

WISCONSIN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

UPDATE

SPRING | SUMMER 2022

Shopbop's Kim
Fleissner Leads
Global Fashion
From Her
Hometown

Jordan Williams
brings new
products to market
at Starbucks

IN THIS ISSUE

8 TO WATCH

Meet WSB alumni
who are making
an impact



Letter From the Dean

I hope by now you have seen the Wisconsin School of Business' new brand campaign, which highlights the stories of alumni who are trusted to lead when there is no blueprint. Although the campaign launched featuring six Business Badgers, we know that there are countless others who are also forging new paths in business and making an impact far beyond themselves.

Over the past few months, as the pandemic recedes, I have started traveling again. I keep finding myself in conversations—whether in Illinois or India—that reference an impressive alum or UW-Madison's reputation as an academic and research powerhouse. It is a compelling reminder of our global influence and widespread reach.

In the pages that follow, you'll find stories of fellow alumni who are trusted to lead. Take Kim Fleissner, for example. As CEO of Shopbop, she is the driving force behind the company's status as a premier global fashion destination (page 12). This year's 8 to Watch cohort is impressive as always, featuring young alumni in exciting roles at companies ranging from the Fortune 500

to flourishing small businesses (page 16). And, we shine a spotlight on a few alumni who are living and working overseas, using the skills and experiences they collected at WSB to lead in companies around the world (page 24).

As we emerge from the pandemic and reconnect with people near and far, I hope you'll take some time to reflect on the power and impact of the Business Badger network. You are linked to business professionals all over the world—more than 45,000 alumni who are leading, creating, and innovating. It's a community I'm proud to be part of, knowing that it's full of trusted leaders who are shaping what's next in business.

Sincerely,

Vallabh "Samba" Sambamurthy
Albert O. Nicholas Dean
Wisconsin School of Business



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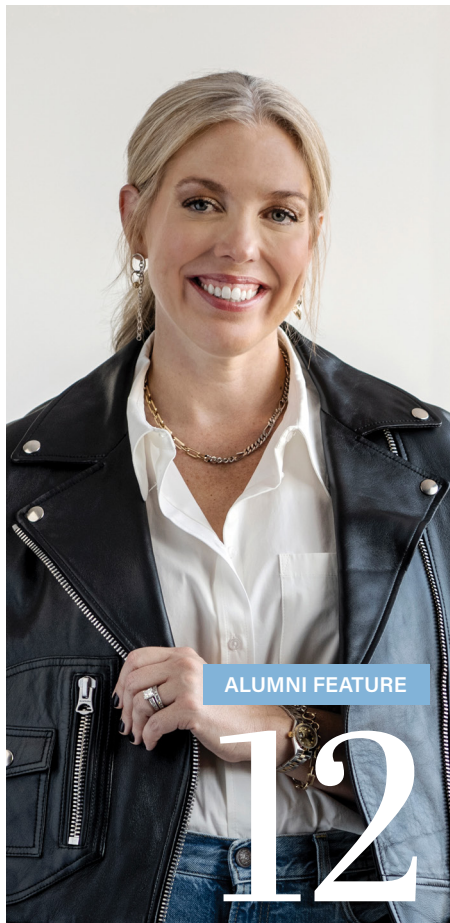
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From WSB to the Olympic Stage



Ann-Renée Desbiens

Sarah Nurse

Abby Roque

Ben Street

Red and white are beloved colors for Business Badgers, but in February a few of them looked good in gold and silver, too.

Former Wisconsin hockey players—including four WSB alumni—dotted Olympic rosters for the U.S. and Canada.

The Canadian women's team defeated the U.S. 3-2 in the gold medal game and was lifted throughout the tournament by strong performances from two Business Badgers.

Ann-Renée Desbiens (BBA '17, MAcc '19) was Canada's goaltender, letting little get past her throughout the Olympic Games.

Team Canada's **Sarah Nurse** (BBA '18) set an Olympic scoring record with five goals and 13 assists, including one of each in the gold medal game.

Abby Roque (BBA '20) was on the U.S. team that won a silver medal. She played in all seven Olympic games, scoring a goal against Finland.

Nurse and Roque broke barriers for hockey at the Winter Olympics. Nurse became the first Black woman to win a gold medal in the sport and Roque was the first Indigenous woman to play for Team USA.

Ben Street (BBA '10) made his Olympic debut as a member of the Canadian men's team, continuing a streak for the Badger men's hockey team of having at least one Olympian since 1976. ◀

UPDATE

SPRING | SUMMER 2022

| EDITORIAL |

MANAGING EDITOR

Betsy Lundgren (BA '03, MA '05)

WRITERS

Jane Burns

Meghan Franklin

Leiah Fundell

| DESIGN & PHOTOGRAPHY |

ART DIRECTOR AND DESIGNER

Shaysa Sidebottom

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Daniel Berman

Timothy Devine

Paul L. Newby II

| ADVISORS |

EDITORIAL

Kaylene Christovich

Binnu Palta Hill (BA '97)

Rachel Lionberg

Shannon Timm (BS '08, MBA '19)

DESIGN

Chad Theel (BS '99)

BRAND

Katie Schauer

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WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON



GOT A MINUTE?

A PEEK AT WHAT MAKES BUSINESS BADGERS WHO THEY ARE

Karen Burch (MBA '21)

VICE PRESIDENT, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & MARKETING
UNITED WAY OF DANE COUNTY
MADISON, WISCONSIN

What's it like working for such a large and well-known nonprofit?

You feel excited and hopeful—excited because this year we celebrate 100 years and hopeful because everyone involved with United Way is helping toward family well-being so that all Dane County residents lead healthy, secure lives. We collaborate with nonprofits, businesses, community leaders, donors, volunteers, and families to solve big-picture problems that no one person or organization can address alone.

What is your leadership philosophy?

Take care of those you lead. This means you care about your team members' well-being as "whole people." You care about their families, their everyday concerns and successes, and their dreams. My seven years as a United States Marine have defined the leader that I am today and taking care of your own has always been a top priority.

What is your favorite WSB memory?

Immersion week. It is unlike anything else I've experienced. It was memorable, shocking, and a little intimidating at times. However, it served as a great foundation for learning and creating friendships. Spending that concentrated time with my fellow executive MBA classmates was meaningful since the pandemic pivoted our in-person experience to a virtual one during our first year.

Oh, and a few more things:

A favorite job moment: Seeing hundreds of blue volunteer t-shirts at last year's United Way Campaign kickoff. | **Karen previously served as marketing director for the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.** | Karen and her husband **co-own Ironville Clothing Company**, an online retailer of bodybuilding and weightlifting apparel. | **A native Spanish speaker**, she learned English at age 9. | **Her parenting philosophy:** "I'm raising them for the world, not for me."

SCHOOL NEWS

To read more, visit business.wisc.edu/news



WSB Wishes Chancellor Blank Farewell

Dean Sambamurthy presents Chancellor Rebecca Blank with a farewell gift—a painting created by Theo Howard, digital learning consultant at WSB—during a fireside chat in Grainger Hall this March. Blank leaves UW-Madison this spring to become president at Northwestern University.

New Fintech Course Prepares Students for Digital Asset Marketplace

Starting in Fall 2022, WSB students will be able to take advantage of a new fintech course, Cryptocurrencies, Blockchain, and Digital Assets, designed and taught by Brad Chandler, director of the Nicholas Center for Corporate Finance and Investment Banking.

Fintech, a merging of “finance” and “technology,” is commonly understood as the use of emerging digital

technologies like blockchain and others to streamline financial processes. Fintech is a critical area for finance students as well as students from other fields to understand in preparation for jobs in the financial sector.

“The goal is to create a premier educational offering to quickly get students up to speed on the important, leading-edge innovations in the digital asset space,” Chandler says.

Business Alum Wins Entrepreneurial Achievement Award



Jim Bakke (BBA '77), president and CEO of Sub-Zero Group, Inc., is one of four entrepreneurs to receive the 2022 Chancellor's Entrepreneurial Achievement Award. The award honors UW-Madison innovators and alumni who further the Wisconsin Idea through outstanding accomplishments in entrepreneurship. The recipients were honored at a ceremony on March 23.

"UW-Madison's vibrant culture encourages innovation among faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Every day, they change lives through teaching, research, public service, and entrepreneurial activities," said Chancellor Rebecca Blank.

Since taking the helm at Sub-Zero Group, Inc., Bakke has transformed his family's business into an industry-leading manufacturer of luxury kitchen appliances. As the third generation of the Bakke family to lead Sub-Zero, he has made investments in the latest technologies and manufacturing processes, innovative cooking products, and new product lines. In the future, the company plans to continue its focus on emerging technology, science, and design.



DAY OF GIVING EXCEEDS GOAL

UW-Madison alumni, students, friends, and parents came together for Day of the Badger on April 5-6 to raise more than \$200,000 for the Wisconsin School of Business. More than 320 generous donors helped unlock a \$100,000 match from an anonymous donor. Gifts received on Day of the Badger go directly toward funding student scholarships to help WSB build the best and brightest classes at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Business Analytics Degree Adds Specialized Tracks

WSB has added two specialized tracks as part of its Master of Science-Business: Analytics (MSBA) degree, a one-year, STEM-designated program that gives students a cross-functional perspective on business and technology. In addition to the core curriculum, students pursuing these tracks will obtain an additional nine credits in specialized coursework.

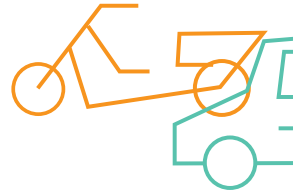
The digital marketing track prepares students for careers in consumer-centric marketing, social media, SEO, mobile, website application, and digital advertising. Students will learn both the implementation of digital marketing and the key quantitative aspects of the field.

The digital risk and insurance track positions students to manage digital risks or lead digital transformation in the risk and insurance industry. Students pursuing this track gain tools to mitigate cyberattacks, malware, and other novel exposures, and dive into the ever-changing technological landscape of insurance.

Launched in the fall of 2019, the MSBA has already doubled in enrollment and is yielding strong career outcomes, with 100% job placement among the 2021 graduating class. The program is garnering impressive rankings as well. ◀

#8 among U.S. business analytics programs
2022 QS World Rankings

HOW 'SUPPLY CHAIN' BECAME A HOUSEHOLD NAME



Nick Petruzzi breaks down pandemic-related disruption in moving consumer goods

BY JANE BURNS | PHOTO BY PAUL L. NEWBY II



NICHOLAS PETRUZZI

Until 2020, supply chain was a term that garnered little attention from anyone beyond those working in the field. That changed when the pandemic triggered delays that continue to impact everything from home repairs to car buying, though.

"Years ago, who cared about supply chain management?" says Nicholas Petruzzi, chair of the Department of Operations and Information Management and the Michael E. Lehman Distinguished Chair in Business. "Now it's a household name."

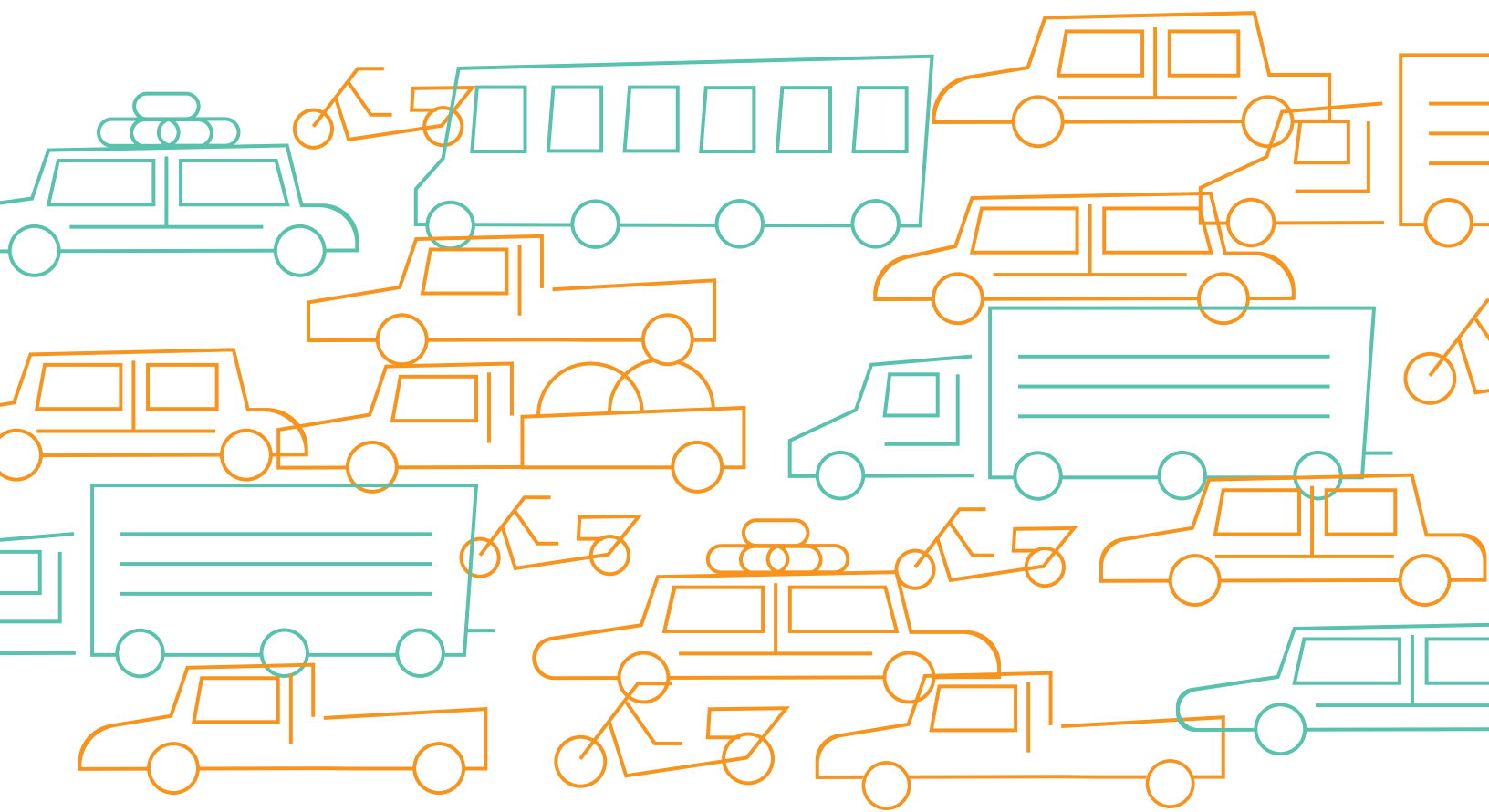
Petruzzi's research expertise explores economic uncertainty within operations and supply chain management. The key to answering questions about supply chain now, Petruzzi says, is recognizing what defines it: supply and demand, stocks and flows, randomness, and

uncertainty. All play a role in what has happened the past two years.

How did we get here?

Petruzzi compares the worldwide supply chain to a freeway that is busy but moving well—until one car stops. Then there are backups and different traffic flows as drivers look for exits while on-ramps back up and impact other roads. Choke points develop. In the supply chain version, a computer chip made in Taiwan can't get to a factory in Detroit so a would-be Ford F-150 truck owner in Wisconsin Dells has to wait.

"You can imagine how integrated and vast supply chains are," he says. "There are so many pieces and parts and there's not just one decision-maker. Each part of the supply chain is making its own move."



Because of worldwide pandemic-related shutdowns, industrial demands shifted to consumer demands overnight, Petruzzi says.

“There are so many pieces and parts and there’s not just one decision-maker.”

— NICK PETRUZZI

For example, toilet paper suddenly needed to be packaged and shipped to grocery stores rather than office buildings, and demand for food shifted from restaurants to households. That upended a system that has no central control. The global supply chain, like a

freeway that may or may not move smoothly depending on what the cars do, is a collective set of autonomous choices.

“It’s not just supply being equal to demand, it’s supply and demand being in the same place at the same time,” he says.

Why do issues remain?

What we’re experiencing now with the supply chain are ripples of problems that began many months ago.

“We continue to adapt,” he says. “Companies are catching up, but the pain points are going to keep changing.”

Rental cars are an example of moving pain points. Rental car companies sold their fleets when no one was traveling. When demand returned, there were fewer cars to rent and companies couldn’t buy new ones

because of production challenges such as those with the computer chips.

The Great Resignation plays a role too, Petruzzi says. If a delayed ship finally gets through a port, a shortage in truck drivers may mean that there is not a truck available to haul the ship’s contents to their next destination.

“It’s not unlike the 2008 financial crisis where problems in one area created problems throughout because the systems are so integrated,” he says.

What will change moving forward?

The pandemic has been a stark reminder of how important it is to prepare for uncertainty. If a business is planning for the next pandemic they’re already in trouble, Petruzzi says, because they need to plan for what they don’t know is coming.

“The best-laid plans

and the best systems are prepared for the unknowns,” Petruzzi says. “That’s real responsiveness and agility. How do we prepare for the unknown unknowns?”

A big key for businesses, Petruzzi says, is to pinpoint exactly what is causing delays and to make a plan for what they can do instead.

Another unknown that will impact the future supply chain is consumers. Will the pandemic permanently change consumers, their habits, and their priorities? Consumers might, for example, care less about lower prices and more about social responsibility or supporting their communities.

New priorities could adjust the supply chain, Petruzzi says.

“Once the supply chain is aligned to do what the world demands, it will be a matter of who can do it good, better, best,” he says. “The redesign is going to come from what we care about.” ◀

HOME OF THE WISCONSIN BADGERS

Dana Rettke (left)
and Olivia Hancock
are behind a new
digital storytelling
platform for
Badger athletes:
uncutmadison.com

Behind the Headlines

Business
Badgers launch
a digital platform
for student-
athletes to tell
their own stories

BY JANE BURNS
PHOTO BY PAUL L. NEWBY II

As a fan who devours a lot of sports content, Olivia Hancock (BBA '22) always thought there was something missing in the mix. As an All-American volleyball player who often reads or watches stories about herself or her fellow student-athletes, Dana Rettke (BBA '21) always thought there was something missing, too.

A chance meeting helped the two WSB marketing students address that missing niche—that college student-athletes rarely have the opportunity to tell their own stories—by starting a nonprofit dedicated to that mission. In Spring 2021, they launched UNCUT

Madison, a digital platform in which Badger athletes become the storytellers and show a side of themselves that the general public rarely sees.

"What is special about our platform is that whatever a student-athlete wants to talk about, we will make it happen," says Rettke, who helped lead the Badgers to the NCAA volleyball title in December 2021. "It's a free space for people."

UNCUT Madison features personal stories from athletes on topics ranging from mental health, the experiences of Black female athletes at UW-Madison, religion, and life lessons from former Badgers. In the short time since

“What is special about our platform is that whatever a student-athlete wants to talk about, we will make it happen. It’s a free space for people.”

—DANA RETTKE (BBA '21)

UNCUT launched, its founders have created an advisory board of sports business professionals and built a team of students to work on all aspects of the 501(c)(3) organization including content, operations, finance, and strategy.

They also formed a partnership with American Family Insurance that provided resources for production equipment that helped UNCUT elevate its stories, particularly those about mental health. The UNCUT crew’s marketing and

PR efforts paid off with local and national media attention.

“There was a lot of blood, sweat, and tears that went into it,” Hancock says.

Hancock came to WSB knowing she wanted a career in sports but on the business side, not the athletic side.

“Even at age 16, I wasn’t just reading the game stats, I was wondering who would be the next official beverage partner of the NFL,” she says. “I was fascinated by sports, the economics of it, and how it can impact people’s lives.”

During her sophomore

year, Hancock worked for UW Athletics as a marketing and promotions intern. The pandemic shut down that job and when Hancock learned the 2020-21 sports seasons would be played without fans, she wondered about maintaining that athlete-fan connection. She discovered an athlete storytelling site called UNCUT Chapel Hill that launched at the University of North Carolina, and believed it could work at Wisconsin, too.

Hancock knew, though, that the project needed a strong student-athlete connection. She found a perfect fit on election day in 2020 when she met Rettke when they randomly volunteered to work the same polling place. Volleyball season had moved from fall to spring because of the pandemic, and Rettke jumped at the chance to get involved.

“She didn’t just want to help by putting it on Instagram,” Hancock says. “She wanted to co-found it, sit in on every meeting, and said, ‘Let’s do this.’”

Rettke had come to UW-Madison as a psychology major, but as her volleyball

career blossomed she changed to marketing to better understand branding and business as her athletic career moved forward. She also majored in risk management and insurance. UNCUT helped her put her education to use.

“It’s hard for athletes to do something that is applicable to their major. We usually don’t have time to get internships or work in the summer,” says Rettke, who is now playing professional volleyball in Italy. “For me, [UNCUT] was exactly what I love. I love marketing, I love working with athletes. They have big personalities and great stories and we’ve been able to share them with the public.”

Besides providing athlete-focused content, UNCUT’s team has prepared new student leaders for the platform to ensure a smooth transition after the founders graduate. Hancock plans to stay connected as an alumni advisor.

“It will be cool to see the brand evolve and take on a new trajectory with new people and fresh minds,” she says. ◀

BUSINESS BADGER CHAMPIONS

When Wisconsin won its first NCAA volleyball tournament in December 2021, it was in no small part due to the contributions of Business Badgers.

Dana Rettke (BBA '21) became the first five-time volleyball All-American this year after she returned for a fifth season, an option available to athletes because of the pandemic. She was named national player of the year. Rettke, who holds degrees in marketing and risk management and insurance, is now a professional volleyball player in Italy.

Lauren Barnes (BBA '21, MS '22), a libero and defensive specialist, earned second-team All-American honors for the Badgers. She earned an undergraduate degree in finance before pursuing an MS in business analytics.

She received the Big Ten Medal of Honor, the conference’s most prestigious award that recognizes student-athletes who have attained the greatest proficiency in athletics and scholastic work.

Liz Gregorski (BBA '24) had a reserve role with the Badgers this season. She’s a real estate major who is also a content strategist and producer for UNCUT Madison. Her interviews with athletes and others can be found on the UNCUT site.





SPACE TO GROW

With a commitment to inclusion,
Arturo Diaz leads WSB's new
Multicultural Center

PHOTO BY PAUL L. NEWBY II

Arturo "Tito" Diaz (BS '15) has always felt he belonged at UW–Madison. He credits his positive experience as a student of color largely to his involvement with his fraternity Lambda Theta Phi Latin, the Associated Students of Madison, and the P.E.O.P.L.E. Program, as well as conversations with fellow student leaders on topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). But not all students of color find strong connections on campus like Diaz did. Now as the Kemper Director of the new Multicultural Center at the Wisconsin School of Business, Diaz wants to ensure every WSB student feels that same sense of belonging he did.

WSB's Multicultural Center, which opened in Fall 2021 and will have its official launch in Fall 2022, functions as a hub for conversation and cocurricular programming around DEI. In his role, Diaz builds and delivers content that focuses on the academic, professional, social, and emotional well-being of historically underrepresented students and supports the development of an inclusive leadership mindset in all business students and the broader WSB community.



WSB: Why is it important for WSB to house a multicultural center?

Arturo Diaz: I think it's twofold. First, we're providing an opportunity for students to build community, get that sense of belonging, and see themselves in the business world. Then, we provide support for them to matriculate through their degree program so they can also build affinity within this community—meaning that the school has helped students achieve particular identity development needs which contribute to their lifelong success. When I look back on my undergraduate experience, it was filled with

joy and activism and all the things I really like, so I was able to build a real love for the university. I very much want that for every student, and I believe the center can help provide that for them.

Second, the center will propel DEI efforts to develop more inclusive leaders throughout WSB.

to build community for multicultural students within the Wisconsin School of Business, which I gravitated toward. I want to help students of all backgrounds who are interested in business to know that they can succeed here and see themselves as the business leaders of the future.

WSB: Tell us about the physical space.

AD: The center, located on the second floor of Grainger Hall, has a multipurpose commons area, which is ideal for events and programming. It also houses two offices, a conference room, a quiet study space, and a room for prayer, meditation, and wellness.

The design of the center has been a collaborative effort from the beginning. Wisconsin MBA students hosted an art competition through the UW Green Fund last semester from which we were able to purchase over 10 pieces of artwork for and by multicultural students to put up in the center's commons area.

WSB: How can alumni get involved with the Multicultural Center?

AD: My hope is to build better connections with alumni in multiple ways. There's a big desire from our alumni to connect with and help mentor current students. Whether it is coming to the center, hosting a chat, or participating in a panel discussion, the center provides a unique opportunity for alumni to get involved. It's a great outlet for those wanting to give back and provide insight. As an alumnus myself, my heart for this center really stems from wanting to pay and pave it forward. ◀

Interview conducted and edited by Leah Fundell

“We’re providing an opportunity for students to build community, get that sense of belonging, and see themselves in the business world.”

— ARTURO “TITO” DIAZ (BS '15)

We're strategically thinking about what it means to understand identities and raise consciousness about our assumptions related to things like board membership or project teams. It also highlights the importance of DEI in the professional setting, which can help businesses and teams grow in what they're trying to achieve. Ultimately, we want to help answer the question, what exactly does it mean to be inclusive of others?

WSB: Why was this initiative appealing to you?

AD: There was so much student energy around this initiative and a call around carving out a space

WSB: What type of programming will the Multicultural Center offer?

AD: Programming and events occurring at the center will highlight heritage and history months and other national events. We are launching a multilevel mentoring program, with MBA students mentoring undergrads and peer-to-peer mentoring among undergraduate students. We're also partnering with other offices like undergraduate student life and various affinity groups to help the center achieve its mission. We look forward to working with our alumni and the Madison community on other programs.





THE CEO Next Door

Kim Fleissner helms global fashion destination in her hometown

BY MEGHAN FRANKLIN | PHOTOS BY PAUL L. NEWBY II

Kim Fleissner (BBA '01, MAcc '02) loves the heartbeat of New York.

"There's so much personality, creativity, energy, and, of course, fashion there," she says.

As chief executive officer of worldwide fashion destination Shopbop, she treasures New York Fashion Week and the chance it affords her and her team to connect with designers who have long been Shopbop staples, as well as emerging brands.

Shopbop's presence in New York during Fashion Week is part of what allows the company to do what its customers count on the brand to do: curate a best-in-class assortment of men's and women's fashion and serve as a trusted destination for style inspiration.

As much as she loves New York and her visits to Shopbop's New York office, Fleissner is happy she gets to come home to Madison, where

Shopbop is headquartered. Madison is also where Fleissner was raised and where Shopbop got its humble beginnings in 1999 in a little shop near the UW-Madison campus.

Like Shopbop, Madison has been the place where Fleissner has experienced tremendous growth. It's growth, she says, that is one of her main measures of both personal and professional success.

An education to open doors

As an undergraduate at UW-Madison in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Fleissner remembers when she first discovered Bop, Shopbop's brick-and-mortar predecessor, on W. Gorham Street.

"I vividly remember shopping there with my girlfriends and saving up to find something fun to wear for nights out," Fleissner says. "It finally felt like fashion was within reach for me."

While fashion has long been an

Continued on page 14

interest of Fleissner's, she didn't have her heart set on going into the industry when she arrived on campus.

"Like many, I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do when I entered college, but I did know that I wanted to have options and find a path that would open doors in

she continued her studies in WSB's master of accountancy (MAcc) program.

As a MAcc student, Fleissner says the internship program was invaluable. Her time as an investment banking intern at PwC not only gave her real, hands-on experience in the field, but it also led her

and really invest in that business' mission and culture," she says.

It was fortuitous timing when a connection encouraged her to apply to a senior financial analyst role at a business whose name rang a bell from her college years, Shopbop.

Shopbop allowed her to apply her work ethic and curiosity at a business that was a true pioneer in contemporary fashion. While Shopbop was first a brick-and-mortar store, its founders brought it online in 2000, when internet retail was still in its infancy.

"Shopbop's founders were visionaries. Not only for what they did for online shopping, but for their obsession with and focus on the customer—something that's still an integral part of the Shopbop brand today," Fleissner says.

When Fleissner thinks about her career trajectory over the past 16 years at Shopbop—a trajectory that's included roles as both chief financial officer and chief operating officer before stepping into her current role of chief executive officer—curiosity has been a major factor in shaping the course of her career.

"It's so valuable to be part of a company through different stages. At each stage and in each role, I've loved dreaming up strategies, applying them, and seeing results come to life. I still love the challenge of understanding the different puzzle pieces of a business and how they fit together. Curiosity and a desire to continue learning have been essential to all of my leadership roles," she says.

Since stepping into the CEO role in 2018, Fleissner has led strategic evolution of the



Kim Fleissner leads teams at Shopbop's offices in both New York City and Madison, where the company is headquartered.

many fields," she says.

After pretty quickly finding her way to the Wisconsin School of Business, Fleissner says that accounting emerged as her area of focus. "I wanted to understand how businesses work on a deep level. I knew I had to understand end-to-end business processes to properly do accounting. No matter what area of business I chose to pursue down the road, I had a feeling accounting could serve as a stepping stone."

Fleissner's innate curiosity, penchant for solving puzzles, and desire to deeply understand how things work proved to be a great match for accounting, and

to New York City, where she had dreamed of living.

Her internship also turned into her first job post-graduation, where Fleissner says it was a privilege to consult for many different businesses and gain a breadth of experience that proved valuable as she progressed in her career.

Curiosity as career catalyst

While Fleissner says that joining PwC was a dream job at the time, it was her curiosity and desire to dive deeper into one company that led her to pursue a path outside of public accounting.

"I wanted to step into a business where I could lead initiatives from start to finish

"The stars aligned. Shopbop had a brand and a customer focus that I loved, and there was an open role that was a great fit for my strengths," she says. "I was excited to get my hands dirty and help a business I was passionate about."

Fleissner's first role at

"Curiosity and a desire to continue learning have been essential to all of my leadership roles."

—KIM FLEISSNER (BBA '01, MAcc '02)



Kim Fleissner shopped at Bop, Shopbop's brick-and-mortar predecessor, as a college student. The store's original sign now hangs in Shopbop's Madison headquarters.

business, with the integration of Shopbop Men, large brand efforts with Shopbop's 20th Anniversary Pop-Up in Soho, New York, and Shopbop's continued commitment to offering customers a best-in-class and diverse assortment of established and emerging brands.

Embracing growth opportunities

At every stage of her career, Fleissner's innate curiosity, strategic focus, and ability to inspire trust—and give it in return—have led to growth opportunities. And growth is something that Fleissner not only embraces, but is motivated by.

"Learning and growth is why I'm still here. It's what keeps me excited each day," she says.

To students and those just starting out in their careers who are looking for advice,

Fleissner says, "Be curious. That has been at the root of what has motivated me for so long. Our world is constantly evolving and changing; lean in to that change. Learning and growth is not only okay, it's required."

Outside of work, Fleissner's life has forced her to grow in ways she never expected.

"Sometimes you grow most when something forces you to adjust your priorities," she says.

Fleissner's introduction to parenthood was triplets, three boys. A fourth baby boy joined the Fleissner family just a couple of years later.

"It's definitely a wild ride having triplets," she says. "As crazy as it is, it's equally fun and special. Those boys are so lucky to have each other, and I feel so lucky to be their mom."

"I enjoy all aspects of my life. Like everyone, I have

to work to find the right balance," Fleissner says.

The comfort of home

As she peeks in on photo shoots happening at Shopbop's Madison headquarters, less than two miles from where Shopbop got its humble start, Fleissner exudes both an energy that matches the fast-paced fashion world and a warmth that calls to mind someone welcoming you into their own home.

For Fleissner, Shopbop does feel like home. While a big part of that feeling is due to the Shopbop team's palpably collaborative spirit—one that spans the different time zones Shopbop team members work in—Fleissner recognizes that another part of that homey feeling is Shopbop's location in her hometown.

"Madison is home to my

family, my work family, and of course the Wisconsin Badgers—forever my favorite sports team," she says.

While Fleissner feels lucky she gets to lead a company with headquarters in her longtime backyard, nothing about her leadership style is nostalgic or stagnant.

Known by her team as someone who empowers them to innovate, Fleissner is constantly thinking about what's next.

"Building a shared vision rooted in a deep understanding of our customers is critical. Having that aligned foundation of who you are and what you aim to do as a business unlocks organizational innovation," she says. "It enables you, and your leaders, to prioritize initiatives and develop strategies that inspire customers through this shared lens." ◀

COVER STORY

8 TO WATCH

Meet accomplished Business
Badgers making major
impact on their industries

BY JANE BURNS AND
LEIAH FUNDELL

PHOTOS BY
PAUL L. NEWBY II



JORDAN WILLIAMS

MBA '13 | Product Experience Director, U.S. Beverage, **Starbucks**

Location: Seattle

Previous jobs: Other product/brand positions at Starbucks; associate brand manager, MillerCoors; English teacher and website manager, Middlesex School

Why he's among the 8 to Watch: Williams pivoted a career in education to brand management, rising through the ranks at Starbucks to bring new products to market with a commitment to customer and partner empathy, innovation, and leadership.

Career switch: Williams began his career as a high school English teacher at a private residential boarding school near Boston, where he also managed the website and digital communications. The school launched a rebranding effort and Williams was invited to work on it with the agency. Brand management, consumer research, and storytelling were all new to Williams, and he was hooked.

The impact of a WSB degree: Williams was eager to dive in and learn business, strategy, and marketing fundamentals and engage

in applied learning. "It gave me a strong foundation from which I can work."

Lessons learned: After Williams' pivot from teaching, he realized the skills and competencies he gained from education carried into management. "I used to joke that if I could get a 14-year-old to focus and deliver results, I could get a 44-year-old to do the same."

More pumpkin spice: Williams' team helped bring Starbucks' pumpkin cream cold brew from concept to market. The key, he says, was looking at it from the customer point of view and recognizing that people who enjoy cold drinks like seasonal flavors, too. "Customer empathy allows us to get at what is causing friction in the person's life, what they wish could be better, what satisfies them," he says. "Ultimately, I want our product to solve a problem and spark joy."

Always a mentor: If Williams' calendar is too full sometimes, it's because he wants to take the time to find promise in others like his mentors did for him. "I'm just trying to pay it forward because I know I am standing on the shoulders of many who have helped me."

BERIT BAUER

BBA '05

**Vice President - Store
Operations, Target**



Location: Minneapolis

Previous jobs: Roles in buying, planning, and inventory management across Target merchandise categories

Why she's among the 8 to Watch: Bauer has advanced steadily at Target, the culmination of experience and leadership in a variety of its retail categories. In her current role she is a liaison between key company partners and more than 350,000 team members in 1,900 U.S. stores.

Target for life: Bauer worked at a Minneapolis Target store at age 16 through summers in college, and after graduating from WSB started her professional career with the company in merchandising. "The curiosity that has shaped my professional career is grounded in the 16-year-old who was interested in all the elements of the store," says Bauer, who majored in marketing and psychology.

Leading by example: Bauer's passion is connecting to and supporting people. The pandemic has brought that home, literally. She started her current role in

October 2020, when her first child was 16 months old and crawling all over her during remote meetings. "There were people who said, 'Thank you for showing it was OK to have your kid on screen and we don't have to be embarrassed or apologetic,'" she says. "I didn't even think about it, but those who are early in their career have the pressure of wondering if they can bring their whole self to work. How we have to work now has given people permission to be themselves."

Dad knows best: As her career evolves, Bauer thinks back to the lessons imparted by her dad when she was young. "He always said, 'Be a leader. Think about those around you and not yourself,'" she says. "Those words are part of my earliest memories and still guide me today."

Impact of a WSB degree: As a high school athlete, Bauer knew that teamwork was important. It wasn't until she got to business school and worked on myriad group projects that she realized it was a key skill. "It's not always easy, but it's a huge part of what life after college is all about," she says.



LINDA LIU

MBA '18

**Senior Product Marketing
Manager, Intuit**

Location: Madison

Previous jobs: Senior manager, monetization and customer insights; manager, digital optimization, Lands' End; various brand management roles, SC Johnson

Why she's among the 8 to Watch: Liu is a skilled marketer and brand manager whose career has rapidly advanced in retail and now tech. She spearheaded unprecedented growth in revenue for the programs she managed at Lands' End. Liu is now on the team accelerating the growth and integration of Intuit's acquisition of Credit Karma.

Steps to success: As an undergraduate student at Cornell University, Liu switched from pre-med to business after taking just one marketing class. At SC Johnson, after a fast-paced series of promotions, she felt an MBA was her next best move. Her WSB degree led to management roles at Lands' End. Liu admits it was hard to leave that momentum at Lands' End, but Intuit was an opportunity to return to her love of product marketing. "Whether it's been different roles at the same company or different companies, I feel there's always a new challenge or a new thing to learn about marketing that keeps me interested and excited. Every role I've had teaches me something new."

Impact of a WSB degree: "When I was considering which business school to go to, I thought about how people would perceive me and what traits they would associate with the WSB brand. I want to be seen as hard working, down to earth, and a team player. The way that I work and show up in the workplace is something that I'm proud of."

**"Every role I've had teaches
me something new."**

— LINDA LIU (MBA '18)

Advice to students and young professionals: Liu says to keep the long-term perspective in mind because measuring success in the short term can seem frustrating. "I wish that I would have pegged my success a little bit less to the tangible markers in the day-to-day. When you take a step back, you realize how much you have grown in your thinking, the person you are, and understanding what's valuable to you."

A portrait of Jordan Teppar, a man with a beard and short brown hair, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt and jeans. He is sitting in a distillery, surrounded by wooden barrels and shelves. He is smiling and has his hand near his chin.

JORDAN TEPPER

BBA '08

**Co-founder and Chief
Executive Officer, Apologue**

**Investment Principal,
Cleveland Avenue**

Location: Chicago

Previous jobs: Project leader, The Boston Consulting Group; investment banker, Mesirow Financial

Why he's among the 8 to Watch: In 2017, Teppar joined Cleveland Avenue to help launch a \$70M food and beverage venture capital fund that helps to bridge the capital and resource gap impacting Black, Latinx, and female entrepreneurs on Chicago's South and West Sides. In parallel, Teppar co-founded Apologue, a maker of spirited liqueurs used to elevate classic cocktails. Both ventures have continued to grow, placing Teppar in a unique position as both an aspiring entrepreneur and an elevator of others' aspirations.

Pandemic pivots: More than 80 percent of Apologue's customers are bars and restaurants, so when they were forced to close at the start of the pandemic, Teppar and his business partner knew they had to quickly pivot. First, they partnered with Chicago's iconic Big Star restaurant to can their signature cocktails in a retail-friendly ready-to-drink format. Then they expanded to create the world's first luxury bottled cocktail, Sunday's Finest Gold Fashioned, all while managing to keep and expand their team.

Impact of a WSB degree: Teppar found his entrepreneurial fire sparked through involvement with entrepreneurship student organizations and his courses. In a class assignment to help a local family construction firm, Teppar helped the small business find creative ways to grow its marketing and sales. "I really enjoyed that open-ended, problem-solving mindset. It showed me that getting involved in that type of work was really interesting and exciting."

Advice to students and young professionals: As someone who is balancing time-intensive positions at both Cleveland Avenue and Apologue, Teppar maintains that you don't have to drop everything to follow your entrepreneurial passion. "Any exposure you have to advance your business before you have to make that leap will accrue to your benefit—whether it is helping out a similar business or industry part-time on nights and weekends, or doing a side consulting project, or volunteering."

ANISH SHAH

BBA '07

Vice President Sales
Operations, **Sprout
Social, Inc.**



Location: Chicago

Previous jobs: Various directorships, sales operations and strategy, Sprout Social, Inc.; head of global sales compensation and manager of sales operations analysis, Groupon; market research consultant, IDG Consulting, Inc.; actuary, PricewaterhouseCoopers

Why he's among the 8 to Watch: Shah has driven explosive growth for Sprout Social, Inc. over the last five years. His talent for growing quality sales infrastructure earned him leader of the year in his inaugural year at the firm in 2017.

Steps to success: After beginning his career as an actuary and market research consultant, Shah's first analyst role at Groupon was the catalyst for his rapidly successful sales operations career. Shah intentionally built for himself a reputation as helpful to anyone and everyone. He was soon perceived to be a solutions expert. "I was sort of lost, and I just wasn't sure what I wanted to do. So, I'm really proud that I found what I'm good at, and that I've turned that into a career."

On leadership: Shah credits his growth to the leadership cultures he experienced at Groupon and Sprout. "It's important to align yourself with the right leadership team," says Shah. "As you're evaluating current or new roles, take stock and ask yourself, 'What does the leadership look like? Who am I surrounded by? How is my peer group going to influence my growth? And what am I looking to learn?'"

Medicinal magic: Shah is a volunteer magician at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital through the nonprofit organization Open Heart Magic. He performs bedside magic every Thursday for sick children to entertain and empower them. "If a 15-minute magic show is all they need to escape the reality of what they're in, to bring a smile and some joy, there's really value in that."

Advice to students and young professionals: "Get out of your comfort zone and take one or two classes that you would normally think you have no business taking. Create more relationships with different people in your organization and network, versus staying in your bubble." ◀

KRISTEN FORECKI

BBA '05

Senior Director, Experiences and
Devices Strategy, **Microsoft**

Location: Seattle

Previous jobs: Vice president of operations and supply, Convoy Inc.; director of operations, Rover; senior product manager, Amazon; financial analyst, General Mills

Why she's among the 8 to Watch: Forecki leads strategy projects addressing Microsoft's growth of core products and big bets for the future. Before joining Microsoft last summer, Forecki was instrumental in leading growth at two unicorn startups (valued at \$1 billion)—Convoy, a digital freight network, and Rover, a pet-sitting marketplace. She was recognized as a "40 Under 40" by the *Puget Sound Business Journal*.

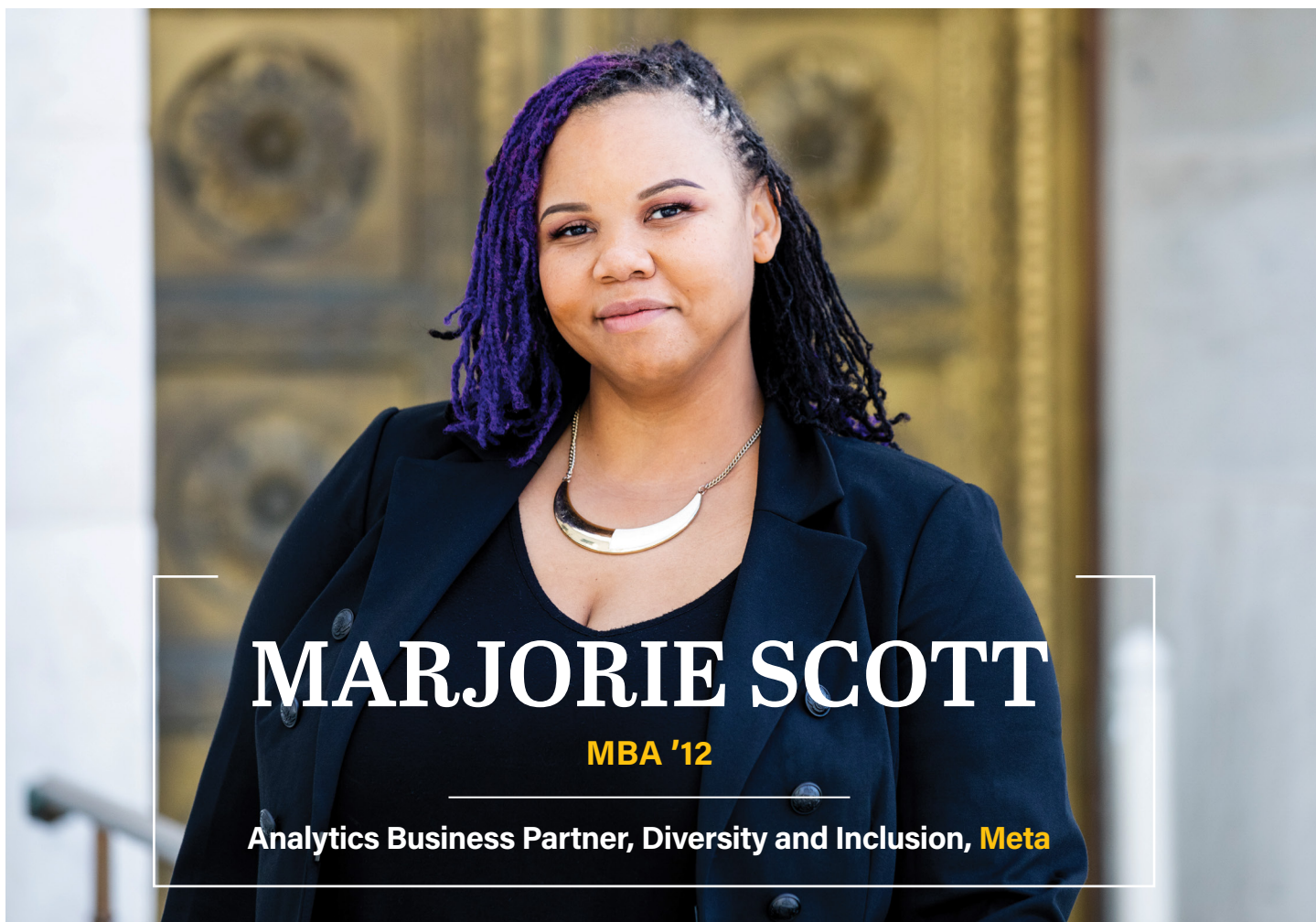
Startups vs. large companies: At Convoy, Forecki was employee #11 in a company that now employs more than 1,000 and is currently valued at \$3.8 billion. At Microsoft, she joined a company with more than 100,000 employees worldwide. "In technology, it's pretty common to go from established industry leaders to startups and vice versa," she says. "I learn from each side." Her role at Microsoft has elements of "intrapreneurship" that tap into her startup experience.

Wearing many hats: As Convoy grew, Forecki led many teams including finance, operations, and public relations, and had more than 10 teams and 300 people reporting to her. That bird's eye view of the company prepared her for her current role at Microsoft. "Sometimes I describe experience in startups as career arbitrage because you get an insane amount of experience in a short amount of time," she says.

Impact of a WSB degree: Career prep and coaching while at WSB were instrumental in learning about all the options available to Forecki, she says. It was so valuable that when she wanted a change that led to her position at Microsoft, she sought a career coach to help with the process despite being a seasoned professional.

Advice for students and young professionals: It's important not to stress out about having an exact career plan, Forecki says. Variety has made her life more interesting. "Life happens in chapters and you don't have to be just one thing."





Location: Washington, D.C.

Previous jobs: Global marketing science education lead, research and scaled solutions, Facebook; manager of checkout tracking client development - tech, The NPD Group; global consumer insights associate, General Mills

Why she's among the 8 to Watch: Scott uses her teaching, market research, and analytics skills to help ensure diversity and inclusion are embraced and supported for Meta's more than 71,000 employees. She analyzes and presents employee diversity data to spur equitable changes that shape the organization's workforce composition.

Leaps of faith: With a career full of pivots, Scott's road to Meta (formerly Facebook) has progressively matched her skills with her passions. Scott's love of psychology and marketing analytics landed her the role at NPD, but when Facebook came calling with a curated role, Scott couldn't resist. Each pivot, even when it seemed like a risk, became a launching pad to a new experience. "It's really fun to always be learning more about yourself and applying skills in different arenas. In hindsight it all looks perfect, but each step has been a little leap of faith. You have to ask yourself, 'Do you see how the past has built you to be at this point?' And then just leap."

Impact of a WSB degree: Scott takes pride in the fact that more than 50 years ago, WSB was one of the first three schools to join the Consortium for Graduate Study in Management, an alliance of leading business schools dedicated to enhancing diversity in business education and corporate leadership by providing postgraduate opportunities for underrepresented populations. "I always say Wisconsin believed in diversity before it was cool."

"You have to ask yourself, 'Do you see how the past has built you to be at this point?' And then just leap."

— MARJORIE SCOTT (MBA '12)

Who inspires her: "I find a lot of inspiration from my family, especially from my grandmother's and great-grandmother's lives as African Americans. Since the 1920s, their mantra has been, 'I'm going to get up and stand for myself and all the generations before and after me.' So, when my grandmother messages me, 'I'm just so proud of you,' I say, 'It's because of you.'"



BLAIR WILSON

MBA '13

Chief Marketing Officer, **Hal Leonard**

Location: Milwaukee

Previous jobs: Vice president of marketing and global sales, Sartori Company; brand manager, Kraft Foods; marketing manager, GE Healthcare

Why he's among the 8 to Watch: Wilson has delivered significant revenue and growth at Fortune 500 and privately owned companies. At both Hal Leonard, the global leader in sheet music, and Sartori, a Wisconsin specialty cheese producer, he has helped drive company expansion into digital, consumer, and international markets.

Impact of a WSB degree: Wilson began his career as a marketing manager at GE Healthcare. He wanted to develop his strategy and leadership skills, so he pursued a part-time MBA at WSB. "It was transformational for me professionally and personally—gaining a network, being able to develop a wider view of an enterprise, and learning what it takes to help guide vision and growth for a company."

Different challenges: At Kraft, Wilson worked on Oscar Mayer's Lunchables, a \$1 billion business that required as much stewardship as growth and innovation. At Sartori, it was the

opposite. The longtime cheese company was expanding its retail presence and developing new markets. "Instead of protecting, you're defining. Instead of trying to continue success, you're trying to create success," he says. Wilson was quickly named the company's youngest vice president.

The right size: Wilson has a passion for midmarket companies. "There's a real opportunity to impact culture, to impact people, and impact financials," he says. "That's the triple crown of business."

A new challenge: As Hal Leonard's first-ever chief marketing officer, Wilson is building a global team by hiring positions that are new to the company. With the company's products of sheet music and lesson books already in the hands of millions of people, Wilson is working on greater brand awareness and digital growth.

Helping close to home: Wilson and his wife love Wisconsin, and he relishes his work at local companies because of the roles they play in communities creating jobs and civic engagement. "Our work can be a means to help our family and our communities," he says of his career and that of his wife, who works in health care. "If not, what's it for?"

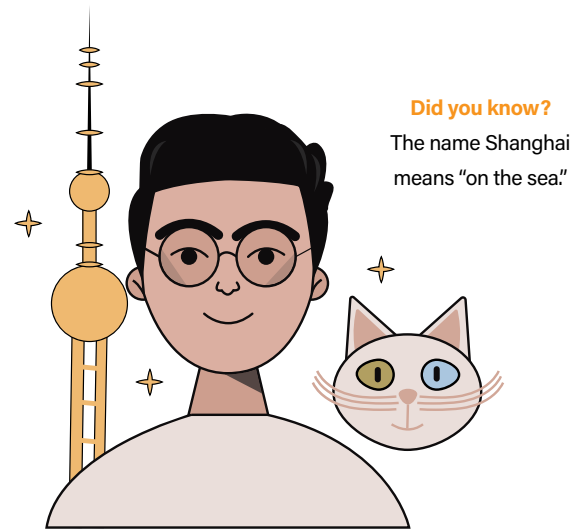
Up, Up, and Abroad

Alumni living overseas
share their experiences
with career and culture

BY LEIAH FUNDELL

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SHAYSA SIDEBOTTOM

For many of us, it's been more than two years since we've traveled internationally due to pandemic-related restrictions and safety concerns. But for some Business Badgers, living and working outside the United States is the norm. Thousands of WSB alumni currently live internationally in more than 85 countries. We caught up with three of them who are enjoying life abroad while working in e-commerce, real estate, and finance.



Yi Ju (BBA '12)

Title: CEO and founder, MollyBox
Current location: Shanghai, China
Hometown: Suzhou, China

There's a 14-hour time difference between Madison and Shanghai where Yi Ju (BBA '12) runs MollyBox, the first subscription e-commerce platform for pet supplies in China. If it's the beginning of his day, he's likely sipping a cup of tea and answering unread emails from the previous day. The morning is also Ju's prime time to "hit his brain with reading and thinking."

"I can see myself getting better each day," says Ju, who was named among *Forbes'* 30 under 30 in Asia retail and e-commerce in 2020. "I care less about what the job actually is and more about becoming a more integrated person as well as an enthusiastic entrepreneur."

Born 100 miles north of Shanghai in Suzhou, China, and living opposite a wholesale market, Ju's entrepreneurial dreams began in childhood. His mother encouraged him to dream big, telling him, "If you don't study hard, you may only have a booth in the market selling small things."

Ju's cousin, a PhD student in chemistry at UW-Madison in 2008, encouraged Ju to pursue those dreams at WSB—and his experience was a good one.

"I can hardly recall what I missed the most from home because I really had a great time at WSB," says Ju. "I would suggest everyone be more open to new things."

Ju returned to China after graduation and continues to be open to new things, including his unlikely collection of office mates at the MollyBox headquarters: two Huskies, one Chinese pastoral dog, and a dozen cats. He's glad to call Shanghai home, notably for its diverse and open culture.

"Shanghai is a city where different cultures and ideals are embraced because of its nature of tolerance and inclusiveness," says Ju.

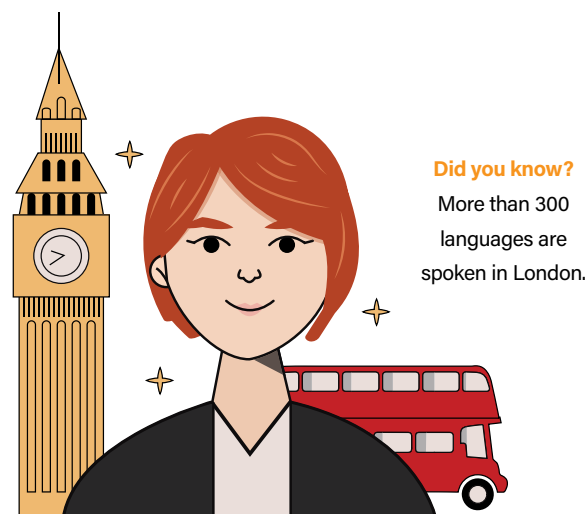


Shawana Fayolle (MBA '07)

Title: Managing director, BentallGreenOak

Current location: Luxembourg City, Luxembourg

Hometown: New Orleans, Louisiana



Elissa von Broembsen-Kluever (BBA '04)

Title: Partner and managing director, Omni Partners LLP

Current location: London, United Kingdom

Hometown: Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

Shawana Fayolle (MBA '07) was in the right place at the right time when she received a once-in-a-lifetime chance to work abroad in Luxembourg. Fayolle initially found herself in Europe's smallest country on an unexpected expat assignment in 2013 for Colony NorthStar, where she had been working in New York City. During that assignment, she met the man who would become her husband. Though she left Luxembourg briefly to return to NYC, the opportunity to strategically forge her career toward managing director at BentallGreenOak—and be in the same country as her eventual husband—ultimately brought Fayolle back to Luxembourg permanently.

"When I was a single expat, I was an international woman of mystery. Every weekend I visited a different city or country in Europe. My experiences and discoveries have shaped my life values."

Now more settled, Fayolle says that her weekends are more predictable, involving various family activities. Among her favorites is walking in one of the forests that cover more than 20 percent of Luxembourg City. She also recommends taking a tour of the Old City, historically one of Europe's greatest fortified sites due to its position at two rivers.

"People might be surprised to find that although the country is the smallest in Europe, it is a melting pot of cultures, with many speaking English. Nearly 50 percent of the population are foreigners."

Fayolle appreciates that diversity in the day-to-day aspects of her role. "Seeing how various countries structure real estate transactions, approach negotiations, and manage complex situations has sharpened my business acumen and opened up my mind to new ways to conduct commerce."

Wisconsin-born and bred, Elissa von Broembsen-Kluever (BBA '04) has spent more than 14 years in London and is still learning new things about her role at Omni Partners and about her city—including London's emerging dining scene.

"I usually take visitors to one of my favorite restaurants for a great meal. The dining options in London have improved considerably over the past 15 years."

Von Broembsen-Kluever's journey from a U.S.-headquartered investment bank to working in the heart of London required knowing what she wanted and being willing to walk away from a position to find it.

"I resigned from the investment bank, and when they asked whether I would consider staying, I expressed my desire to work abroad. I met the CEO of the London business on his next visit to the U.S. and relocated to the U.K. four months later."

Her role involves frequent meetings with investors and colleagues, reading documents, reviewing analysis, and speaking to third-party advisors.

Von Broembsen-Kluever knows firsthand that the road to working abroad isn't always direct.

"Build a skill set doing something you enjoy first. Then once you've proven yourself, get vocal about your desire to go abroad and start tapping into your network in a targeted way."

Von Broembsen-Kluever said the biggest mental shift was adjusting to the European approach to holiday—or vacation, as its more commonly called in the U.S. "The days are there to be taken and enjoyed," she says.

Von Broembsen-Kluever has acclimated well to the idea. She recommends walking along the tow path on the River Thames between Parsons Green and Hammersmith on a dry day. "It's fantastic!" ◀



Nathan Kirchmier, vice president at Walton Street Capital, speaks to WSB undergraduate students as part of a consulting trek.

Consulting Demand

New
certificate
will build
students'
consulting
credentials

BY LEIAH FUNDELL
PHOTOS BY PAUL L. NEWBY II

Grace Orella (BBA '22) didn't know that she wanted to go into consulting until fall of her senior year when a friend recommended that she look into it. A marketing and supply chain management major at WSB, Orella was already honing the exact skills her future employer Accenture was looking for in a quality consulting candidate. Her deep understanding of data analytics, presentation confidence, and soft skills like business communication and collaboration were all picked up through her coursework as well as experiential learning outside the classroom.

"With my majors, there are so many different paths I could have gone down," says Orella. "Getting to experience different companies and industries is something that was so important to me over my time at UW and ultimately led me toward a career path in consulting."

While Orella's pivot was a serendipitous shift late in her student experience, many students have consulting career aspirations from the moment they step foot onto campus. And the demand from employers is there, too.

"Students want to go into consulting," says Melissa Leffin (BBA '09), director of

career engagement for the undergraduate program. "As we're successfully placing more students in this industry, we're also strategically growing our employer partnerships and alumni connections in this field."

Soon, students will have a new opportunity to build their credentials in consulting through an undergraduate certificate.

The new consulting certificate, slated to roll out in Fall 2022, responds to growing student interest in consulting careers. It is also a strategic alignment of the school's mission to achieve core school recruiting status among top firms and drive strategic growth in corporate consulting.

"The goal was to develop curricular experience for students to gain key skills sought after by consulting firms," says Steven M. Boeder, director of the Erdman Center for Operations and Technology Management, who has led development of the consulting certificate. "The benefits of this certificate are multi-dimensional, including increased alumni engagement, partnerships among graduate and undergraduate students, partnerships with other schools and colleges, increased employer engagement, and overall student preparedness for the workforce."

The curriculum will help develop foundational consulting knowledge and skills specifically in the areas of project management, business communication, advanced analytics, strategy, organizational change, and technology. A new case interview analysis course

will help students effectively implement a systematic approach to analyzing case problems and then concisely communicate that analysis with actionable recommendations. After completing all course requirements, students should be able to apply consulting knowledge and understanding to applied settings and ultimately secure consulting roles with top firms in the industry.

The seeds for the certificate were planted between the Badger Consulting Club and the Wisconsin Consulting Club, whose combined membership includes more than 130 students across WSB, the College of Letters and Science, and the College of Engineering. The Wisconsin Consulting Club receives 50-90 applications each semester and traditionally has been the hub for students interested in consulting careers.

Leta Krueger (BS '22), Wisconsin Consulting Club president, and James Ly (BBA '23), vice president of internal development for the club's executive board, were integral to developing the consulting certificate by providing



Student interest in consulting careers is on the rise, and many had the chance to learn from industry professionals in Chicago this spring.

commitment to providing students with the most innovative and challenging curriculum," says Ly. "It will allow more students to pursue consulting and expand UW-Madison's overall presence in the field."

The certificate is open to all UW students who want to develop consulting skills as part of their undergraduate experience. The demand is projected to be as high as 150 to 200 undergraduate students.

WSB has always prioritized experiential learning opportunities, knowing they provide a competitive

providing members with networking trips to consulting firms, information panels and case workshops with alumni, mock interviews, and access to a broad consulting network.

As a precursor to the certificate's launch, WSB offered a career exploration trek in March 2022 as part of its Career Forward program, which helps to guide undergraduates' aspirations in more than forty career pathways, including consulting. Twenty undergraduate students visited Chicago firms Spaulding Ridge, Bain & Company, and Walton Street Capital to learn from and network with alumni in consulting, finance, and technology.

"The certificate is an investment that will continue to pay dividends long into the future for WSB and the consulting industry," says Jonathon Kuether (BBA '08), associate partner at Bain & Company, who met with students during the consulting trek. "My hope is that the certificate helps increase earlier interest for students, resulting in an increased number of prepared candidates." ◀

"The goal was to develop curricular experience for students to gain key skills sought after by consulting firms."

—STEVE BOEDER

research into the student interest, demand, and content for the certificate.

"The consulting certificate is a testament to the Wisconsin School of Business'

advantage to students entering the job market. The Wisconsin Consulting Club and Badger Consulting Club have been the primary sources for these experiences,

Class Notes

1960–1969



Martin Feldman (BBA '64) has been retired for more than six years in Florida after living and working in the Northeast. He loved his four years at UW–Madison, as did his two sons, who also attended. Next up is the grandkids who are beginning to search for colleges (fingers crossed!).



John Goetz (BBA '66) worked in newspaper advertising and marketing management positions for 38 years, but retired early to spend more time with family. His stories have been published in the *Journal of the Wild West History Association* and featured in the Western History Department of the Denver Library.

Steve Cain (BBA '68) recently marked the seventh anniversary of managing the Midwest office of Fairfield Capital Group, LLC, which offers equipment leasing consultation and service to middle market companies.

More Class Notes are featured in the digital issue at

[business.wisc.edu/
update/spring-2022](https://business.wisc.edu/update/spring-2022)

1970–1979

Ken Towers (BBA '71) and his wife, Barbara, have moved from the San Francisco area after 39 years to Carpinteria, California—only six blocks from their son, Mike, and his wife, Tara, and three granddaughters aged 5, 3, and 1. Life is good in a beach town with many golf courses in the area!



William Rauwerdink (BBA '72) connected with many leaders, including Sen. Johnson and more, while in Washington, D.C. last winter. Business remains great!



Karen Leonard Erwin (BA '74, MBA '79) is retired in Chattanooga, Tennessee. After grad school, she spent 12 years with Arthur Andersen & Co. (now Accenture) followed by other enriching experiences at Harnischfeger Systems, IBM, Metavante (now FIS), Compuware, Oracle, and NTT Data.

Dick Fields (MBA '75) is retired and living in Fullerton, California. He spends his time babysitting his first grandson and is still on *Libertarian Counterpoint*, a Sacramento-based public access TV show, going on 31 years.

John Shaffer (MA '75) is enjoying retirement and the change from administrative roles to a personal art-related project. His collection of work by Italian illustrator Ezio Anichini (1886–1948) is the basis for an exhibit at the Marian Library of the University of Dayton.



Joe Fahey (BBA '76, MBA '80) recently retired after a satisfying career in international marketing. He has started public speaking under the name of Travels, Traditions & Tales and shares his global experiences in an educational and entertaining format.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



RAMESH SHARDA (MBA '78, PhD '81)

has been selected for the Fulbright Distinguished Chair Award at Aalto University in Finland. Sharda is only the second Oklahoma State University faculty member to receive this award. He also won the 2020 OSU Eminent Faculty Award, and was inducted into the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame in 2016.

Steven Mandell (BBA '79) has been practicing law since receiving his juris doctor from Georgetown in 1982. In June, he will celebrate the 28th anniversary of the law firm he helped to start in 1994, Mandell Menkes, LLC.

1980–1989



David Jewell (BBA '80) is moving on to his next adventure after a fulfilling 40 years in the music industry and more than 24 years at Yamaha Corporation of America.

Karen Schneider (BS '80, MBA '82) passed away suddenly on October 26, 2021, at the age of 63. She is survived by her husband, Lou Perretta.

Thomas Huisman (BA '82, MBA '13) has accepted a position with Fincantieri/Marinette Marine as a senior quality engineer. The U.S. Navy awarded a contract for the next-generation Constellation Class frigate to Fincantieri in April 2020, and it will be built at the Marinette Marine shipyard in Marinette, Wisconsin.



Liz (Miller) Dawes (BBA '85) recently received the Medal of the Order of Australia for her work in establishing the Robert Connor Dawes Foundation after her 18-year-old son, Connor, died from brain cancer. Since 2013, the nonprofit has become the largest charity in Australia dedicated to pediatric brain cancer.

Joseph Bowar (BBA '87, MS '94) recently joined Viridian Partners as managing principal.

Kent Kirchstein (BBA '88) wrapped up his 16-year career in

sales leadership with Schneider Electric's energy services division to transition to a full-time CFO role with B9Creations. Kirchstein has been part of the B9Creations team as a part-time CFO since 2017.



RJ Moshay (MBA '89) has returned to Dallas, Texas, after spending more than a decade in Durham-Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The Tar-Heeled Badger Texan was recently named senior account director in the corporate social responsibility/philanthropic services vertical at Sunwest Communications, a global PR firm based in Dallas, Texas.

1990-1999

Robert Cottingham (BBA '90) was promoted from partner of national geographic markets to partner of internal mergers and acquisitions at Wipfli. He is responsible for leading Wipfli's merger and acquisition efforts with certified public accounting and consulting organizations throughout the United States.



Scott Richardson (BBA '91) was recently named a Five Star Wealth

Manager in Milwaukee for the 10th consecutive year. In addition, his boutique wealth management firm, Richardson Financial Group, Inc., was named the top-ranked company in the *Milwaukee Business Journal's* Best Places to Work-micro category for the second consecutive year.



Irwin Carver Smith III (BBA '91) has been named vice president

and partner of Truity Partners LLC. Smith and others recently participated in a management buyout of Baker Tilly Search and Staffing.



Laura Rauman (BBA '92) founded and leads two organizations that celebrated milestone anniversaries in 2022. Management consulting company Vista360, LLC celebrates 20 years and the nonprofit school Bloom360 Learning Community rounds out its fifth year of serving neurodivergent learners with an innovative approach.



Dana Hermanson (PhD '93) appeared in the Research.com 2022 World

Ranking of Top Business and Management Scientists, as well as the 2022 World Ranking of Top Economics and Finance Scientists. He is professor of accounting and Dinos Eminent Scholar Chair at Kennesaw State University.

Crystal Long (BBA '95, JD '98) has taken a position as a prosecutor in the Monroe County District Attorney's Office in Sparta, Wisconsin. She spent 21 years as a prosecutor for the Columbia County District Attorney's Office in Portage, Wisconsin.

Penelope Smiley (BBA '96) recently joined Bader Rutter as a strategy planning director.

Dan Cocos (BBA '97) recently joined 4Degrees as the head of engineering after completing nine years at BAO Systems.



Sarah Marty (BM '97, MS '01, MA '05) has been named director

of WSB's Bolz Center for Arts Administration after a nationwide search. A Bolz Center alumna, Marty has served as interim co-director since June 2020.



Jane Tereba (BBA '97) has been named president of Capital

Valuation Group, a boutique firm specializing in valuation and litigation support for privately owned businesses. Tereba joined CVG in 2013, and has earned her ASA accreditation and became a shareholder in 2014. In addition to client work, she enjoys teaching about business valuation through speaking events and podcasts.

Keith Alexander (MBA '98) released an online course that teaches people how to advocate effectively for a loved one about to undergo surgery. "The Patient Advocate Insider: How to Advocate Effectively for A Loved One and Get Them Better Care" is being marketed to not-for-profit organizations.



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Sinan Edil (BBA '98) serves on the executive board of Setas Kimya Sanayi

AS, one of the largest specialty chemical manufacturers in Turkey, with four plants in Tekirdağ, Turkey. He's managed the company's masterbatch business unit since 2005.



Jason Huett (BBA '99) was recently promoted to chief marketing officer

for Simply Automate, Inc.—a robotic process automation firm based in Austin, Texas.

Carrie Leonard (BBA '99) has been elected to serve as Johnson Block & Co., Inc.'s president. She was promoted to partner in 2013 and has served as managing partner in the Viroqua and La Crosse offices.

2000-2009



Will Hsu (BBA '00) won the DraftKings NFL Week 15 Millionaire Maker

contest and turned \$45 of entries into more than \$1.1 million in prize winnings. He and his wife, Jenny, donated more than 20 percent of the winnings to Wisconsin charities, including the Wisconsin School of Business for the James M. Johannes Endowed Directorship at the Puelicher Center for Banking Education. Hsu serves on the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association Board of Directors.



Jason Schmid (BS '00, MBA '05) has joined Burns

Continued on page 30

Class Notes

& McDonnell to lead and expand services in food manufacturing, specifically chocolate, and confectionery markets throughout the U.S. He is joined by fellow Business Badger **Ryan Stark (BS '12, MBA '17)** in the firm's growing downtown Madison office.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



BETH NORMAN
(BBA '02)

was recently recognized as a 2022 Top Woman Wealth Advisor by *Forbes* and was proud to be ranked #1 in the state of Wisconsin.

Cody Harper (BBA '01) and **Chad Tepley (BBA '02)** collaborated as Tepley's company, CDT Realty Corp., closed on acquisition/construction financing of \$8.9 million for a new 49-unit apartment development in northeast Minneapolis. Harper, vice president of originations at Mag Mile Capital, arranged the financing.



Nathan Houdek
(BA '02, MBA '16) was recently appointed

commissioner of insurance for the State of Wisconsin by Gov. Tony Evers. He serves as the state's chief regulator of insurance and

oversees the operations of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance.

Scott J. Schultz (MBA '02) was recently named vice president of marketing and product development at TDS Telecom. For nearly two decades Schultz has held director-level roles in product management and development and in direct sales and the repair contact center at the Madison-based telecommunications company.

Peter Lewandowski (BA '05, MBA '20) was honored as part of *In Business* magazine's 40 Under 40 Class of 2022 for his contributions to the greater Madison community.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



ZACH DAVIS
(BBA '08)

is the founder at The Trek and the co-host of *Backpacker Radio*, the company's flagship podcast. *Backpacker Radio* is the #1 hiking podcast in the U.S. with 3.5 million lifetime downloads.



Jennifer Post Dräger (MBA '07) is the founder of Bright Outlook

Global Prep, an educational consulting firm working with young people as they plan their educational journeys. She also serves as president of the American Women's Club of Berlin, a diverse association of 250 women in the capital city of Germany.

Tyler Falish (BBA '08) was recently named North America director of research for Kroll's forensic investigations and intelligence practice. Falish will also continue to provide marketing and strategic support to his brother, **Alexander Falish (BBA '14)**, and father in their management of Noble Roots Brewing Company, a family-owned Green Bay-based craft brewery.



Dennis Hull (MBA '09) was promoted to senior director, insights and analytics, for Spectrum Health, an \$8 billion integrated health system employing more than 31,000 people across multiple sites in Michigan. Hull, his wife, Barbara, and their three children, Emma (9), Brendan (8) and Molly (5), proudly fly the Badger colors in a sea of Spartan green and Wolverine blue.

2010-2019

Jessica Warmington (BA '10, MFS '14, MBA '16) moved to Lexington, Kentucky, and

accepted the role of human resources manager for Schneider Electric at a manufacturing plant with more than 600 employees under two unions.



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Eric Dehn (MBA '11) recently joined Gundersen Health System as vice president of enterprise architecture and solution design. Dehn most recently served as vice president of enterprise architecture, engineering, and cloud infrastructure at Thrivent Financial.

Mark Haakenson (BBA '11) was named controller and chief accounting officer at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in January 2022.



Deanna Singh
(MBA '12) has a new book, *Actions Speak Louder: A*

Step-by-Step Guide to Becoming an Inclusive Workplace, published by Penguin Random House. The award-winning author shares exercises and strategies to empower anyone seeking to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in their workplace.

Steve Braaksma (MBA '14) has accepted his first position



"My first Grammy!!! It was an honor to sing under Gustavo Dudamel almost three years ago as part of the Pacific Chorale, alongside the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Los Angeles Children's Chorus, National Children's Chorus. Today we received the honor of winning a Grammy for Best Choral Performance."

—**BROOKE JACKSON (MBA '09)**

as a software developer with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. After transitioning from a career in supply chain, he is eager to use his new skill set for a mission he believes in and is looking forward to a rewarding career as a developer.

Ben Ganther (BBA '14) has co-founded and is opening the first climbing and fitness gym in Green Bay, Wisconsin—Odyssey Climbing + Fitness.



Andrew Grochowski (BBA '14) welcomed baby, Eli, in April 2021, and has enjoyed watching him grow and develop. The new dad also accepted a promotion and new position as large-loss adjuster for Farmers Insurance. He and his family look forward to everything 2022 has to offer!



Simon Linwood (MBA '14) recently joined UCR Health as chief information officer. He previously held IT innovation roles at Nationwide Children's Hospital.



Amber Winter (BBA '15) has recently been promoted to chief executive officer at Madison-based learning management systems provider, Web Courseworks.

Sarah Bluvus (MBA '18) has supported small businesses located in Mercer Island, Washington, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her recent accomplishments include securing and distributing nearly \$400,000 in small business grants, marketing support, and public space amenities as well as launching the MInext buy local marketing campaign.



"I'm very excited to announce that I will be joining Walgreens as a Marketing & Merchandising Development Program Analyst following my graduation from the Wisconsin School of Business this spring. Looking forward to this next chapter in Chicago!"

—**JULIA CHELAK (BBA '22)**

Michele Slattery (MBA '19) was recently named vice president of sales at TDS Telecom. She is a TDS sales veteran with 24 years of experience at the company, holding numerous roles in marketing, sales strategy and execution, and communications.

2020-2022



Craig Stein (MBA '21) and **Katie Stein (BS '15)** welcomed their son, Porter, in October 2021. ◀

More Class Notes are featured in the digital issue at business.wisc.edu/update/spring-2022



Heriberto Hernandez-Flores, Monica Murphy, Katie Haghighi, and Nicolas Flores-Sanchez (from left) are among the first graduating class of BEL students.

MEMORIES AND MILESTONES

First Class of BEL Scholars Graduates

Seven years ago, the first cohort of Business Emerging Leaders (BEL) scholars first arrived on campus as high schoolers, just beginning their journey with WSB. They spent a portion of their summers taking business courses, exploring career pathways, and gaining leadership skills. They also participated in corporate visits, community development, and a healthy dose of summer fun in Madison.

Now, this inaugural group of BEL scholars are newly minted WSB alumni, having graduated in May eager to start their careers and apply all they've learned. With job placements ranging from BP to Spaulding Ridge, these young professionals are ready to make their mark on the world—taking with them the spirit of all they experienced as BEL scholars and Business Badgers. ◀



The donor-funded BEL Program is a college preparatory program for students from diverse backgrounds that have strong academic records and leadership skills.



Corporate visits enable BEL students to envision the kind of companies they see themselves working for someday.



It's not all work with no play. BEL students experience life in Madison, including a visit to the Madison Mallards baseball game.



Matteo Bruce (BBA '22) signs the Google wall at the company's Chicago headquarters.



Outdoor activities, such as a rope and obstacle course, help BEL students build teamwork and trust.



These BEL scholars are among the newest members of the Business Badger alumni network. Congrats to the Class of 2022!



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headquarters **P. 12**

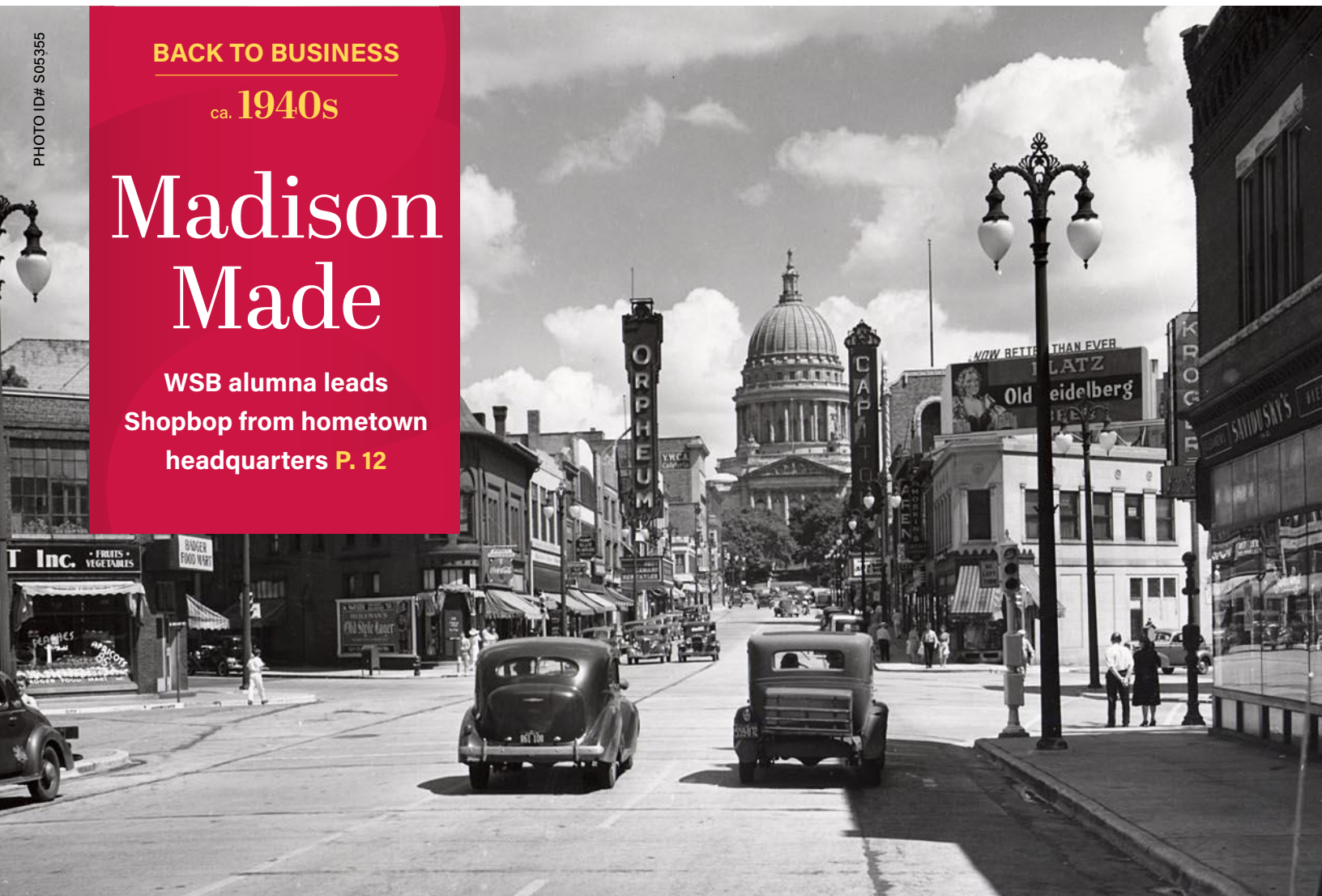


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