

BUSINESS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTHERN
ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS | SPRING 2024

**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
EDWARDSVILLE**

Innovation. Engagement. Impact.



About the SIUE School of Business

OUR VISION

The SIUE School of Business aspires to be recognized for its excellence in developing highly skilled professionals who shape the global business environment in an ethical, inclusive, responsible, and innovative manner.

OUR MISSION

The SIUE School of Business provides a high-quality, accessible business education that empowers learners to make a difference in a dynamic, diverse, and connected world.

KEY ELEMENTS OF OUR MISSION

HIGH QUALITY

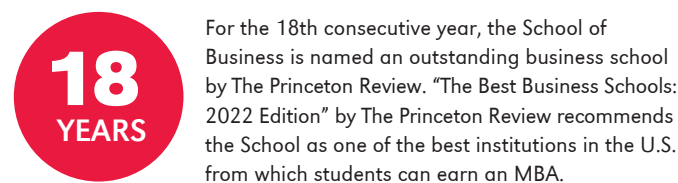
We provide a high-quality business education by: (1) offering business programs that are accredited by AACSB; (2) creating a learning environment for undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education students that fosters creativity, critical thinking, ethical behavior, sociocultural competence, and appreciation of global issues; (3) placing a strong emphasis on the application of cutting-edge business practices and technology in our business programs; (4) hiring and retaining faculty that deliver a business curriculum based on the combination of contemporary research, relevant business practice, and teaching effectiveness.

ACCESSIBLE

Our education is accessible in several ways: (1) we offer courses in fully online, hybrid, and traditional face-to-face formats, depending upon our students' and degree programs' characteristics; (2) we foster a welcoming community for students from a diverse set of backgrounds by being sensitive to their social and educational concerns; (3) we connect students with the business community in the St. Louis metropolitan area; (4) we have faculty that are excited to engage with students both during and outside of class.

A DYNAMIC, DIVERSE, AND CONNECTED WORLD

We prepare our students to function and thrive in a rapidly changing global business environment by developing an appreciation of different world views, an international perspective, and technological skills in the business curriculum.



Only 5% of business schools worldwide are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International. Even fewer have earned dual AACSB accreditation in business and accounting, placing the SIUE School of Business among the elite 2% of business schools around the world to have earned this dual distinction.

SIUE IS AMONG AN ELITE FEW:
2% of business schools worldwide are AACSB-accredited in both business and accounting.

FACULTY



2 UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

- BS Accountancy
- BS Business Administration

12 UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION SPECIALIZATIONS

- Computer Information Systems
- Cybersecurity
- Data Analytics
- Economics
- Entrepreneurship
- Finance
- General Business Administration
- Human Resource Management
- International Business
- Management
- Marketing
- Supply Chain Management

4 GRADUATE PROGRAMS

- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Marketing Research
- MS Accountancy
- MS Management and Information Systems

GRADUATE SPECIALIZATIONS

MBA

- Business Analytics
- Healthcare Administration
- Management
- Management Information Systems
- Project Management

Master of Marketing Research

- Business Analytics

MS Accountancy

- Business Analytics
- Taxation

MS MIS

- Business Analytics
- Project Management

SIGNATURE COURSES

Business Transitions I:
Planning for Success

Business Transitions II:
Commitment Beyond College

Schoenecker Reflects on Last Year as Dean

Seeing students reengaging in organizations, research symposiums and more is a significant highpoint for Tim Schoenecker as he closes out a seven-year chapter of service as dean of the School of Business at SIUE.

"I've been really pleased at students' level of engagement in 2023," said Schoenecker. "Coming out of the pandemic, student participation in co-curricular activities really suffered. Students were coming to school and immediately leaving after classes without much interaction. This year we've had students stepping forward to organize a number of activities that have been successful. It's great to see the quality and ingenuity that our students have displayed."

"A mock networking event is one of the initiatives set into motion by School of Business students this year," Schoenecker said. More than 100 students participated, and 35 companies were on campus for this event, which gave students an opportunity to practice their networking skills. The event was spearheaded by Beta Alpha Psi, an accounting student organization. One week later, the first-ever business student research symposium was held; it was the brainchild of Kelly Cruise, a senior honors student studying economics. "Four students presented and eight more offered poster presentations," he said. "The work was tremendous. I'm so proud of our students for their initiative, creativity and hard work."

Three of the School's student-run entities – a student investment fund plus marketing and accounting student organizations – traveled to conferences and participated in competitions this year as well. Another highlight from the spring semester was an alumni event held in Chicago, which gave Schoenecker the opportunity to visit with former students. He looks back with pride at what these alumni are achieving. "One of my students is living for two years in London, pursuing mergers and acquisitions experience. Another is founding his own venture capital fund. And another is deputy budget director for the City of Chicago," he said. "It's really gratifying to see these individuals succeed, and I'm thankful to have had the chance to cross paths with them during my time as a faculty member or as dean. They're going to have tremendous success in their careers."

Schoenecker said sometimes it's wise not to take oneself too seriously. He remembers co-authoring an article in 2007 with a former School of Business dean who questioned the future of online education. "Not too many years later, I ended up encouraging us to offer our MBA programs online," he said with a grin. "You just never know where educational delivery is going to lead."

"Over the past seven years, the School of Business has grown its online graduate headcount to near-record enrollment," said Schoenecker. "We're a fiscally stable unit on campus and we continue to expand our executive education portfolio. I'm very proud of both of those things."

Tim Schoenecker, PhD
Dean Emeritus



Dear Alumni and Friends of the SIUE School of Business,

Thank you for your support of the School of Business. As described by Dean Emeritus Schoenecker, last year was a banner year in terms of student engagement and success in curricular and co-curricular activities. In the 2023-24 academic year, we continue to build on the efforts and successes of the past year.

Our focal areas going forward are student-centered and will directly benefit the School's students as they pursue degrees that will ultimately bring economic benefits to regions where students live and work. Our mission to prepare students for tomorrow's workforce is enhanced through your support. Our specific focus for enhancing student education includes upgrades to student study spaces in Founders Hall. Our business students fill our hallway tables and lounge areas while studying individually or in groups, before and after their scheduled courses. Our last upgrades to these areas occurred over 25 years ago and refurbishment that is more suitable to student study groups is needed.

Other student-centered focal areas also include additional support for scholarships and additional transitions course costs. As companies decrease tuition reimbursement benefits, scholarships become more critical in educating tomorrow's workforce. In the coming year, we will expand our signature transitions courses that provide professionalism and mentoring for business students. At present, the transitions courses are in the junior and senior years. With an increased number of students being directly admitted to the business school as freshmen, we will include transitions courses in the freshmen and sophomore years from Fall 2024 forward.

Your support for our business students helps them gain knowledge and skills to use in defining the future of business in a changing world. Please join me in thanking Dr. Schoenecker for providing an excellent foundation for the School to build on for the benefit of our students.

Janice R. Joplin, PhD
Interim Dean



Prestigious President's Exporting Award Bestowed Upon Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE

The Illinois Small Business Development Center's International Trade Center at SIUE (Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE) is the recipient of the highest recognition possible for making a significant contribution to the expansion of U.S. exports.

Led by long-time Director Silvia Torres Bowman, the Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE is among a select cadre of "E" for Excellence Award recipients. Only 24 honorees nationally received the award this year, and the Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE was the only recipient located at a university.

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo presented the award to Torres Bowman along with SIUE Chancellor James T. Minor, PhD, in early June.

The President's "E" Award was created by executive order to recognize persons, firms or organizations which contribute significantly in the effort to increase U.S. exports.

"On behalf of President Biden, I congratulate the Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE on its distinguished achievements in exports, which is delivering tangible benefits for local economies, workers and their families," Raimondo said. "The Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE serves as a model that will inspire enterprises and entrepreneurs everywhere. The "E" Award is the highest honor that U.S. exporters and export service providers can receive from the U.S. government. They are a testament to your hard work exporting your products and services to the global market – and your remarkable resilience during an unprecedented global pandemic," she added.

The Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE promotes and provides export opportunities that American businesses are seeking, according to Raimondo, such as profit, impact and economic growth. "Exporting world-class American products and services isn't just good for our domestic economy, it's also vital to our global competitiveness," she said. "That's why we're doing everything we can at the Commerce Department to promote American businesses and products."

2023 winners of the "E" Award collectively contributed to nearly \$1.5 billion in exports of goods and services between 2019 and 2022, according to the Commerce Department.

Winners of the "E" Award are authorized to fly a blue and white banner to display their accompanying certificate of commendation that is signed by the Secretary of Commerce in the name and by the authority of the President, to wear and issue to employees an "E" lapel pin, and to refer to the award in their marketing.



"Receiving this recognition not only motivates us to work even harder, but also reminds us that we are making a significant impact on so many small businesses and communities in Illinois and our U.S. economy," said Torres Bowman. "Building long-term partnerships with our clients has always been an integral part of the mission and our long-term commitment to small businesses in southern Illinois."

Chancellor Minor said this recognition demonstrates SIUE's ability to make outsized contributions to the economic development of the region. "In addition to producing talented graduates who will define the workforce of our region, SIUE supports the development of the business community in ways that merit national attention," he said. "This award is a powerful and definitive statement about impact."

The Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE has been serving the export needs of small and medium-sized businesses from 35 counties in southern Illinois for nearly 40 years. The Illinois SBDC

ITC at SIUE focuses on educating, equipping and empowering small businesses for long-term international success. It fosters global trade through collaboration with SIUE's academic programs, connecting students developing skills in international business, foreign languages and market research with regional companies seeking to expand internationally through exports.

On a regular basis, Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE client companies are provided no-cost export-based services, including one-on-one advising sessions (in person or virtual), evaluations of export readiness, customized global connections and export finance assistance.

Illinois ranks fifth in the nation as a leading exporting state. In 2022, it generated more than \$78 billion from exports sent to more than 215 countries, supporting nearly one million U.S. jobs. The Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE has assisted its clients in the generation of more than \$160 million in export sales over the past five years.

“The Illinois SBDC ITC at SIUE serves as a model that will inspire enterprises and entrepreneurs everywhere.”
– GINA RAIMONDO
U.S. Secretary of Commerce

SIU System Moving Closer to Increased Undergrad Course Access



SIUE, SIUC and the SIU School of Medicine are planting seeds for a course-sharing initiative that increases educational access for all Southern Illinois University System students.

Janice Joplin, PhD, interim Dean of the School of Business, said coordinating among the campuses to increase access to courses is the first objective of the current System strategic plan. "Each SIU campus has differing areas of expertise," she said, "And it's not always financially feasible to add that expertise to all campuses. We're embarking on a course-sharing initiative wherein a SIUE student may take a course from SIUC, and the System makes it seamless for that student."

"Making the back-of-house systems requirements 'invisible' to the student," Joplin said, "is where the complexity enters." Both campuses are working on building the necessary IT network to make this possible. "Right now, each campus handles this differently, and each has its own software and learning management system platforms," she said. "Course registration and how entire course materials are housed is distinctly unique. Our objective is to decrease barriers between campuses to increase access for all students, no matter their home campus."

For example, Blackboard is currently the learning management system utilized by faculty and students at SIUE. At SIUC, D2L (Desire2Learn) Brightspace is the learning management system.

Joplin said the idea of increasing educational access systemwide began in 2019. In spring of 2022, faculty and staff from both SIU campuses produced a white paper that outlined details, challenges and benefits of the proposed course exchanges strategy. In summer 2022, the Universities' strategic plan was implemented with educational access as the number-one goal.

"A student may want to take an elective course from SIUC because SIUE doesn't offer it, or vice versa," said Joplin. "We're currently focusing on undergraduate courses and can point to examples where students in applied communications at SIUE are also enrolled in SIUC online courses. We are offering a small set of courses this fall to test what we're building and make adjustments."

Dell Foundation is providing funding to help the campuses organize and establish the necessary infrastructure. The SIU System is also studying other universities' best practices with regard to increasing educational access.

WELCOME TO NEW FACULTY



• Prajakta Kolte, PhD

Kolte began as assistant professor of computer and management information systems in August 2022 after a career in venture capital, working in both new startups and subchapter S analytics. Kolte is currently teaching graduate-level courses including database management systems, database designs and machine learning. She and her husband came to the U.S. from India in 2012.

“ I love my colleagues here and it's a supportive environment in terms of research. ”



• Markus Nauroth, PhD

Nauroth joined the faculty in January 2023 as assistant professor in computer and management information systems. After years of working in computer science across the globe and earning a PhD in theoretical physics, he accepted a post as a full professor at the University of Applied Sciences in Mainz, Germany. In 2018, Nauroth was invited to SIUE as a visiting scholar. He and his family loved Edwardsville and ultimately chose to return. He is currently teaching computer management and information systems with an emphasis on cybersecurity.



• Shivendu Singh, PhD

Singh joined the School of Business faculty in August 2022 following a three-year experience working as an assistant professor in Auckland, New Zealand. With a PhD in information systems and technology management, his specialties are in open innovation, machine learning, artificial intelligence and business analytics. Singh is teaching students IT with a focus on project management software. "Our department believes in teamwork, and everyone works together," he said.



• Maria Prats, PhD

Born in Barcelona, Spain, Prats holds a PhD in organizational behavior with an emphasis on motivation. She joined the faculty in August 2022 as an assistant professor. Prats came to Edwardsville after two years as postdoctoral scholar at Northwestern University's Center for Leadership and three years of international business work in Washington D.C. She, too, said there is a strong spirit of collaboration between colleagues here.

“ Students are eager to learn real-life scenarios about ethical issues in companies. ”

FAREWELL TO RETIREES



• George Watson, PhD

Watson retired in August 2022 after teaching business in society/business ethics for 15 years. "I really enjoyed teaching the course because there were always a lot of interesting examples to call upon," said Watson. "The most interesting part of business ethics is the psychology of real-life business ethics." Just before he retired, Watson earned a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing and is currently authoring his first book, a spy suspense novel that includes several ethical issues faced by the main character. In addition to writing, he enjoys woodworking and lathing.



• James Mussulman, MBA

Mussulman retired after nearly 26 years of teaching business infrastructure technology and information security courses at SIUE. He holds both a BS and an MBA from SIUE. For nearly 23 years, Mussulman has owned his own business, Mussulman Consulting Service.

School of Business Grads Launch, Grow Entrepreneurial Vision

Six School of Business graduates are owners of their own successful firms; evidence that a solid foundation of business expertise is the basis for innovative entrepreneurialism.



MITCH MEYERS
BSA '78, MBA '81

Mitch Meyers transitioned from a career as a marketing executive with 7UP and later Anheuser-Busch into launching her own vertically integrated medical cannabis firm, BeLeaf Medical Company, in 2019. Underneath the parent BeLeaf are SWADE Medical Dispensary, SINSE Cannabis and PHYTOS.

"When my son started college in Boulder in 2009, I was fascinated that this whole new industry was springing up," said Meyers. "Every state has its own regulatory structure. When Missouri's ballot initiative passed, our group applied for and was awarded 10 licenses in cultivation, manufacturing and dispensing."

Meyers' SIUE-based accounting and finance education, she said, prepared her for the opportunity more than 40 years later to launch BeLeaf. "Medical cannabis is an alternative to many pharmaceuticals without the harsh side effects," said Meyers. "If you believe in what you do and are passionate, people will follow you."



LES SUHAYDA
BSA '79

Les Suhayda's education would lead him into a successful purchasing career as a senior buyer for McDonnell Douglas Chemisphere. But it was two of Suhayda's hobbies – major league baseball and wine – that led him to launch Menrathwines, named after his Hungarian grandfather.

Suhayda's company, Lazlo Corp., began in 2002 as an industrial chemical wholesaler. Before the economy took a downturn, he pivoted and invented the first wine slushie, selling it in Busch Stadium.

“The accounting and business theory education I acquired at SIUE helped me greatly.”

"The beverage product development was similar to the process I'd followed for product development in the chemical industry," said Suhayda. "The accounting and business theory education I acquired at SIUE helped me greatly. Education provides the skeleton and experience fills out the body. I'm one who never gives up."



JEFFRY HARRISON
BSBA
Finance and Entrepreneurship '12

What began as a college student's retail services discount card in 2009 by the name of Rovertown is now a customizable branded app-creation company whose clients include large gasoline and convenience store franchises.

Rovertown co-founder and president Jeffrey Harrison's SIUE education prepared him well to succeed in a venture that began as the Rovercard and morphed seven years later into Rover Enterprises. In 2013, the business – operated by Harrison plus SIUC graduates Mike Philip and Michael Rzeznik – won a \$50,000 Arch Grants Startup Competition award. Three years later, the company was teetering when national gas station retailer Hucks asked for an app. The rest, said Harrison, is history.

"We develop and manage apps for convenience stores," he said. "It has all come full circle and we never gave up."



IAN MAUE
BSBA
Computer Information Systems,
current student

Ever since Ian Maue's grandfather bought him a small drone eight years ago, he has been fascinated with building and racing drones. In 2021, he turned that fascination into a business and founded Metro East Drone. Maue has flown his drones commercially over more than 15 states' worth of clients, offering services such as surveying, flythroughs, live production and photo/video.

“I've been lucky enough to provide photos and video for NASCAR and IndyCar races.”

"I've always been a big racing fan," said Maue, whose work includes flying drones that chase race cars from above for live video coverage of events. "I've been lucky enough to provide photos and video for NASCAR and IndyCar races."

Pursuing his degree full-time while working full-time has been a challenge that Maue is embracing. "I've regularly flown back in time to catch Wednesday in-person classes at SIUE," he said. "The accounting, economics and general business courses I've taken are valuable to my business."



BRITTANY DWYER
BSBA
Marketing '11, MBA '15

Brittany Dwyer said her degrees served her well in her 2021 launch of Disco!, an online group experience booking platform. In 2022, Disco! won a \$75,000 Arch Grants Startup Competition award.

"I had a great corporate job during the pandemic, but the goal of launching Disco! was keeping me up at night," she said. "In 2021, I made the leap so I could focus full-time on my business. That year I launched the beta version of my site. We're still in the early stages of the company, but it's growing rapidly, and the feedback has been incredible. If the pandemic taught us anything, it has been the importance of human interaction."

Some 40% of Disco! clients are corporate customers looking for assistance in planning and booking client dinners, holiday parties and team building experiences. Dwyer also regularly plans group experiences for nonprofits. Her firm's hyper-curated, customized bookings include events such as a rooftop happy hour or a day at a local farm. "We're more than a marketplace," she said. "We're a community, giving small businesses the means of monetizing their own events."



ANNA ARMON
BSBA
Entrepreneurship '23

Anna Armon, a 2023 SIUE graduate and the first-place winner of the School of Business' TheOther40 pitch competition, began sewing four years earlier when she was gifted a machine. Throughout 2020, she sold Covid masks and hair scrunchies. And a year later, when the reusable mop cover her mother purchased became clogged with pet hair, the lightbulb in Armon's brain went off. During that period, Armon was in an entrepreneurship course at SIUE.

"I began sewing and selling reusable covers for dust mops and wet mops," she said. "That's when my business and my product, the Eco-Mop, was born. The mop can be composted at the end of its life cycle. All my products – the Eco-Mop, reusable dusters and reusable paper towels – are environmentally friendly." Armon is currently creating a bamboo mop and it's in the proof-of-concept stage.

Over the summer, Armon completed a 10-week entrepreneurship program at Washington University in St. Louis. "One of the best things about this program is that it provides a paid intern for each of the participants," she said. "I was able to choose my intern who worked for me during this period. It has been such an amazing opportunity, and I'm honored to be the first non-Washington University student to be part of this initiative. It's so kind of the university to open its doors to me."

MBA Grad Jackie Hayes Named to 40 Under 40 Roster



Alumna and business development professional Jackie Hayes is among the St. Louis Business Journal's current class of 40 Under 40 honorees.

The distinction is bestowed upon those who are considered movers and shakers in their profession and who faithfully serve their community.

Jackie Hayes, 30, a 2017 MBA graduate, was nominated for the coveted award by her former supervisor, John Caupert, executive director of the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center located on the SIUE campus. In his nomination, Caupert communicated Hayes' role as director of business development and client relations at the NCERC along with her extensive volunteer work and fundraising efforts for organizations, including St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Girls on the Run.

In addition to her volunteer work, Hayes leads a group for young professionals in the biofuels sector, the Young Professions Network, which she began in 2020 while serving the Renewable Fuels Association. Since its inception, the network has grown to more than 200 members of young professionals from across the globe who serve the U.S. ethanol industry.

"It's an honor to be named a 40 Under 40 recipient," said Hayes, an Alton native. "I've truly enjoyed fundraising for and contributing to organizations whose mission makes an impact on future generations."

In 2023, Hayes volunteered to serve as vice chair of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Young Friends Committee's leadership board. Hayes, who recently took a position as business development manager for Whitefox Technologies, an engineering and technology company, is committed to doing her part to reduce carbon emissions.

"My investment in an MBA has already paid off professionally," she said. "My number-one goal over the trajectory of my career is to have the biggest impact I can with companies that contribute to decarbonization."

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It's an honor to be named a 40 Under 40 recipient. I've truly enjoyed fundraising for and contributing to organizations whose mission makes an impact on future generations.

— JACKIE HAYES
Alumna and business development professional

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Doctor of Humane Letters Conferred to John Martinson

John Martinson, fighter pilot turned venture capitalist, is the recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from SIUE.

Martinson earned an MBA from SIUE while serving in the U.S. Air Force in California. "The SIUE School of Business professors flew to where I was stationed every three weeks to teach 20 hours over a three-day weekend," said Martinson. "It was incredible dedication on their part. I learned that kind of immersive style and it helped me the rest of my career to really dig into subjects."

Earning his graduate degree in 1975 proved to be a catalyst in launching Martinson's longstanding career of more than 40 years as a venture capitalist. He has participated in more than 200 equity financings and has served as a director of 80 companies. He is also a 2011 SIUE Hall of Fame inductee.

In 1986, Martinson started his own venture capital firm, Edison Partners. He is chair of Martinson Ventures and remains an active individual investor and philanthropist. His investment specialties include educational technology, digital health and marketing automation. Martinson currently serves as chair of the Martinson Family Foundation which awards grants to educational and charitable programs. Under his leadership, the foundation has provided funding and advising for 50 multiple-year projects at 20 universities to improve

K-12 instruction in mathematics, science, technology and engineering. He has also funded seven honors colleges and eight theater technology upgrades.

"About 25 years ago, I realized that I'd been blessed in my career and that motivated me to initiate a philanthropy program to begin giving back," he said. "At first, I gave my time, and then money, and then more time and then more money, and it continues today. I think I have another 15 years to go in business and similarly even longer with philanthropy. But I get so much more out of it than making money...I get a lot out of helping people progress."

Martinson urges students to follow his lead.

"I hope in your careers you'll have time to give back to this institution to which we all owe so much," he said. "Together we can give our time and money to help it grow to greater heights."

Chancellor James T. Minor, PhD, said the honorary doctor of humane letters is bestowed upon individuals who have made a profound impact on SIUE in line with its mission, vision and values.

"John Martinson continues to have an impact on SIUE students and faculty," Minor said.



“About 25 years ago, I realized that I'd been blessed in my career and that motivated me to initiate a philanthropy program to begin giving back.”

— JOHN MARTINSON



Business Faculty Serve in Campuswide Roles

Three School of Business faculty members are going the extra mile as they serve the University in a campus-wide leadership capacity.



JANE JIA, PhD Faculty Senate President

Jia, professor of finance, is serving as Faculty Senate president for one year. The role is time consuming but rewarding, she said.

“My function is to help with the communication between administrators and the faculty,” said Jia. “By inviting the administrators, including the Provost, Chancellor and SIU System President, to attend the Faculty Senate meetings and the Faculty Senate executive committee meeting and planning the topics of meeting discussions, I have improved the interactions between faculty and administration.”

During the individual meetings with the Provost, Jia accumulates all the faculty’s suggestions and ideas across the different schools at SIUE and communicates them to the administration.

As the Faculty Senate is comprised of 61 senators – each representing both tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty from each school – Jia’s service demands a great deal of time in interactions, both in person and remotely. Each senator is assigned to a distinct council such as faculty development, welfare, curriculum, budget operations and finance, governance, and graduate councils. The Faculty Senate regularly compiles a report that goes to SIUE administration and Jia relays administration responses back to faculty.

“The School of Business doesn’t normally have a representative on Faculty Senate Executive Committee, so I am honored to serve in this capacity,” she said.

“.....
The School of Business doesn’t normally have a representative on Faculty Senate Executive Committee, so I am honored to serve in this capacity.
.....”



MIKE HAIR, PhD Graduate Council Chair

Hair, associate professor of marketing, is in his first year of chairing the Graduate Council. One of the council’s key goals is expediting faculty members’ programming-related requests and being responsible for academic policy oversight. The council convenes monthly and is comprised of members from faculty, staff, students and other constituencies.

“All of the items that were approved in subcommittee are formally accepted by the council,” he said. “We act in an advisory capacity to the Chancellor and discuss budget-related and planning-related decisions. Our goal is to help promote smooth communication with the administration.”

“.....
Our goal is to help promote smooth communication with the administration.
.....”



ARIEL BELASEN, PhD Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Coordinator

Belasen, an economics professor who teaches MBA program courses and undergraduate economic specialization classes, is in his second year as the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (URCA) coordinator. As URCA coordinator, Belasen seeks out faculty who are willing to pair with undergraduates so the students can gain valuable research experience. URCA provides funding that enables a faculty member to hire a research assistant, which in turn affords the student an opportunity to acquire real-world research and publishing expertise.

“Even more important than the stipend the students earn is the chance to work alongside a faculty member and learn the entire research process,” he said. “It’s particularly important for undergraduates who are thinking about graduate school. This URCA opportunity helps them gain a leg up on their competition.”

Last semester, 90 URCA-funded research projects took place. The more selective URCA associate program funds 10 projects per year; students in this program receive a greater stipend plus travel allowance and an equipment allowance.

“When the position opened up to lead URCA, I immediately applied for it, because I’ve had such great research experiences and I wanted to give back,” Belasen said.

Harbison Among 2022 Hall of Fame Inductees



Damon Harbison, MBA '04, President, SSM Health Southern Illinois, is among a select cadre of individuals inducted into the SIUE Alumni Hall of Fame in September 2022.

During "A Night Among the Stars," Harbison was recognized for his contributions in the healthcare profession, as well as service to SIUE and to his own community. Initially following a clinical career path as a radiation oncology therapist, Harbison chose to pursue an MBA and tap into his leadership abilities to transition into hospital leadership.

"My MBA equipped me with general foundational leadership and the capacity to work hard, build business relationships and excel in critical thinking," Harbison said. "SIUE really set the course for me in life," said Harbison. "Working all day and then coming to SIUE for graduate school allowed me to apply the theories and principles I was learning in the classroom to real life in a meaningful way."

Harbison has worked at SSM Health Illinois for nearly six years, as president for St. Mary's Hospital - Centralia as well as the Rural Health Network. In July, SSM Health's restructuring expanded his leadership by adding SSM Health Good Samaritan Hospital in Mt. Vernon and the role of president over the Rural Health network in Southern Illinois to his responsibilities.

Before his tenure at SSM Health began in 2010, Harbison served in multiple leadership roles with Tenet Healthcare at

Saint Louis University Hospital. One of his earliest leadership roles was as chief mentor for SLU Hospital where he and his team created an onboarding program for new employees, held lunch-and-learns for other mentors, and ensured that initiatives worked to retain talent and decrease turnover. It was at this time Harbison realized the importance of mentoring and sharing experiences to assist others in their educational and career journeys.

"Spending time with university-age young adults and investing in their future is so important," he said. "As a community and as a profession, we should strive to be better today than we were yesterday."

In February, Harbison was appointed to the board of the Illinois Hospital Association. He remains a member of the SIUE School of Business Advisory Board, SIUE Foundation Board of Directors, the Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and numerous other regional, national and international organizations.

On a personal level, Harbison, his wife and children regularly serve at their church's mass, help clean the church and volunteer after school. "My family wants to lead by example," he said. "Positivity is contagious. We're intentional about carving out time to make service happen. And it instills values in our children so they can instill it in their children one day, moving generations forward. Pursuing excellence in our career while balancing our family life is an ongoing journey."

"SIUE really set the course for me in life. Coming for graduate school allowed me to apply the theories and principles I was learning in the classroom to real life in a meaningful way."

- DAMON HARBISON, MBA '04
President, SSM Health Southern Illinois

Business Students Reap Benefits from Professional Organizations

School of Business students represent their university in multiple facets as they travel to conferences across the country to learn more about their future professions.

As president of the SIUE chapter of Beta Alpha Psi - the honor society for accounting, finance and CMIS students and professionals - senior accounting student Hannah Sheahan's leadership position has afforded her travel to regional and national conferences. The society's local chapter touts 60 active members.

In February 2023, Sheahan and her executive board attended Beta Alpha Psi's annual conference in Houston as well as another national conference the organization hosted in Las Vegas in August. Also in attendance was Marc Ortegren, assistant professor of accounting and auditing, and the chapter's faculty advisor.

"More than 1,000 attend these national conferences," said Sheahan. "It's an excellent way to gain fresh ideas."

Sheahan said Beta Alpha Psi prioritizes its focus on service. Members regularly volunteer to paint items at Restore Décor located in downtown Edwardsville, volunteer at SIUE's commencement ceremonies and pick up recycled waste after St. Louis Cardinals games. The local chapter also launched a networking event to connect students with potential employers. Mentoring accounting undergrads is also part of their service commitment.

"This year we started a networking night that was open to all School of Business majors that several area companies sponsored," she said. "More than 120 students and 35 companies attended to develop soft skills, and we offered professional headshots. This fall we're continuing our Meet the Firms career fair to help match students with open job positions."

"More than 1,000 students attend these conferences. It's an excellent way to gain fresh ideas."

- HANNAH SHEAHAN
BSA student

May 2023 business administration graduate Ashton Roberts served as president of the American Marketing Association's local chapter.

"I had the privilege of gaining many amazing experiences throughout my time in AMA," said Roberts. "We participate in the Case Competition every fall, and we bring a number of speakers to campus as professional development opportunities."

A record number of 12 SIUE members of AMA traveled to New Orleans for the association's national conference in March to compete in marketing-centric competitions and received the honor of outstanding in the category of Best Educational Value. The local chapter was also recognized for the chapter marketing plan members created and submitted.

Roberts' challenge as president for 18 months was to rebuild the organization following the pandemic. "In May 2022, we were left with fewer than five members and we grew that number to 41 within the first few weeks of the fall 2022 semester," she said. "Our executive board provided excellent guidance and support. Everything I did and learned through this affiliation with AMA led me to where I am today as a marketing and communication coordinator with Centene Corporation. I encourage anyone and everyone to join AMA, even if you know nothing about marketing or business. It provides so many opportunities for growth and networking."





Graduating Senior Launches School's First Student Research Symposium

A May 2023 economics graduate is credited with initiating the School of Business' first student research symposium.

Kelly Cruise, now a graduate student at Baylor University, approached then School of Business Dean Tim Schoenecker, PhD, last fall about the idea to host a research symposium to give business students the opportunity to perform research and gain experience in presenting their findings. Cruise said the concept stemmed from her work in SIUE's Student Economics Association.

"We were all doing our own independent research and each of us was working with a business professor as part of the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities program," said Cruise, "Yet we really weren't aware of what each other was researching. I approached Dean Schoenecker about creating a mechanism through which we could share our information and gain valuable presentation experience in the process."

With full support from the Dean; her URCA mentor; Ariel Belasen, PhD, economics professor; and her instructor, Marlon Tracey, PhD, associate professor of microeconomics, Cruise set her idea into motion, accomplishing much of the groundwork to launch the one-day program in spring 2023. Participating business students, including those who were active members of the Financial Management Association and American Marketing Association's SIUE chapters, submitted their proposals in February. Four students were selected to offer official presentations and another 11 students were chosen to create research posters to display during the event.

On March 28, 2023, the student-led symposium took place in Founders Hall. Several economics and financial management students made full presentations, while the posters on display included topics such as how U.S. divorce rates correlate with labor rates. Graduating seniors from the Department of Economics and Finance leveraged the symposium as their required capstone experience.

Cruise, whose graduate studies are central to behavioral economics, said she hopes another SIUE School of Business undergraduate will continue the symposium.

Belasen agrees that the student-led research symposium enhances undergraduates' communications experience and serves to prepare them well as they continue their education.

"I had the privilege of mentoring Kelly, one of only 10 URCA associates selected annually from the entire SIUE student body," Belasen said. "I assisted with the venue and some program coordination for the symposium, but Kelly did all the work to make it happen. This symposium provides participants with invaluable experience, especially those students going on to graduate school. Being able to conduct research and present your findings are skills that any working economist needs. It's my hope that this symposium continues."

Tracey, who teaches microeconomics and statistical/empirical analysis courses at SIUE, said a student research symposium is the ideal opportunity that allows undergraduates to present technical material and co-publish with their instructor while gaining invaluable experience to prepare them for graduate research in a future professional role as an economist.

"Both Kelly Cruise and Mickenzie Bass are going to go on and do really great things," Tracey said. "We're really hoping to continue this student research symposium on a regular basis. It affords these bright students the opportunity to publish before they graduate, be recognized and appreciated for the research they're doing, and have a voice in the research that we as faculty members are doing."

Another such example of the caliber of students who are pursuing a career in economics is Bass, who created the concept of a Cougar Price Index – an index modeled to the Consumer Price Index yet specific to SIUE students and their expenditures. Bass and Cruise worked diligently on the Cougar Price Index as members of the campus' Economics Club, gathering immense amounts of data. Tracey said the Cougar Price Index tracks SIUE students' daily expenditures over time to predict the trajectory of expenditures and gauge the potential economic burden they may be feeling as college students in Edwardsville and as part of a broader environment.

"Seeing Kelly and Mickenzie present their research findings was truly impressive," said Tracey. "They both presented at the level of Ph.D. graduates who present their doctoral dissertation."

Both women participate in local and/or regional conferences. Bass has upcoming presentations at the Illinois Economics Association and the Southern Economic Association. Cruise has delivered talks at the Midwestern Psychological Association.

Presenters and their research topics at the School of Business' first student-led symposium included:

- Mickenzie Bass - Unintended Consequences of Plan B: Increased Alcohol Abuse
- Abdulah Abraham - Power at Sea: China's Export Performance and its Commitment to Maritime Power
- Bugra Ilgaz Boyukkirli - Comparing Cellular Manufacturing Methods
- Kashish Tandon - Adoption of the B Corporation Certification

Symposium and topics:

- Carter Bonta - Switzerland: An Economic Profile
- Financial Management Association - Student-Managed Investment Fund
- Makayla Rowe - Sorority Membership Fostering Leadership Aspirations
- Noah Pirtle - Are National Divorce Rates Impacted by the Labor Economy?
- Student Economics Association - Cougar Price Index
- Kaiden White - The Philippines: An Economic Profile
- Abe Jones - Venezuela: An Economic Profile



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Fiscal Year 2022-23

The School of Business works closely with the business community to provide the very best business expertise and develop programs that provide a foundation for students to become leaders in their chosen careers. The commitment of these advisory board members to lend their expertise and to serve the School of Business as ambassadors in the business community is gratefully recognized and appreciated.

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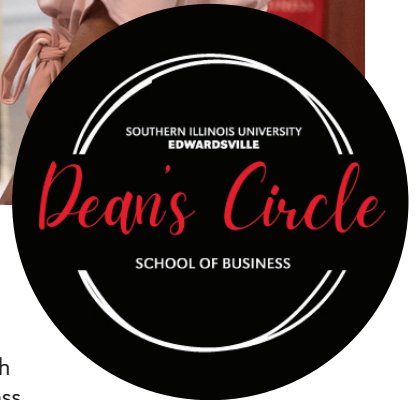
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