IN THIS ISSUE

8

TO WATCH

Meet WSB alumni who are making an impact

Donovan Malloy shapes strategic HR initiatives at Microsoft

Understanding the preference for natural talent with Chia-Jung Tsay
One of my favorite aspects of the newest phase in the Wisconsin School of Business’ Trusted to Lead brand campaign is seeing the many different possibilities in business. Launched in February, the campaign features two dozen students who are pursuing their passions, values, and purposes as they define their career paths.

As I look over these stories, I am struck by how each student embraces their individual strengths and backgrounds to broaden the scope of what’s possible in business as they break boundaries and ignite change.

Take Charlie Forbes, for example. With an interest in both finance and politics, this fourth-generation Badger is merging his passions to bring a different perspective to Wall Street. You can meet Charlie and some of the other students featured in the campaign on page 28.

As I read the stories included in this magazine, I’m equally excited about the many paths our alumni take into business—including this year’s outstanding 8 to Watch selections. Kelley Kollock (page 15) is improving sustainability efforts at one of the world’s largest hotel chains. Tim Schlidt (page 21) is raising capital to fund psychedelic therapies, creating a new wave of cutting-edge antidepressants. And Amber Scott (page 18) is using her real estate expertise to create economic opportunity for underrepresented communities.

I am inspired by these stories and seeing how our students and alumni alike are chasing their dreams, redefining success, and doing business differently.

That is, after all, the Wisconsin way. I can’t think of any better way to be.

Sincerely,

Vallabh “Samba” Sambamurthy
Albert O. Nicholas Dean
Wisconsin School of Business
What’s Fueling Business Badgers?

On a busy day, hundreds of students pack the Capital Café in Grainger Hall to load up on coffee, snacks, paninis, breakfast sandwiches, and much more. More than 35 student workers staff the popular eatery, which opened in 1996 and now serves about 200–220 meals per day during the school year.

We asked Robbie Buchanan, Capital Café manager, for a closer look at what’s fueling Business Badgers:

40%
Grab and go
Prepackaged sandwiches and other items from the café’s self-serve coolers make up nearly half of all meals served.

325–350
Coffee drinks are sold each day to caffeine-craving customers.

New contender
Matcha drinks are rising in popularity—and sales.

Available daily
Seven sandwiches, three salads, and a variety of other tasty options.

Most popular food items
include the bacon, egg, and cheddar bagel breakfast sandwich and the chicken pesto sandwich.

Best-selling coffee drinks
include caramel macchiatos, cold brew coffee, and flavored lattes (especially vanilla and caramel).

What’s on tap for Harley’s 120th anniversary?
We’re going to have some great acts, but really, our customers are the show. It’s their interaction, it’s their bikes. We have to be open to our customers owning our brand. Riders from all over the world are taking their vacation to come and be with me. How cool is that?

What motivates you on the job?
The museum hosts about 500 events a year, from corporate retreats to weddings. So, I’ve done a lot of things but I haven’t yet done the perfect event. There’s always one more question I could have asked to make an event even a hair better. That’s what pushes me.

What is your favorite WSB memory?
Oh, and a few more things:
Bradway built early business chops by operating his family’s bowling alleys in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. | On his 20th birthday, he bought his first motorcycle. | Another of Bradway’s favorite jobs was working the drive-thru at A&W. "I loved the owners and the culture." | Event philosophy: Organizes, but embrace the unpredictability. "If something is overplanned, over-curated, or overly easy, it’s not memorable."
New Certificate Increases Opportunity to Study International Business

In Fall 2023, WSB’s international business major will transition to a certificate program, enabling more students to integrate international business into their academic plans. The international business major had previously required a double major, making it difficult for some students to fit this area of study into their degree plans. “We are excited that more Business Badgers will have the opportunity to explore international business through the flexibility this new certificate offers,” says Sachin Tuli (BBA ’98, MS ’00), director of the international business program. “Research shows that those who advance their global mindset are more inclusive and empathetic, have greater self-confidence and comfort with ambiguity, and are more imaginative in solving problems and forging cooperation.” Students who are currently pursuing the international business major have the option to switch to the certificate program in Fall 2023 or complete their major by Summer 2028.

Supply Chain Management One of UW–Madison’s Fastest-Growing Majors

Steady growth of student enrollment is an important measure of an academic major’s success and relevance. WSB’s supply chain management major ranked #8 on UW–Madison’s hottest majors list, which highlights undergraduate majors that added the most students from Fall 2018 to Fall 2022. “We deliver an exceptional learning experience to our students,” says Jake Dean (MBA ’09), director of the Grainger Center for Supply Chain Management. “I believe the resources provided by WSB and the Grainger Center for Supply Chain Management and the increasing renown of supply chain as a discipline and career are among the primary reasons why we have had so much growth.”

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS HIT NEW CAREER PLACEMENT RECORDS

WSB’s world-class business education gives students the strong academic foundation and real-world skills to launch impressive careers upon graduation. Undergraduate students from the Class of 2022 set a new benchmark for post-graduate success, as highlighted by the data below:

- **95%** job placement
  - Among undergraduates within three months of graduation—an all-time high
- **60+** jobs in consulting
  - Secured by undergraduates, reinforcing WSB’s investment in this growing field
- **+$7,000** average starting salary increase
  - Since last year, reflecting heightened demand and value of WSB graduates

Day of Giving Helps Business Badgers Take Flight

Alumni, parents, and friends came together on March 28–29 for UW–Madison’s annual day of giving: Day of the Badger. Thanks to the strong Business Badger community, more than $152,000 was raised for the Wisconsin School of Business. These gifts will be used to increase access to global experiences for current and future students, allowing them to see business through a global lens and build key problem-solving skills, resiliency, and cultural awareness. More than 300 donors helped unlock a generous $50,000 match from Anthony and Carolyn McCusker. WSB is grateful for everyone who participated in this year’s campaign and is excited to increase global learning opportunities for the next generation of business leaders.

For the first time, WSB also hosted a Day of the Badger student celebration to educate students on the importance of philanthropy and celebrate the gifts that enhance their educational journeys.

SCHOOL NEWS

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

**Fabio Gaertner Wins Chancellor’s Teaching Innovation Award**

Fabio Gaertner, professor of accounting and information systems and the Cynthia and Jay Ihlenfeld Professor for Inspired Learning in Business, received the 2023 Chancellor’s Teaching Innovation Award, which recognizes a faculty member who has shown an innovative approach to learning. Gaertner teaches financial accounting in the full-time, professional, and executive MBA programs. His research includes the effects of executive compensation and taxes on corporate outcomes, asset prices, and accounting information.

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Chia-Jung Tsay investigates our hidden preference for naturals over strivers

**THE ‘IT’ FACTOR**

**IDEAS AND INSIGHTS**

**BY CHRIS MALINA | PHOTO BY PAUL L. NEWBY II**

From a young age, pianist Chia-Jung Tsay wondered why her fellow musicians were going to such great lengths to conceal their warm-ups before big performances and competitions. “The practice room windows were often covered with newspaper,” says Tsay, who holds graduate degrees in music performance and a PhD in organizational behavior and social psychology. “If there was a hook on the windowed door, people would hang clothing or even folding chairs to block the view.”

That behavior was a clue that judges and audiences might actually prefer the naturally gifted performers—the ones who didn’t need the hours of practice before concerts—and it’s something Tsay would later investigate as a social scientist. Now, as an associate professor of management and human resources at the Wisconsin School of Business, she’s further exploring the psychological processes that influence decision making about performance—including the so-called “naturalness bias”—and how it plays out in business.

Bringing this preference for naturals to the surface, however, takes work, especially when people frequently claim to prefer the strivers. Qualities like grit, tenacity, and hard work tend to be seen as valuable, and after all, who doesn’t love an underdog story? “However, there’s a distinct difference between what people explicitly say is important and valuable to an area of achievement and what they do,” says Tsay, who joined WSB in 2021 as the Bruce and Janice Ellig Professor in Management. “People indicate they very much favor hard work and striving, but their choices seem to reveal this preference for the naturally gifted instead.”

“People indicate they very much favor hard work and striving, but their choices seem to reveal this preference for the naturally gifted instead.”

— CHIA-JUNG TSAY

To illustrate that discrepancy, Tsay first conducted a study in which participants were presented with biographies of two classical musicians: one who was described as a natural to some participants and a hard worker to others—and similar results ensued. “On average, people would see the business proposition attributed to the natural as more likely to succeed,” says Tsay. “They were also more willing to invest in that idea.”

While Tsay points out that there’s nothing wrong with appreciating natural talent, she says it’s important to understand the contradiction illustrated by the research and the consequences it can have—especially in human resources, where things like hiring decisions can be subtly influenced by unconscious biases.

“It’s not just about fairness to candidates, which is important, but there could also be an impact on organizations as well,” she says. “Without realizing it, hiring managers are potentially losing out on people who may be more qualified on the metrics that an organization cares about.”

Going forward, Tsay continues to conduct studies aimed at further understanding and unpacking naturalness bias. Since first exploring the topic more than 10 years ago, new avenues of research have opened up—especially when it comes to equity and inclusion.

“I’m continuing to conduct this lens to think about less conscious influences on perceptions of performance or perceptions of achievement to look at the implications for different genders and racial minorities,” she says. “Once there is that awareness, we can potentially create the conditions where we’re less vulnerable to the factors that we wouldn’t consciously say should affect our judgment.”

**UPDATE SPRING/SUMMER 2023 | 07**
Liz and Joe Henry are building a family enterprise, one bottle at a time

By Chris Malina
Photos by Paul L. Newby II

For Liz Henry (BS ’83, MBA ’96) and Joe Henry (BBA ’14), being in business together isn’t just a job. It’s a family matter. The mother and son—both Business Badgers—are two of the powerhouses behind Henry Farms, LLC, based in Dane, Wisconsin. Those working in agriculture may know the Henrys best for their seed corn operation, but those who enjoy a good cocktail are most likely familiar with their secondary business: J. Henry & Sons, which crafts small batch bourbon and has taken on a life of its own in recent years.

“When we started, we were producing only a couple hundred barrels each year,” says Joe. “Now, we have three rickhouses with capacity for more than 10,000 barrels on the property, and that’s just to keep up with our current demand.”

Continued on page 10
she wasn’t even sure she had a taste for. Soon be putting that education to work selling a spirit that merchandising, and how to negotiate with vendors. “I never really saw myself being a farmer, and I think another reason my dad started making bourbon was to wrangle my brother and back into the family business,” says Joe, who moved to Chicago and started a career in sales after studying management, HR, and international business at WSB. Having grown up on the farm, Joe admits to initially wanting some distance from his family’s undergraduate degree in agriculture. When Liz married her husband, Joe Sr., and began working in Joe Sr.’s head. After some trial and error, the mid-2000s planted the very serious seed for a new business in Joe Sr’s head. After some trial and error, the Henribs—including sons Joe and Jack—began making bourbon in 2009, using grains from their own farm. A good bourbon, however, takes its sweet time getting ready, and the Henrys’ first bottles didn’t hit the market until 2015. It was an excruciating wait for an untested product, but the Henrys got a big boost in confidence after entering their first spirits competition in Louisville, Kentucky. “We didn’t even have a label for it yet,” says Joe. “The bottle had our name on a piece of masking tape. And it still won an award.” That award was a coveted gold medal from the American Distilling Institute and an affirmation the family was on to something, both professionally and personally. “One of the key components I felt was going to make the fact that this brand is really us.” - LIZ HENRY (BS ’83, MBA ’96)
Let’s Talk About It
Julie Phillips supports student success through mental health services

As the Wisconsin School of Business’ first-ever embedded mental health provider, Julie Phillips is quickly proving to be a welcome resource to students, faculty, and staff. As a complement to WSB’s existing student success team, which provides holistic support to Business Badgers both inside and outside the classroom, Phillips offers counseling and other clinical therapeutic services aimed at helping students prioritize their mental health and wellbeing.

A licensed marriage and family therapist with nearly 30 years of experience in counseling and higher education, Phillips—who joined WSB in November 2022—also holds an MBA and is uniquely positioned to understand the challenges and stressors facing business students and give them the tools to achieve professional success while maintaining a healthy mindset.

WSB: Why is it important to have this position here?

Julie Phillips: As an embedded mental health provider, you’re actually part of the community you’re supporting, rather than being an outside entity. I think that’s definitely an advantage, in that students see an office within their building. It’s faster and easier for them to access these services because I’m right there in Grainger Hall and I’m only seeing students from the Wisconsin School of Business. It’s more convenient for them and they feel more comfortable. I also think that helps a lot in terms of reducing the stigma of seeking out mental health support.

Another advantage of being embedded is that I have a better understanding of the school’s culture. I’m familiar with the instructors that students have, I know the policies and the timelines surrounding internship applications, and I understand the common stressors and elements that really play into that. So, students don’t have to go over all that in order for me to understand where they’re coming from.

WSB: What services do you offer?

JP: I primarily provide direct counseling services to undergraduate students at WSB, and those appointments can be either virtual or in-person depending on comfort levels and schedules. I also provide four hours of “Let’s Talk” sessions each week, which are open to all students from pre-admission to graduate. During these sessions—which are less formal than individual counseling—students can drop in and talk about whatever they wish. They don’t have to make an appointment and there’s no paperwork. As a result, some students might use that as a bridge or gateway to more routine outreach programming and counseling.

We also have a myriad of services available through University Health Services, from support groups to a 24/7 crisis line, should a student need further resources.

WSB: How else are you supporting wellbeing across the school?

JP: I’m available on a consultative basis for faculty, staff, and instructors who might benefit from hearing about something through a mental health lens. Since joining WSB last year, I’ve been doing meet and greets so that everyone within the school becomes familiar with me and feels comfortable referring students my way. Many instructors are now including my contact information and a description of my services within their syllabi, which is really helpful. I also put on workshops for staff and faculty where I’m able to help manage some of their concerns about students—such as how to identify the signs of depression—or provide helpful tips on practices like self-care.

WSB: What’s stood out after your first few months on the job?

JP: I’ve been very impressed with the student population, in terms of their willingness to consider and participate in the therapy process. From what I’ve experienced, students are not hesitant to directly reach out for services or individual counseling. That’s a shift we’ve seen since the pandemic, and I think that’s encouraging.

In addition, having WSB administration really support and advocate for this position—as well as clearly see its function in ensuring student success—has gone a long way in further destigmatizing mental health services. For students, seeing that the school is committed to their mental health is a very welcome development.

I’ve also just found WSB to be so welcoming and accommodating, and it’s really a joy to be here.

Interview conducted and edited by Chris Malina

For students, seeing that the school is committed to their mental health is a very welcome development.

— Julie Phillips
DONOVAN MALLOY
BS ’11, MBA ’19
Senior Human Resources Consultant, Microsoft

Location: Seattle
Previous jobs: Talent engagement and development manager, compensation manager, diversity champion team lead, and other HR roles, Nielsen

Why he’s among the 8 to Watch: Malloy puts people at the center of everything. His inclusive and systematic approach to human resources at Microsoft helps ensure a harmonious balance between individual and corporate needs. “We all have to pitch in to be able to make a business successful,” he says. “If we can do that in a way that honors who we are individually and then what we can do collectively, that’s how we succeed.”

A strong foundation: Growing up in Los Angeles, Malloy says attending college in Wisconsin wasn’t exactly on his radar—but receiving a prestigious Posse Foundation scholarship allowed him to enroll at UW-Madison and study consumer science. He later was accepted into the Human Resources Emerging Leaders Program at Nielsen where he began his HR career in full. There, Malloy traveled to Shanghai, China, to create and deploy a new career development framework for employees.

Impact of a WSB degree: Engaging in classroom discussions with other working professionals about real-life situations and challenges during his evening MBA program was invaluable preparation for a high-level career in HR.

MATCHING WITH MICROSOFT: Malloy was hired at Microsoft in 2019, moved to Seattle, and got to work building and establishing systems to foster deeper connections among the company’s many teams—something that took on added importance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Building a pipeline: Being able to recruit more diverse talent into HR has driven Malloy throughout his career because he sees room to create long-lasting change. “As we develop the next generation of business leaders, we have to think about our processes differently. HR is a great home base for that work because we can be a representation of what we need to see within a broader business.”

KELLEY KOLLOCK
BBA ’16 | Manager of ESG, Hilton

Location: Arlington, Virginia
Previous jobs: Various roles in planning, product design, inventory, and pipeline management, Target

Why she’s among the 8 to Watch: A leader in the emerging field of environmental, social, and governance (ESG), Kollock shapes initiatives for sustainable travel and increased corporate responsibility for one of the world’s largest hotel chains. Since joining the company in 2022, Kollock and her team helped land Hilton on the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices—a benchmark for corporate sustainability efforts—for the sixth straight year.

From red to green: At WSB, Kollock majored in marketing and supply chain management before accepting her first job with Target. There, she worked alongside a design team incorporating circular economy principles into their work—and extending the life of everyday products—which further developed her interest in sustainability and pushed her to explore careers in the ESG field.

Impact of a WSB degree: With over 7,000 hotels in Hilton’s portfolio, Kollock has her hands full when it comes to incorporating sustainability strategies at diverse properties around the world. Fortunately, her education has given her a leg up in logistics. “I would encourage anybody to take a supply chain management course. It helps you see the whole picture. You are really only one piece in what’s often a bigger puzzle, and it’s helpful to have that mindset when looking at challenging scenarios.”

Best advice for students: Kollock never expected to spend her final spring break as a WSB student in Germany studying the country’s auto industry—but she couldn’t pass up the chance to travel and get practical, hands-on experience. “If somebody’s offering you an opportunity for something, take advantage of it. Even if it doesn’t immediately sound like your thing, it’s oftentimes worth it.”

Photo by Timothy Davis
AMBER H. H. PORTER

MBA ’19

Senior Venture Capital Associate,
American Family Insurance Institute for Corporate and Social Impact

Location: Madison
Previous jobs: Managing partner, Multihyphenate Productions; chief of staff to CEO, seed-stage startup; theater literary assistant, ICM Partners; various other roles in the performing arts industry

Why she’s among the 8 to Watch: Through her work with the American Family Insurance Institute for Corporate and Social Impact, Porter facilitates investments in companies aimed at closing equity gaps in America with a specific focus on economic opportunity and healthy youth development. She embodies the company’s philosophy of dreaming fearlessly and is committed to enacting social change.

Investment in action: Porter and the institute recently backed a company called CNote, which helps large companies move capital into underserved communities at scale.

Impact of a WSB degree: "I leverage everything I learned in the MBA program on a daily basis."

Giving back: A recipient of scholarships for both her undergraduate and graduate education, Porter says she feels a duty to pay it forward. She’s an active mentor of interns and maintains her connection to the arts by serving on the board of Madison’s Forward Theater Company.

“I’m really proud that I was able to break into this work.”

— AMBER H. H. PORTER (MBA ’19)

AKHIL REMESAN

MBA ’22

Partner, Madison Lake Capital

Location: Madison
Previous jobs: Founder and CEO, Foodcliff; private equity associate, Borgman Capital; early-stage startup; various roles in the performing arts industry

Why he’s among the 8 to Watch: While earning his MBA, Remesan launched his own private equity firm, Madison Lake Capital, and immediately hit the ground running. Within a month of his WSB graduation, the firm closed on its first acquisition. With a focus on lower- to middle-market companies—especially those in Wisconsin—his philosophy is to partner with company leaders to ensure mutual growth and prosperity.

From founder to finance: After earning an undergraduate degree in engineering and later working as a consultant, Remesan launched a mobile food ordering startup, Foodcliff, and found himself drawn to the financial aspects of running a business. That later spurred his decision to move on from Foodcliff and pursue an MBA in corporate finance and investment banking. Remesan chose WSB because of the solid curriculum and expert faculty.

A different approach: As opposed to turnaround firms, Madison Lake Capital specializes in buying stable companies who are looking to sell—and their collaborative approach has resonated with clients. "We talk to the seller and emphasize that we'll take care of their people," Remesan says. "We also take pride in partnering with the management team when we come in to ensure everyone gets a say in company strategy."

Impact of a WSB degree: Remesan credits his professors for listening to his vision for Madison Lake Capital and guiding him along the way—even outside of the classroom. "They truly wanted me to be successful," he says. "That helped build my confidence and created the sense that I had people I could always call with questions."
AMBER SCOTT
MBA ’14
Director, Real Estate Debt and Equity Investment, Northwestern Mutual

Location: Newport Beach, California
Previous jobs: Various underwriting and market associate roles, Northwestern Mutual; project manager, Community HousingWorks

Why she’s among the 8 to Watch: With more than $10 billion of direct transactional experience across asset classes, Scott is an experienced leader in real estate. In addition to balancing debt and equity investments at Northwestern Mutual, she helped the company launch a new impact investing fund in 2021 aimed at building capital and creating economic opportunities in predominantly Black communities in the Milwaukee area and beyond. “That work has huge potential to impact the trajectory of families and individuals for generations,” she says.

A voice for change: As a first-generation college and post-graduate student from California, Scott studied economics and quickly became inspired by real estate’s potential to create generational wealth. Having grown up in a community where many residents faced financial insecurity—and were frequently excluded from economic policy discussions—Scott saw a career in real estate as a way of building stability not only for herself, but for those who don’t have a seat at the table.

Impact of a WSB degree: With a nudge from some supportive colleagues, Scott decided to pursue an MBA with a specialization in real estate and urban land economics at WSB. In addition to the specialized curriculum in real estate, she says the best education she received was in the business of people and how to best work alongside others from various backgrounds to achieve mutual goals.

Homeward bound: Scott joined Northwestern Mutual in 2014 and worked in the company’s Milwaukee headquarters before transferring to a field office back in California about an hour from where she grew up. “Having the opportunity to apply my institutional real estate expertise to the cities and communities that I was really familiar with was super exciting,” she says.

Best advice: “Be courageous enough to move forward despite your fear. You are more than enough, so create the spaces you need to show up as your true authentic self.”

JOE LOEHNIS
MBA ’18
Chief Executive Officer, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

Location: Madison
Previous jobs: Executive director, First Tee South Central Wisconsin; cello teacher/performer; professional golfer

Why he’s among the 8 to Watch: When the pandemic turned the performing arts industry upside down, Loehnis pulled out all the stops to keep the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra (WCO) in front of audiences and relevant to the community. He’s delivering a new brand of leadership to a new era, introducing creative ways to deliver artistic experiences that entertain, inspire, and unite a growing and diverse modern audience.

The show must go on: WCO is best known for Concerts on the Square, a summer concert series that brings 250,000 people to downtown Madison. When COVID-19 hit, Loehnis knew that canceling wasn’t an option. With a venue change and some strategic reorganization, Loehnis was able to continue Madison’s beloved tradition, making WCO one of the first orchestras in the country to safely perform during the pandemic.

Musical beginnings: Loehnis picked up his first cello in third grade and was playing for the Green Bay Symphony by the time he was 16. Since then, he has been using his talent to inspire youth in his community. At one point, Loehnis was teaching cello to 25 students—while simultaneously golfing on professional tours. “I saw the impact that music had on me, and I had the opportunity to give that same impact to kids and watch them develop as people,” he says. “I got to see it come full circle.”

Impact of a WSB degree: Loehnis’ role as an executive requires him to juggle many different responsibilities—a skill he honed at WSB. “On any given day, I could be doing finance, human resources, or operations. Without even realizing it, I’m drawing from those WSB classes every day.”

“I saw the impact that music had on me, and I had the opportunity to give that same impact to kids and watch them develop as people.”

— JOE LOEHNIS (MBA ’18)
KELLY JOHNSON

BBA ’15

Location: Portland, Oregon
Previous jobs: NCAA licensed merchandise manager, Adidas; senior merchandising analyst and various other roles, Wilson Sporting Goods Company

Why she’s among the 8 to Watch: Driven by a personal and professional passion for sports, Johnson creates lasting impact in industry and the community. Her desire to create new opportunities has earned her high-profile positions at both Wilson and Adidas and led her to create her own youth-focused foundation.

Merchandising 101: At Adidas, Johnson oversees operations like marketing, forecasting, and sales that are integral to launching new products. Using the analogy of a bike wheel, Johnson says that her role—the hub—works with cross-functional partners—the spokes—to connect consumers and products.

Blazing new trails: Johnson acknowledges the challenges of being a female in the sports industry, but uses her leadership skills to create pathways for others. “Even though I’m not a pro athlete, I can be that inspiration for younger females,” Johnson says. “We need more females who can lead in this industry.”

Leaving a legacy: When she was an undergraduate student, Johnson founded the Kelly Johnson Foundation to provide extracurricular and academic support to Wisconsin high school students. It has since expanded nationwide, and has awarded 17 scholarships and provided sports equipment to four high school teams.

Impact of a WSB degree: “Being able to run case studies and do interesting projects in my advanced classes has had direct applicability in my career.”

Putting in the work: Johnson thinks mental health is critical for success in the sports industry, especially after feeling the effects of depression herself. “I think the biggest misconception is you just take a pill and everything’s better. I’ve done a lot of personal work over the years, and I’m proud of where I am today.”

Talking shop: Johnson hosts a podcast called The Daily Grind where she talks to entrepreneurs, business owners, and CEOs about goal achievement. It’s an opportune way to keep learning, she says. “Soak up as much information as possible from experts in their respective industries. Because one, that’s where they live and breathe, and two, that’s their daily grind.”

TIM SCHLIDT

BBA ’15
Co-Founder and Partner, Palo Santo

Location: New York
Previous jobs: Private equity associate, Madison Dearborn Partners, LLC; investment banking analyst, Greenhill & Co.

Why he’s among the 8 to Watch: Schlidt is on a mission to find the next breakthrough antidepressant. Driven by his own struggles with mental health, Schlidt co-founded Palo Santo in 2020, a venture capital fund focused on funding psychedelic therapies to treat conditions like depression, anxiety, PTSD, and addiction. He was named to the 2023 Forbes “30 Under 30” list in the venture capital category.

A new approach: The introduction of drugs like Prozac in the 1980s revolutionized how conditions like depression were treated, but since then, Schlidt says there’s been little innovation in the field. Psychedelic therapies, he adds, have the potential to improve on these drugs by treating the root causes of these conditions and not just the symptoms.

Business and biology: Schlidt’s lifelong interest in business led him to pursue a career in finance, but growing up, he also felt a strong pull towards psychology and psychiatry. “I think the biggest misconception is you just take a pill and everything’s better. I’ve done a lot of personal work over the years, and I’m proud of where I am today.”

Palo Santo was born. However, it wasn’t until COVID-19 hit—and put mental health in the national spotlight—that Schlidt knew the time was right to launch the fund.

Hitting the ground running…literally: Schlidt is an avid runner, and his love for running has helped him improve his mental health. “I think the biggest misconception is you just take a pill and everything’s better. I’ve done a lot of personal work over the years, and I’m proud of where I am today.”

Why Schlidt chose WSB: “Being able to run case studies and do interesting projects in my advanced classes has had direct applicability in my career.”

Putting in the work: Schlidt acknowledges the challenges of being a male in the healthcare industry, but uses his leadership skills to create pathways for others. “I think the biggest misconception is you just take a pill and everything’s better. I’ve done a lot of personal work over the years, and I’m proud of where I am today.”

Talking shop: Schlidt hosts a podcast called The Daily Grind where he talks to entrepreneurs, business owners, and CEOs about goal achievement. It’s an opportune way to keep learning, he says. “Soak up as much information as possible from experts in their respective industries. Because one, that’s where they live and breathe, and two, that’s their daily grind.”
Izzy Fawcett is getting to be quite the global citizen these days. The WSB junior from Wheaton, Illinois, spent her Spring 2023 semester studying abroad in Rome and also traveled to Berlin over spring break in 2022 for a faculty-led trek as part of a supply chain management course. Even though she “loves Madison more than anyone,” Fawcett knew getting off campus to participate in international learning would build new skills and push her out of her comfort zone.

“I think it’s important to understand business on a global level, but there are also so many personal benefits that people gain by going abroad,” she says. “I’ve definitely learned to be more vulnerable and open-minded.”

Stories like Fawcett’s are common at the Wisconsin School of Business. That’s because 40% of WSB undergraduate students study abroad—well above the national average—and all signs point to increased interest, especially coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I call it the ‘getting out of my parents’ basement’ energy,” says Kallan Picha, director of global programs and partnerships at WSB. “Students really want to explore and experience the world. We’re trying to match that energy and build programming students want to take advantage of.”

While the traditional one-semester study abroad program has long been a staple of colleges and universities, WSB is taking global learning to the next level with the development of new, shorter-term international treks for both undergraduate and graduate students, as well as establishing new exchange partnerships with universities across the globe to bring more visiting international students to Madison. It’s all part of the school’s plan to help students develop a global mindset—one that will prepare them for careers in today’s business environment.

“The world is more interconnected than ever, and we want to create students who are not only globally minded, but are good global citizens,” says Picha. “To do that, we’re really broadening the menu of options so that students have a whole portfolio of programs to choose from that fit with their budgets, their timing, and their interests.”

Through global learning, students build problem-solving skills, learn resiliency and flexibility, and increase their cultural awareness. The benefits also manifest in more tangible ways; Picha notes that students who return from studying abroad have higher GPAs, stronger job prospects, and increased earning potential (including, on average, a 25% higher starting salary).

Whether students are going for a full semester or a 10-day trek, Picha’s team is committed to maximizing the time with meaningful experiences. “Students are earning credits, they’re getting grades, they’re doing assignments,” she says. “Meanwhile, we’re arranging engagements with local companies and cultural immersions, so students are learning a lot and working really hard.”

Thanks to scholarships and philanthropic support through initiatives like Day of the Badger, more students than ever now have access to resources to offset the costs associated with international programs.

That’s something that resonates with Fawcett, who hopes more students can have opportunities just like the ones she’s had.

“I do think everyone deserves and should have a global experience,” she says. “Being open to learning a different language and customs and the value of diversity in business is really important. And as college students, this is the time to do it.”

“We want to create students who are not only globally minded, but are good global citizens.”

— KALLAN PICHA
DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS
Michael Connelly (BBA ’75, MA ’76) was the chief executive officer of Mercy Health, one of the nation’s largest health systems, from 1994 to 2017. He’s the author of the new book The Journey’s End: An Investigation of Death and Dying in Modern America.

Doug Griesse (BBA ’75) was elected to the Green Lake and Duck Lake Association board of directors for a three-year term in 2022. In February 2023, he was also elected to the board of directors of the Fishtown Preservation Society in Leland, Michigan.

David Nemschoff (BBA ’77) retired in 2019 after a successful career in banking and finance, which led him to the role of chief financial officer. He now teaches history, military history, and diplomacy at Long Island University. His book, The Yom Kippur War, was published in 2022.

Amy Kluz Janke (BBA ’90) recently accepted the role of chief financial officer at Waasuu Supply Company, a manufacturer and distributor of specialty food products. She was named one of the Wisconsin Women in Business “40 Under 40” for 2019.

Mike Schroeder (BBA ’79) was recently named chairman of the Milwaukee Moon will soon be celebrating his eighth anniversary of managing the Midwest office of Fairfield Capital Group, LLC.

Frank Bankerd (BBA ’67) is an attorney with the law firm of Bankerd & Bankerd. He has been practicing law in the Milwaukee area for over 40 years.

John DiPietro (BBA ’70) is the founder and CEO of the DiPietro Family Foundation, which supports education, health, and human services.

Mary Jane Worthington (BBA ’59) is a business consultant and author of several books on management and leadership.

John F. Maloney (BBA ’63) is a retired general partner of the investment firm Mason & Sullivan, based in San Francisco.

Michael Murray (BBA ’90) is a senior vice president and senior investment consultant for the Murray Thomson Group of Baird. Murray and his business partner, Gregory Thomson (BBA ’91), advise clients on wealth management issues and manage their investment portfolios.

J Evan Smestad (BS ’91, MBA ’04) and his wife, Jodi Samuels (PhD ’90), celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary this year, which included a Polar Plunge in Vancouver, British Columbia (brrr!). They were married in the Wisconsin State Capitol after Smestad’s first semester at the Wisconsin School of Business. Samuels was a founding partner of Anovia Health with 19 employees, and he sponsored the launch of Baird Scholars in 2021. Schroeder is proud that these resources will support the next generation of professionals.

Michael Murray (BBA ’90) is a senior vice president and senior investment consultant for the Murray Thomson Group of Baird. Murray and his business partner, Gregory Thomson (BBA ’91), advise clients on wealth management issues and manage their investment portfolios.

Michael LaCour-Little (MS ’96, PhD ’96) has retired from Fannie Mae where he was senior director of economics in the Economic and Strategic Research Group. Previously, he was chair of the finance department at California State University, Fullerton, where he continues as a professor emeritus.

David Nusbaum (BBA ’72) is a founder and CEO of the Nusbaum Group, a financial services company.

Julie Fry (MA ’97) appeared on Morgan Stanley’s Times Square billboard in New York City in recognition of completing the Morgan Stanley Inclusive Ventures Lab program. Fry is also one of the founders of Gentreo, an award-winning online estate planning platform that makes estate planning affordable and accessible to all.

Jeremy Moungey (BS ’01, MBA ’02) was promoted to lead the North American Workday Delivery Practice for Allight Solutions. Moungey will bring the same tenacity and energy that he had as a four-year member of the University of Wisconsin Marching Band!

LaCour-Little is available for consulting assignments including expert witness work.

Michael Murray (BBA ’90) is retired, and his wife, Jodi Samuels (PhD ’90), is available for consulting assignments including expert witness work.

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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

TYLER KENNEDY (BBA ’13) AND WES SCHROLL (X ’15)

won the Chancellor’s Entrepreneurial Achievement Award in April 2023, which recognizes UW–Madison innovators and alumni who further the Wisconsin Idea through outstanding accomplishments in entrepreneurship. Co-founders of Fetch Rewards, Kennedy is the senior vice president of operations and Schroll is the chief executive officer.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Kendra Armstrong McAdams (MBA ’12) and her husband, Scott, welcomed Davis Scott McAdams on September 29, 2022. He joins big sister, Sloan (2).

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Robert Broome (BBA ’16) started his own snack bar brand, Moski, which makes chilled oat bars dipped in chocolate. As Broome began building a team, he brought on Chelsea Sherman (BBA ’15) as a part owner and leader of finance and supply chain.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Liz Christenburg (MBA ’16) has worked in consulting and software sales at Deloitte and Salesforce, respectively, since her graduation from WSBE. In September 2022, Christenburg launched GymnFit Fitness, an online marketplace which connects people to nearby workout spaces.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Amy Walsh (BBA ’16) took a new role as indirect sourcing business lead with General Mills in October 2022. She is excited to join the General Mills organization!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Jacob Dinetz (BBA ’18) joined the startup brand Blank Street Coffee as its first real estate hire at the end of 2021. Since then, the company has raised its Series A, opened over 70 locations, and spanned across four global markets. It is now the largest specialty coffee shop on the East Coast by location count. In December 2022, Dinetz was featured on Commercial Observer.

QUINN THOMPSON (BBA ’16)

received the Thomas A. Costello Memorial Alumni Award in November 2022 for his efforts in student mentorship and recognition. This award, which commemorates the legacy of the late Tommy Costello (BBA ’19), recognizes a member of the Badgers in Finance alumni network who goes above and beyond to help others. During Thompson’s career at Guggenheim Partners, he hosted Badger students on company visits and created a pipeline to hire students for internships and full-time employment. He is a mentor to UW-Madison students and has returned to campus to speak with students about cryptocurrency. Thompson is currently the head of growth and capital markets at Maple Finance, an institutional debt capital markets startup.

2000–2009

2010–2019

2020–2023

“Breaking news! Stellar Tech Girls is on a TV near you! Tune in to watch me pitch to a team of Wisconsin moguls on ‘Project Pitch It’ Episode 1, Season 7! The show aired all over Wisconsin in March and April 2023.”

—MARINA BLOOMER (MBA ’22)
The Next Generation of Leaders

With a little help from more than 20 business undergraduate and graduate students, the Wisconsin School of Business launched a new phase of its Trusted to Lead brand campaign in 2023. In this behind-the-scenes look, meet some of the emerging leaders who are redefining the possibilities in business. Read more at business.wisc.edu/next-generation-leaders.

Ayo Kolawole (BBA '25), who hopes to start his own development or private equity firm, shows off his skills on four wheels for a campaign video.

Michelle Yang (BBA '25) is filmed in WSB’s Learning Commons. She cares deeply about the ethical use of technology.

Kenzi Jones (BBA '22) tells the camera crew about her dreams of becoming a chief marketing officer.

“Understanding what’s going on in the world and how different events all connect is an overarching passion of mine.”

— CHARLIE FORBES (BBA '23)
A-Maize-Ing
Alums turn heirloom corn into award-winning bourbon P. 08