouraged by perceptions of low pay and long hours. They quickly learned that the payoff was worth any sacrifices.

“We definitely earn our keep,” said Taylor. “But it’s more than a job; it’s a passion. I love working with my staff and our volunteers, and — fairy tale as it may sound — I love making a difference.”

As a product manager for one of the world’s largest food companies, Emily Melton Bolusky (BSBA ’98) found herself in a stable career with a long professional runway in front of her. While at The University of Tulsa, she dreamed of a career in which she would perform marketing research and focus sessions — determinations why consumers pick one product over another. And, she was doing just that.

But after a few years, she began to understand that in order to advance, she would have to constantly be looking for her next move within the organization. From her perspective, it seemed that some of those upward movers would require stepping on coworkers in front of her; that was an uncomfortable feeling.

She began to look outside the walls of the company for opportunity. Through some contacts she had while volunteering in college, she found out about a position at the Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa.

“I’m Cherokee, and I’ve had cousins and friends who are native people – empowered her with a sense of purpose and pride. It has a mission, and you work for that mission each day.”

The mission — providing quality, comprehensive care to Tulsa’s native people — empowered her with a sense of purpose and pride.

In her position, she is responsible for public relations and fundraising efforts for the center. She feels like she’s home now.

“I’m sure there are a lot of great for-profit and nonprofit organizations out there, but this one is the perfect fit for me,” she said. “It sounds trite and so cliché, but it’s something bigger than you.”

Emily Melton Bolusky

Kristen Taylor (BSBA ’04), Stephanie Lipscomb Madsen (BSBA ’06) and Courtney Naylor (BSBA ’06) work for the American Cancer Society in Tulsa. Emily Melton Bolusky
Doing Good
The Business of
THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA
BUSINESS MAGAZINE

Hooked by the cause
Alumna finds the right fit in the nonprofit sector

On those sleepy mornings when it’s tough to get out of bed, Julie O’Rourke (BSBA ’98) thinks of the thousands of kids in the Kansas City area who need someone to care about them.

“That kicks me into gear if I’m having one of those days,” said O’Rourke, the director of marketing and special events for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City. “The kids need us.”

With an increasing number of children at home with no adult care or supervision, many are left to find their own recreation and companionship. The Boys & Girls Clubs offers a positive alternative to that. In Kansas City, more than 6,000 kids between the ages of 5 and 18 belong to the club.

The Boys & Girls Clubs in Kansas City. She is responsible for fundraising events, media relations, marketing and design work. The Club’s calendar is jam-packed with events, and O’Rourke is behind each one of them.

In February, she organized the annual Kids Night Out benefit event, which in the past has featured Julie Andrews, John Lithgow, Cuba Gooding Jr., Sidney Poitier, John Travolta, Bill Cosby, Jay Leno, Muhammad Ali, and other “A” list celebrities. This year, award-winning actor Michael Douglas headlined the event.

Another high-profile program that O’Rourke is heavily involved with is called Reviving Baseball in the Inner City. The program enables hundreds of kids in Kansas City to play baseball and softball with well-trained coaches, gaining improved athletic skills while learning the value of teamwork, sportsmanship and other life skills.

The mission of the organization is to instill a sense of competence, self-worth, belonging and influence in the boys and girls who are members. O’Rourke has seen a number of success stories, including at-risk children who have gone on to graduate from college and pursue ambitious careers.

Reflecting on her time in both the for-profit and nonprofit business sectors, O’Rourke believes there is a need for both types of people.

“When I got out of college, I thought I would never have a job like this. I thought I would never have a job where I could make a difference,” she said. “But I think that’s what I love about my job.”

Alumna discovers rewards in the wild

Holly Munsell Becker (BSBA ’99) goes to work each day on 84 acres inhabited by more than 2,000 birds, reptiles and exotic animals. On a walk in the office, she might hear the trumpet of an Asian elephant or the thunderous roar of a Malayan tiger.

Her job at the Tulsa Zoo and Living Arts Museum is to manage the financial side of income generated by guests who visit, including analyzing data from concessions, ticket sales, special attractions, memberships and more. However, Becker also makes the Tulsa Zoo shine by maintaining the look of a top-notch zoo and by adding amenities that make the zoo stand out as a family attraction.

“I have a creative side, but I also like the number crunching,” said Becker. “My work here offers both. I attribute a lot of what I do here to what I learned in school.”

While a business student at The University of Tulsa, she was not considering a career at the zoo or any other nonprofit, for that matter. As a senior, she landed an internship at a global telecommunications company that led to a full-time gig in international marketing.

She enjoyed the job and learned as much as she could before setting her sights on a smaller organization. She yearned for the type of work where she could more directly help the bottom line.

“When you work for a smaller organization, your area of impact is larger,” she said. “When you are one of 20 employees, as opposed to one of 20,000 employees, it’s much different. It’s nice to see how fast we can make decisions and have an impact.”

As a lifelong lover of animals and the outdoors, Becker is thrilled to be working toward the zoo’s mission of educating people of all ages about animals and the environment. Most people come to the zoo for recreation, but the goal is for visitors to leave with knowledge about the importance of conservation.

“It’s a mission that the dedicated workers at the zoo are proud to work toward,” she said. Becker is glad to be surrounded by like-minded people.

“I just fell in love with this place,” said Becker.
Pavé the Way: Student brings cancer awareness initiative to Tulsa

Anthony Varney was only 6 years old when he was diagnosed with cancer. Now, 14 years later, as a sophomore at TU’s Collins College of Business, he’s using his athletic and organizational talents to increase awareness of one of the worst diseases on the planet.

An avid cyclist, he created the local group Pavé the Way during his senior year in high school at Boscawen, N. H., to support the Lance Armstrong Foundation’s LiveSTRONG worldwide cancer awareness initiative. Pavé is French for cobblestone, a common racing surface in Europe. The name’s dual meaning is appropriate for the cause, he said.

During its inaugural event, about 75 donors and 25 cyclists participated and raised more than $1,000 for LiveSTRONG. In addition, local companies donated such goods as T-shirts and sweatshirts, which were printed with the Pavé the Way logo.

“I thought that was going to be the end of it,” said Varney, who left New Hampshire to study business management at The University of Tulsa.

Then, after getting established in Tulsa, he found a thriving cycling scene, but no real LiveSTRONG presence. Varney felt inspired to continue what he started in New Hampshire and is transforming it into a grassroots advocacy organization.

“It’s something that never leaves you,” Varney said of his experience with colon cancer. In fact, the particular type of cancer he had as a child has a recurrence rate of about 90 percent.

In an effort to support LiveSTRONG, Pavé the Way organizes events, fundraisers and information sessions to help promote awareness and well-being.

The organization is in the early stages of forming a cycling team with the purpose of riding around the TU campus, the city of Tulsa and the state of Oklahoma to promote the LiveSTRONG message, said Varney.

In addition to setting up a booth on campus during Cancer Awareness Day, he has worked with the Susan G. Komen group locally, participated in the LiveSTRONG Challenge race outside of Austin in October, and is planning a formal dance later in the spring. He’s established an online store to sell Pavé the Way gear.

“We are the local army for the LiveSTRONG Challenge,” he said. “They rely on people like us to become local leaders.”

A Category 2 cyclist for a team in Tulsa, Varney plans to participate in several upcoming races. Although team rules prevent him from wearing Pavé the Way or LiveSTRONG gear, he plans to create awareness in other ways.

“With my major being Business Management and eventually looking toward event coordination, I hope to start heading towards the nonprofit sector in the business world,” said Varney. “My ultimate goal would be to work for LiveSTRONG. However, I feel that this may be a long trail before I get there, and working with other professional organizations will help me broaden my imagination for what I can do to help fight cancer.”

Future helping hands

The recently added not-for-profit certificate at the Collins College of Business is sparking interest among students across campus. Karin Lincks is one such student.

A previous oboe performance major who is now studying arts management, Lincks wants to pursue a career that strengthens the classical music scene in Tulsa.

“I want to be able to ensure that performances are in place for the gifted musicians in our community so their talent does not go to waste,” said Lincks. “Classical music draws a very diverse audience and gets all parts of the community interacting. Getting this certificate will allow me to be prepared in starting my own organization or in joining one already in existence.”

Students like Lincks, with a mind for bettering the community, are finding this certificate a great addition. With a class specifically designed in “marketing for nonprofits,” students gain experience working with organizations both in and out of the classroom. This certificate is especially popular with those obtaining arts management degrees.

Classes in the program allow for experience in building a nonprofit organization from the bottom up, as well as offering real-world experience with organizations in Tulsa. Lincks currently has an internship at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center Trust, which puts on community shows and events and provides grants for local nonprofit arts performances.

“We have a very strong relationship with TU. The age of their students is perfect for fresh thinking that is outside the box, and it allows us to be kept updated on what the current trends are,” said Chad Olivo, marketing and public relations manager of the Tulsa Performing Arts Center Trust.

“The nonprofit world is very different from the for-profit world because you have to wear many different hats. Each day is different; it’s trial by fire. Karin has adapted beautifully and quickly, been assigned many projects, and is a joy to work with.”

In addition to real-world experience, the “Not-for-Profit Administration Certificate” program addresses the different challenges nonprofits face in comparison to for-profit businesses. The 18 credit hour includes courses in financial management, marketing, human resource management and legal issues.

“I’ll tell anyone at TU going into any type of business or management that adding a nonprofit certificate to their major is the best way to go,” said Lincks. “With nonprofit, it’s not about the money. It’s about working for a greater cause and bettering our community as a whole.”
“Big Brother” mentorship program creates friendship

Victor’s mother was initially guarded about Rasher, but today he is treated like family. She often calls him to share news in broken-English about his “Big Brother.”

Victor’s teacher took him aside to share some positive news. Victor was showing a marked improvement in schoolwork and was frequently talking about his “Big Brother.”

"As a professor at TU, Rasher understands the importance of education, and he has been able to convey this to his ‘Little Brother’ over the course of their match," said Lillian Tucker, the specialist at Big Brothers Big Sisters in Tulsa, who matched the two. “Victor’s teachers remarked that they saw great improvements not only in Victor’s academics, but also his relationships with peers. In the second year of the match, Victor even won student of the month and invited Rasher to the ceremony.”

Nine years have passed since Rasher and Victor first met, and the mentorship is stronger than ever. In fact, the Big Brother match has been so successful that Rasher was notified in February that he was the recipient of the 2009 Big Brother of the Year award for Tulsa and Oklahoma. In April, he was recognized nationally with a President’s Volunteer of the Year award for his work with Big Brothers Big Sisters and other organizations.

Victor, 16, is a freshman at Booker T. Washington, the most competitive magnet high school in Tulsa. As his grades have climbed, so has his self-esteem. His fondest memories with the college include sharing a Fulbright grant to Ireland with Steve Steib, professor of economics, and taking a hot-air balloon ride with Bob Monroe, professor emeritus of finance and former dean of the college. Colleagues say Hennessee has left quite a mark at the Collins College of Business and that they are going to miss him.

“Even if he is a huge loss to us – he can’t be replaced,” said Wray Bradley, associate professor of accounting, who views Hennessee as a mentor always willing to lend a hand.

After earning his Ph.D. from the University of North Texas, Hennessee came to TU in 1977 and taught for a few years before moving to the University of Texas in which Hennessee works alongside attorneys and accountants to help structure tax-beneficial deals for his clients. Recently, he helped negotiate a $90 million deal in the Permian Basin in Texas in which Hennessee’s students have benefited countless students. His legacy will continue to have a positive impact on our students long after his retirement.”

Students seeking the online MTAX degree are mostly tax professionals from the big four public accounting firms – PricewaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte & Touche, Ernst & Young and KPMG – as well as companies like General Electric, Archer Daniels Midland, Pricer & Gamble and small, private firms.

Students from Maine to California, plus a good number of international students, have completed the online degree. Because all of the teaching and discussion occurs online, Hennessee said he usually doesn’t see any of his students until graduation.

“The first time you see them is at graduation, so we like to take them to dinner and spend some time with them,” he said.

Ironically, he says, he has more interaction with his students in the electronic setting than he did when he taught face-to-face. With thousands of e-mails generated every semester, plus live-sessions, white boards, chat rooms, automated quizzes and small group sessions, the course is also very labor intensive. Students must be self-motivated because they don’t have regular classes or hard deadlines.

“These are high-level professionals and work comes first for them,” said Hennessee. “These are students who turn on the computer at night after the kids are in bed.”

Students who enroll in the course receive a CD of lectures by Hennessee. The lectures are embedded with hyperlinks to various documents that students would otherwise have to look up. The courses are well-suited for online delivery because of the specific nature of the subject matter and the homogeneous makeup of the faculty.

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Sustainability not a passing fad

By Brian R. Chadwuck, Assistant Professor of Marketing at the Collins College of Business

Business buzzwords like “sustainability” and “going green” seem to be everywhere these days. Whether you are sipping a cup of Starbucks’ ethically-produced coffee or reading the “Customer’s Bill of Rights” on a JetBlue flight, companies are making it abundantly known that they care about people and our planet. Although prevalent today, this marketing strategy is nothing new. In fact, it’s based on a decades-old business concept called the “Triple Bottom Line” (TBL), which brings together three interrelated market-focused phenomena: human capital, natural capital, and profitability.

The expectation in the marketplace for companies to emphasize TBL principles has increased considerably in recent years. In light of current national discussions on renewable energy and healthcare, market trends appear to legitimize the importance of the TBL when considering the development of a firm’s value proposition. However, to appreciate the extent to which the TBL will be a part of our everyday lives in the foreseeable future, there are many contemporary examples to consider.

As noted in Fortune’s annual publication “Top Employers to Work For,” human capital consists of a social element that can focus on a company’s employees, customers, or channel partners. As mentioned earlier, Starbucks has refined the notion of fair trade certification with its suppliers and includes a product line which sources coffee in an ethical fashion. In addition, JetBlue’s “Customer’s Bill of Rights” responds to the travails that sometimes result from scheduled passenger air travel. By emphasizing human capital issues in a relevant fashion, companies can communicate the value they place on the social concerns prevalent among consumers.

Meanwhile, the development of natural capital, as noted by Australia’s “America’s Greenest Companies,” has an environmental emphasis that allows companies to differentiate themselves from competitors. Likewise, the decreased use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in manufactured air conditioning and aerosol spray units has proven to be a commerce-based answer to depleted stratospheric ozone. Also, The Wall Street Journal’s yearly ECO-momics conference brings together business and environmental leaders to discuss effective solutions that create long-term environmental capital. In effect, the response to environmental concerns in the marketplace provides a way for firms to distinguish themselves in a competitive fashion.

Finally, the tangible economic value these initiatives provide for a country is paramount for the long-term success of any company utilizing the TBL as an index for success. Based on standard economic thought, the depletion of a country’s capacity for progress and development can be avoided with the intelligent and constructive construction of its most precious resources: its people (human capital) and its land (natural capital). By applying a TBL approach, a business can choose to focus on the strategic development of its human and natural capital in distinctive ways to remain competitive and contribute to long-term renewal.

Still, the greenwashing of business-related activities to disingenuously communicate the artificial environmental contribution of a good, service, or firm serves as an example of a company misappropriating the intent of the TBL for short-term interests. At some point, customers, competitors, and channel partners will examine such positioning and determine its relevance. Then, such greenwashing activities will need to be adapted to add tangible value or become irrelevant.

There is little doubt that a concerted effort to refit a company’s value proposition toward the social and environmental concerns of the marketplace is industry-specific. For instance, Wal-Mart recently announced its long-term goal to be supplied exclusively by renewable energy. However, this may not be immediately adaptable to other sectors of the economy. In addition, the One Laptop Per Child program aims to provide every child in less-developed countries with a computer. But, this may not be readily achievable without adequate access to computing devices. Nevertheless, these decisions provide insight into the growing importance of the TBL in mainstream corporate and consumer decisions.

It cannot be denied that the advent of labor unions and anti-commercial pollution movements over a century ago greatly improved our quality of life during and after the industrial revolution. In continuing with this tradition, firms must balance the importance of TBL initiatives so both current consumers and channel partners are considered. By authentically acknowledging that it cares about customer concerns through a TBL-based emphasis, a company is able to establish a bond that might otherwise be unattainable. Once this has been achieved, the relationship with the customer can prove invaluable for the foreseeable future. Only then will sustainability become a truly realizable goal to remain competitive in a turbulent marketplace.

Akhilesh Bajaj and Robert Russell coauthored “The Role of Workforce Utilizing Social Network Metrics,” which was accepted by Decision Support Systems, a high-quality journal in MIS and decision support.

Wen Chang visited and made presentations at Fudan University and East China University of Science and Technology in China, and Tsinghua University in Taiwan during the 2009 winter break. Chang was elected president of the Chinese-American Association of Tulsa for the term of 2010-2011.

Wen Chang and Timothy Urban have been selected to serve as editors of a special issue of International Journal of Production Economics on “Interdisciplinary Research in Operations Management.”

Kevin Krieger coauthored “Opinion Open Interest Changes and Future Equity Returns,” which is forthcoming at the Journal of Business Finance and Accounting.

Mary Dana Laird will be presenting a paper as part of a symposium titled “Workplace entitlement: I deserve it, give it to me or else!” at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management in Montreal in August. Coauthored by Paul Harvey, this paper deals with the coping consequences of workplace entitlement. Laird and Harvey also wrote “Too Much of a Good Thing: Inflated Self-perceptions in the Workplace” which will be presented at the Fourth European Conference on Positive Psychology, scheduled for June 2010 in Copenhagen, Denmark.


Mike Troilo wrote “The role of trust in new SME creation: Differences in motivations and opportunities” which is forthcoming in International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, pp. 131-145, 2010.

Mike Troilo and Larry Wofford coauthored “Managing Cognitive Risk in Real Estate,” which is forthcoming in the Journal of Property Research. JPR is a first-rate journal published in the UK.


Jim Zboja will be presenting a paper titled “Perceptions of Sales Pressure: A Qualitative Study” at the 2010 Academy of Marketing Science Annual Conference to be held May 26-29 in Portland, Oregon. He will also be serving as a session chair.
Keeping it in the family

All four members of the Laird family have received their business educations at The University of Tulsa. They were all on campus to celebrate Homecoming 2009 last October.

Cathy Laird (BSBA ‘80), finance director of RL Hudson in Tulsa, said, “The TU business college is so well respected and the alumni support so strong that it really helps you find your place in the business community.”

Cathy’s husband, Bob Laird (BSBA ‘80), is president and CEO of Geophysical Research Company, which specializes in providing insurance to high-end ranchers and ranch companies. He also owns a ranch in DeSoto, Missouri, and competes in horse shows and barrel racing. His cookbook, Cowboy Boyd’s Authentic Cowboy Cookbook, is available at Barnes and Noble and Amazon.com.

Jane Talkington (MBA ’09) has become an instructor of “Sustainable Enterprise” at OSU in Stillwater as well as “Sustainable Business” and “Sustainable Communities” online courses at OU. She combined her MBA from The University of Tulsa with a doctorate in Environmental Science from OSU, specializing in “Sustainability” to create a hybrid green business perspective.

Boyd Hoffmann (BSBA ‘91) is the owner of St. Louis-based Paramount Agency, which specializes in providing insurance to high-end ranchers and ranch companies. The business, which opened in 2008, teaches children and adults how to prepare delicious foods from recipes they can use at home. A second location in Tulsa is slated to open this summer. For more information, visit www.SageCulinaryStudio.com.

WHAT’S YOUR FORTUNE? Make your fortune a reality with The University of Tulsa’s graduate business programs. Whether you’re a full-time student or have a full-time career, TU has the accessible classes you need to fulfill a destiny in business. Our attention to real-world learning experiences and our multidisciplinary approach will strategically enhance your career by building multiple areas of expertise.

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SEND US YOUR NEWS:
We want to hear what you’re up to. Send news and photos about your careers and families to alumni-business@utulsa.edu

Danielle Lange (BSBA ’96) married Landon Nalley (BSBA ’05) on May 16, 2009 in St. Louis. TU alumni in the wedding party were B.J. Fagan (BA ’07), Merrill Kelly (BSBA ’86), Bob Cooper (BA ’05), Tyler Alford (BSBA ’05, MBA ’07), Krystal Smith (BMG ’07), Jacob Johnson (BSBA ’06, Rollie Rhodus (BSA ’08) and Derek Smith (BPE ’05).

Katie Sailer Merillat (BA '04, MBA '09) and Adam Merillat (BMG '06) welcomed a son, Blake William Merillat, on February 1, 2010.

The Dallas Alumni Chapter celebrated the holidays on December 19, 2009 at Bengal Coast Restaurant. Pictured are Jeff McCord (BSBA ’99), Katy Young (BSBA ’04) and Chapter President Layne Fisher (BSBA ’07, MBA ’09).

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Kimberly Fairchild (BSBA ’96) was promoted to assurance partner for HoganTaylor LLP.

Catherine deCamp (BNBE ’99 and MBA ’04) is the owner of Sage Culinary Studio, a hands-on cooking studio in Tulsa for children and adults. The business, which opened in 2008, teaches children and adults how to prepare delicious foods from recipes they can use at home. A second location in Tulsa is slated to open this summer. For more information, visit www.SageCulinaryStudio.com.

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Burt Holmes believes in a challenge

urt Holmes (BSBA ’54) believes in a good challenge. As a longtime Challenger of the Annual Fund for the Collins College of Business, he would like to challenge you this year to join him in contributing to a new generation of prospective business men and women.

The generosity of alumni like Holmes supports about 60 percent of the college’s Annual Fund, which pays for professional development opportunities, exposure for students to industry leaders, equipment and more. Little things like this make an enormous difference for students.

“I’m doing it because I think it’s good for the university,” said Holmes. “The motivator is the feeling of satisfaction in doing something for the university. But you have to temper that with your ability to give.”

The economy has taken a toll on unrestricted giving, and Holmes hopes that his continuing gifts will inspire others to contribute at a leadership level ($2,500 minimum gift) and become an Annual Fund Challenger. In addition to helping students, this alumni support also has a great bearing on TU’s national ranking. Alumni have the power to help TU achieve recognition among the “Top 50” universities in the nation.

Holmes attended TU on a basketball scholarship and majored in marketing. Fifty-two years ago he co-founded QuikTrip in Tulsa with Chester Cadieux. He is president of Tulsa-based Leaders Life Insurance. A Trustee Emeritus of The University of Tulsa, Holmes is among a group of dedicated alumni and friends who are up for the challenge of making the Collins College of Business a source of tomorrow’s best business leaders.

“I’m a believer in the Challenger program.”

To learn more about becoming a Challenger contact Amy Berry at (918) 631-3111 or e-mail amy-berry@utulsa.edu.