

WISCONSIN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



UPDATE

FALL | WINTER 2023



Taking center stage
with creative force
Shasparay Irvin

IN THIS ISSUE

LEADING OUT LOUD

YouTube CMO Danielle Tiedt Empowers
Users to Change the World

Dean Sambamurthy welcomes another grad to the WSB alumni community.



Letter From the Dean

As UW-Madison celebrates its 175th anniversary, one word comes to my mind: discovery.

Since 1848, our university has been home to numerous discoveries and thousands of patents that have expanded the limits of human knowledge while enriching countless lives in the process.

Here at the Wisconsin School of Business, we cultivate our own culture of discovery, creating “aha” moments for students in the classroom while also developing new insights through research and hands-on learning. Truly, there’s something new discovered here every day!

But discoveries aren’t limited to campus. In fact, millions of individual discoveries are made daily across the globe thanks to technology, social media, and our own ingenuity. Just ask Danielle Tiedt (page 14), YouTube’s chief marketing officer, who helps users discover new ideas on the platform—and gives them the tools to positively impact their communities.

In the pages that follow, I hope you’ll make some discoveries of your own. You’ll meet

alums like Nick Fetzer (page 18), whose own classroom epiphany led him to pursue mission-driven work, and Shasparay Irvin (page 8), a performance artist and entrepreneur who is making waves on and off the stage. Dog lovers will also be delighted to discover a new canine-friendly product created with help from Arek Schmocker (page 3).

Taken as a whole, I hope these stories represent for you a rediscovery—that is, the power of our Badger community to lead with purpose and change the world.

Here’s to another 175 years.

On, Wisconsin!

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

Photo by Paul L. Newby II



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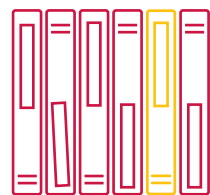
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Madison Memories

To commemorate the 175th anniversary of UW-Madison, three Business Badgers reflect on their favorite campus memories.



"Getting my thesis bound. At the binding store, my friend and I were shown the various colors and told the most common choices were black or dark blue. We then saw bright yellow was an option—which we chose knowing that ours would always stand out in the grad office bookcase. To this day, they still do!"

—Bryan Rives (MA '89)



"The Fifth Quarter at Badger football games. Seeing everyone jump out of their seats at the same time to clap to the music or do the wave truly embodied the spirit of the university: many people from different backgrounds working together to achieve the same goal!"

—Susan Bakken (BBA '87)



"Meeting my wife at the Kollege Klub! Whether it was the path to the restroom or the sticking floor, Christa Stern (BA '92) and I instantly connected at a level that's kept us married for over 25 years. We are hopeful that the matchmaking power of the KK continues, as our son just started his undergraduate studies in Madison."

—Eric Eilers (BBA '93, MBA '06)

Read more campus memories in the digital version of *Update*, and share your own memories on social media using [#UW175](#).

UPDATE

FALL | WINTER 2023

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▶ Arek Schmocker (MBA '19)

CO-FOUNDER, CFO, AND COO,
CHOCOLATE RESCUE FOR DOGS
GERMANTOWN, WISCONSIN

▶ Tanzi 🐕

TAIWANESE MOUNTAIN DOG
AND GOOD GIRL

GOT A MINUTE?

A PEEK AT WHAT MAKES BUSINESS BADGERS WHO THEY ARE

What is Chocolate Rescue for Dogs?

Our product is the first line of defense if your dog eats chocolate. Inspired by the experience of my business partner's dog eating a whole bag of dark chocolate, our team developed an at-home remedy which quickly reduces the level of toxins in a dog's stomach, prevents absorption, and buys valuable time for dog owners to figure out their next step.

What early successes have you had?

Since launching in 2022, we had a third-party lab demonstrate the safety and efficacy of the product. We were then recognized with the Bright New Idea award at the 2023 Governor's Business Plan Contest. Most recently, we negotiated a supply agreement to get our product in about 65 stores.

What is your favorite WSB memory?

Brad Chandler was one of the most memorable finance instructors in my MBA program. He had a three-hour applied learning class on Friday mornings that was pretty intense, but afterwards, we'd all head over to the Vintage bar on University Avenue and enjoy ourselves.

Oh, and a few more things:

Schmocker met his future business partner, Amadeus Benitez (BS '17), through a [help wanted ad](#) on Craigslist. | **13:** Countries visited over nine months prior to enrolling at WSB. | Tanzi was adopted in and named after Taiwan's [Tanzi District](#), where Schmocker's wife taught English. |

Advice for aspiring entrepreneurs: "Be prepared to sell to everybody and everything."

SCHOOL NEWS

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

WSB Welcomes 8 New Faculty Members

Eight new faculty members joined WSB in Fall 2023, deepening the school's investment in knowledge and thought leadership that will shape industry and educate the next generation of leaders. "Our newest faculty members bring impactful research and expertise at a time when change in the business and technological landscape is unprecedented," says Vallabh Sambamurthy, WSB's Albert O. Nicholas Dean. Specializing in cross-disciplinary topics like artificial intelligence, climate change, and racial disparities, these faculty will address some of today's most critical questions and help students think strategically about complex business issues.

By academic department, the new faculty members are:

Management and Human Resources

Anyi Ma | Mahka Moeen

Accounting and Information Systems

Ewelina Forker

Risk and Insurance

Philip Mulder | Stuart Craig

Finance

Erik Mayer | Anthony DeFusco

Marketing

Tarun Kushwaha

Alumna Barbara Bolens Hired as Director of Nicholas Center for Corporate Finance & Investment Banking

WSB welcomed alumna Barbara Bolens (BBA '83) as the new director of the Nicholas Center for Corporate Finance and Investment Banking. Bolens will leverage her executive leadership experience, knowledge, and passion to lead the center into the next stage of its strategic plan.

Previously serving as an advisory board member for the center, Bolens brings a wealth of institutional knowledge to her new role. Additionally, she has experience developing and executing strategies, driving change programs, and communicating vision to multiple constituencies—key strengths that will allow her to expand the center's reach and enhance its reputation.



Fred Petri's family joined WSB deans past and present to accept the award.

Fred Petri Honored With Distinguished Alumni Award

Fred Petri (BBA '69, MBA '70) was posthumously awarded WSB's Distinguished Alumni Award, which recognizes exceptional professional careers and honors alumni who make far-reaching impacts in the community, industry, and at UW-Madison. A generous friend and supporter of WSB, Petri passed away in 2021 after a 15-year battle with early onset Alzheimer's disease.

A ceremony in October 2023 commemorated Petri for his impactful

work in the WSB community, specifically involving the James A. Graaskamp Center for Real Estate. He played a vital role in establishing and naming the center, as well as creating new initiatives and programming to drive it forward.

"This is a very prestigious honor," says Dean Sambamurthy. "We're fortunate to count Fred not just as an alum, but as a friend and somebody whose passion for Wisconsin never left him."

WSB Launches New Track in Affordable Housing and Sustainable Development

As the global real estate climate evolves, topics of housing affordability and sustainability have become increasingly prominent. Recognizing the crucial need for specialized real estate professionals who can navigate these fast-growing areas, the Department of Real Estate and Urban Land Economics has developed a new graduate-level track in affordable housing and sustainable development.

Launching in Fall 2024, the new 12-credit offering adds to WSB's current portfolio of graduate real estate degrees, which includes the MBA in real estate and the Master of Science-Business: Real Estate

and Urban Land Economics. The new track features a concentrated curriculum and hands-on learning with professionals in the field to prepare students for careers in both residential and commercial real estate development with a focus on affordable and sustainable housing issues and financing.

"WSB's longstanding leadership in real estate and ability to meld tradition and innovation continues with the creation of this new track in affordability and sustainability," says Mark Eppli (BBA '83, MS '84, PhD '91), director of the James A. Graaskamp Center for Real Estate.

HIGH MARKS FOR WSB PROGRAMS

#7 public undergraduate business program

WSB ranked #7 among public institutions and #17 overall in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2023-24 annual rankings for best undergraduate business programs.

Several academic programs also earned high rankings:

#1

Real Estate

#2

Insurance/
Risk Management

#9

Marketing

#17

Accounting

#22

Management

#26

Finance



INTRODUCING WSB'S NEW MASTER'S IN ACCOUNTING AND BUSINESS ANALYSIS

In Fall 2024, classes will begin for WSB's new Master of Science-Business: Accounting and Business Analysis. Students will learn from faculty and industry experts in taxation, consulting, emerging technology, and more to gain advanced technical and analytical skills and develop a deeper understanding of systems, controls, and data analysis.

The one-year program boasts an innovative curriculum that is specially tailored to the industry's new certified public accountant exam, equipping students with a competitive

edge for success. "The curriculum is designed using input from our alumni and employers—meaning students gain the skills employers want and can make an impact on day one," says Stacie Kelley, the James L. Henderson Professor and an associate professor of accounting and information systems at WSB.

In addition to hands-on learning, students will also benefit from career coaching and connections to top recruiting companies—including some of the largest accounting firms in the country.

CREATING THE PERFECT PLATFORM

Allen Li delivers insights to boost digital platforms and the businesses that use them

BY CHRIS MALINA | PHOTO BY PAUL L. NEWBY II



ALLEN LI

When Zhuoxin “Allen” Li revises lesson plans each semester, he’s not just tweaking small details. He’s making sure technology hasn’t upended his entire curriculum. “I spend nearly two months updating all my examples,” says Li with a laugh. “Teaching digital strategy, things get quickly outdated. But it’s a fun process.”

An associate professor of operations and information

management, Li joined the WSB faculty in 2022 and teaches graduate-level digital strategy and data technology classes—both informed by his research on digital platforms.

With the proliferation of technology, businesses have flocked to online platforms like marketplaces, social media sites, and mobile operating systems—all digital spaces that connect suppliers and consumers. When

businesses and platforms work in harmony, both parties win. But as platforms grow, friction can ensue as their business interests evolve and diverge.

“We have digital platforms that are getting larger and are frequently possessing

example,” says Li. “A platform like Amazon can deliver a large number of orders on the same truck, while food delivery is point-to-point. After factoring in all the costs and fees associated with that, there’s little left on the table for restaurants.”

“I’m researching how we can create a more sustainable platform ecosystem that creates economic value.”

—ALLEN LI

much more power,” says Li, who is also the Michael and Mary Sue Shannon Professor at WSB. “I’m researching how we can create a more sustainable platform ecosystem that creates economic value for not just the biggest players, but also the much larger number of smaller participants.”

One sticky example that’s become extra visible in recent years is the rift between restaurants and food delivery platforms. While sites like Grubhub and DoorDash deliver food to our homes, they also deliver hefty fees to restaurants, which are already operating with low profit margins.

“Food delivery is a particularly challenging

That’s caught the attention of policymakers, who are seeking ways to support restaurants in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the country, cities are capping the fees platforms can charge independent restaurants. While Li acknowledges the intent, his research has shown the move has backfired, with platforms shifting their tactics to promote purchase from chain restaurants or eateries outside of city limits where fee caps are not in place—thus reducing exposure of the restaurants the policies sought to help.

“So, we have to think about other ways to improve the efficiency of the business to achieve certain economic scale,” says Li, who continues

to build upon this research, thanks to support from the National Science Foundation and a prestigious Faculty Early Career Development Award.

“That could include considering self-driving cars or even drone deliveries in the future,” he adds.

Meanwhile, as customers return to in-person dining, demand for delivery remains high—meaning restaurants must now contend with simultaneous dine-in and to-go orders during peak service times. To ease the burden on kitchens, Li is using platform data to develop an approach that flattens demand spikes: identify the most flexible customers and offer them discounts for placing food orders outside of the busiest hours.

“My research is looking into historical purchase patterns to come up with the optimal design of this promotion,” says Li. “This will ideally help restaurants better utilize their capacity.”

As for the future of Li’s research on food delivery and other digital platforms, a new factor is emerging: societal impact. Recently, many platforms have introduced identifying tags like “small business” or “Black-owned” to help customers support businesses that align with their values.

“For platforms, the priority is about making profit, but there’s now a question of whether they should also consider the societal value they are creating and if that

might eventually benefit their profitability,” Li says. “I’m looking at whether companies can be doing better by doing good.”



Capitalizing on Crowdfunding

Digital crowdfunding platforms like Kickstarter and GoFundMe have blossomed in recent years; however, many campaigns fail to hit their goals. Another arm of Li’s research looks to maximize crowdfunding’s success in both entrepreneurship and philanthropy.

In one study, Li analyzed giving patterns to determine the best times for entrepreneurs to promote their all-or-nothing funding campaigns to have the highest chance of success.

In another project, he analyzed online donation and browsing activities to propose a new model to help philanthropic crowdfunding platforms better connect returning donors to projects relevant to their interests.

More projects funded. More causes supported. It’s a win-win.



DOING BUSINESS HER WAY

Arts entrepreneur
Shasparay Irvin is going
big on and off the stage

BY CHRIS MALINA | PHOTOS BY PAUL L. NEWBY II

Shasparay Irvin (BS '20, MA '23) has always recognized a business opportunity when she sees one. Just ask the targets of the Halloween scheme she ran as a child.

"I'd be selling my candy to other kids after they ate all of theirs," she says. "I guess I've always been what you'd call a hustler."

With such innate entrepreneurial spirit, a career in business might have seemed like the natural outcome for Irvin, but growing up, the Austin, Texas, native never saw it that way.

"I didn't think business was for me, because I never saw any businesspeople who looked like me," she says. "It didn't feel accessible."

These days, however, Irvin has a much different outlook. Shaped by her experiences as an arts administrator, festival organizer, performance artist, entrepreneur, and Wisconsin School of Business graduate, she sees things much differently—and isn't letting past perceptions hold her back.

"Business doesn't have to look one particular way," she says. "There's a whole cohort of people I graduated with

and none of us are doing the same thing. What's great about business is that you can really make it yours."

Outside the beat box

Besides an interest in business, Irvin gravitated towards performance arts early in life, but was discouraged by a lack of representation and roles in her local theater scene. Seeking acceptance and an outlet for her creativity, she discovered an art form that would change her life's trajectory: slam poetry.

Continued on page 10



Irvin poses in front of Madison's MYArts youth arts center, where she rehearses, hosts events, and nurtures the next generation of young performers.

"I realized it didn't matter what you looked like, as long as you had a story to tell," Irvin says. "For three minutes and 10 seconds, people would listen to me."

She rapidly built her poetry skills and began competing in national competitions. Then, while attending community college and reconnecting with the theater, she applied to the First Wave Urban Arts Scholarship program—a first-of-its-kind university initiative centered on urban arts, spoken word, and hip-hop culture—which landed her

as an undergraduate at UW-Madison. That's where her interests in arts and business collided.

After taking a stage production class, Irvin began to engage in a thought experiment: *What would it look like to create an interdisciplinary festival that promoted and celebrated Black artists?*

As a theater major with artistic aspirations, Irvin knew she'd need experience writing grants. So, she submitted a festival proposal to UW's Studio Creative Arts Award, mainly to get feedback. To her

“There’s a whole cohort of people I graduated with and none of us are doing the same thing. What’s great about business is that you can really make it yours.”

—SHASPARAY IRVIN (BS '20, MA '23)

surprise, she landed the grant.

"I was like, okay, now I actually have to figure out how to do this," Irvin says. "My advisors recommended I take an arts entrepreneurship class which I didn't know existed."

There, she met Sarah Marty (BM '97, MS '01, MA '05), director of WSB's Bolz Center for Arts Administration, who quickly became a mentor and friend.

"She took me under her wing and helped me write

a business proposal," Irvin says. "With her help, I wrote several grants that first year and got all of them, and things just took off from there."

Building business chops

In 2019, Irvin launched the Black Arts Matter Festival in Madison, curating a blend of slam poetry, music, and visual arts with representation from local and national artists. The inaugural event was a hit.

Inspired by the festival's success and wanting to

build upon it, Irvin decided to pursue a master's degree in arts and creative enterprise leadership, an accelerated one-year program at WSB.

Much to the surprise of her classmates who knew her as a festival founder and artistic director, Irvin says one of her favorite parts of the program was working as an assistant to others through applied learning opportunities.

"It was nice to be in a position where I could observe someone else working and being the boss in the way that I have had to be," Irvin says. "They had all of the skills I had been trying to learn on the fly and broke things down for me, step-by-step, in a way where I could truly learn."

She also learned that a business degree could help her in other ways—both as an artist and an administrator—like navigating what can be a sticky issue in the arts: money.

"I'm fortunate to be aware of the business side of things that other artists might struggle with, like contracts, or having to say no to jobs because they don't make sense financially," Irvin says. "And as an administrator, I can really respect that."

Dreaming big

There's arguably no other bucket list in the world like Irvin's, which includes opening an event space, getting a PhD, writing a book, acting on Broadway,

and starring in a television show that runs at least five seasons.

"I am kind of weirdly ambitious," she says with a laugh. "But my main goal is to be able to say that I'm an artist and continue to be creative throughout my life."

So far, she's making good on that goal. Since graduating from WSB, she's performed on and toured with a popular storytelling podcast and starred in a recent production of "The Wiz" in Madison. She's also exploring ways to take the Black Arts Matter Festival national, while simultaneously pursuing employment opportunities in arts administration, taking on gigs, and channeling her entrepreneurial spirit by offering her services for hire—everything from performance coaching to wedding officiating (complete with personalized love poems).

She admits that her path forward in business could go one of many ways—but wherever it goes, she'll be doing it the best way possible: her way.

"I just hope that people are encouraged by the fact that I don't have it all figured out," she says. "I don't have the traditional business trajectory, but I'm proud of the work I did during my master's program and how it will inform my future work. Really, as long as I'm being creative, I'm open to wherever the wind takes me." ◀

Going **BIG** and **SMALL**

The 2023 Black Arts Matter Festival took to the stage in November with some of the biggest acts in festival history. Thanks to Irvin's curation, attendees enjoyed comedy from Jerrod Carmichael, star of three HBO stand-up comedy specials; music from the Grammy-nominated R&B group Tank and the Bangas; and a competition between some of the nation's best slam poets.

But among all the big names, Irvin was equally proud of who else was featured: a variety of local and regional artists. "I think it's really important to respect the communities you're working in," she says. "Having that representation from local artists and providing that platform is something I really think about when curating an event."

Connecting the Dots...

Cody Baldwin prepares students to turn data into in-demand careers

PHOTO BY PAUL L. NEWBY II



CODY BALDWIN

Making sense of billions of disparate data records is kind of Cody Baldwin's thing, but he admits it doesn't take a data scientist to identify one of the biggest business trends today: Analytics is hot. With nearly 15 years of big data experience across the public and private sectors, Baldwin serves as director of the Wisconsin School of Business' highly ranked and rapidly growing Master's in Business Analytics program, which prepares students for in-demand jobs across a variety of industries.

WSB: What is business analytics?

Cody Baldwin: It's taking data and turning it into meaningful business insights. Businesses have questions they're trying to answer, and data is one path to a solution. Let's say you work

“You can take your existing education and experience, add analytics to it, and become even more valuable than you already are.”

—CODY BALDWIN

at Netflix and want to determine how to minimize churn. The company wants users to stay with the service and not cancel it after a month or two. If you have data about when and why subscribers leave, you can use it to address the issue and limit that churn.

WSB: Why is this such an in-demand field right now?

CB: Data is growing faster than our ability to handle it. Companies have huge amounts of untapped data and there's currently not enough talent or capacity

to work with it. There's so much potential in data, and companies are always searching for a competitive advantage, which helps explain why we're seeing such a strong demand in this field. Our last two graduating classes had 100% job placement within six months of graduation.

WSB: What degrees does WSB offer in business analytics?

CB: Our MS in business analytics is a one-year, full-time program. In addition to learning

common industry tools, students build a foundation of analytics knowledge, methods, and best practices. There's also a wide range of elective options, and we work with students to select the best courses based on their individual career goals. Students also take part in a consulting practicum project where they work with real companies on real problems. That really builds their confidence and ultimately helps them in their job search.

We've also recently launched a two-year, completely online master's degree in data, insights, and analytics. It's a flexible option that will continue to evolve as the program grows. Regardless of the program students choose—and the background they already have—they're going to be well equipped for success in a wide range of analytics roles. What's really cool is that you can take your existing education and experience, add analytics to it, and become even more valuable than you already are. That opens a lot of career paths.

Another thing that's unique about business analytics degrees at WSB is our focus on cloud computing—something that employers told us they wanted. So, we've built that into the curriculum and our cloud computing expertise really sets us apart from other analytics programs.

WSB: What effect will the rise of artificial intelligence programs like ChatGPT have on this field?

CB: Generative AI is just one tool in our analytics toolbox, and really, tools are changing all the time. But the business questions that we're trying to solve—boosting revenues, saving costs, improving customer satisfaction—remain fairly constant. Over time, we get better tools, like AI, to help us take data and turn it into insights, but there's always going to be a need for someone who can figure out the right tool to gather the right data for the business question that needs solving. ◀

Interview conducted and edited by Chris Malina

DYK your analytics acronyms?

The world of business analytics is full of acronyms—many of which are now creeping into our day-to-day conversations.

Need a hand knowing your AWS from your SQL? Baldwin has you covered.

AWS

Amazon Web Services: the most popular cloud computing vendor

GPT

Generative Pre-trained Transformer: used in applications to create human-like text

ML

Machine Learning: when computers learn from data to carry out certain tasks

NLP

Natural Language Processing: enables computers to understand and respond to text and voice data

SQL

Structured Query Language: the language used to communicate and interact with databases

A VOICE FOR GOOD

YouTube CMO Danielle Tiedt leads with purpose at the intersection of business and tech

BY CHRIS MALINA | PHOTOS BY JIM NEWBERRY

Danielle Tiedt (BBA '96) describes her complex job in three simple words: It's never boring.

As YouTube's chief marketing officer since 2012, Tiedt has worked to transform the site from a simple video hosting hub into a global economic powerhouse—and one of the most valuable brands on the planet.

"Really, the most fun thing for me is being at the forefront of change," Tiedt says. "When I started at YouTube, we were trying to prove that we weren't just a platform for dogs on skateboards. Now, we're so much more."

During her tenure, she's introduced new services like YouTube Shorts and a kid-friendly YouTube app. She's also helped launch and grow multiple premium subscription services, including YouTube Premium, YouTube TV, and most recently, NFL Sunday Ticket.

She's undoubtedly proud of her role in YouTube's growth over the past decade—and arguably even prouder of staying true to the company's stated mission to "give everyone a voice and show them the world."

"I came to YouTube for the mission," Tiedt says. "I really believed in YouTube's potential to make the world a better place and I still do. The challenge though is how to give everyone a voice and do that in a safe and responsible way. Things were much easier when fewer people were online,

but it's much more complicated now."

However, Tiedt will tell you she's never been one to shy away from a challenge. With a dynamic team at her side and a strong business education guiding her decision making, she's well equipped to lead YouTube forward amidst a rapidly evolving digital environment.

Because when growth and change are guided by a steady hand, the possibilities for good are limitless. So while users may have initially come to YouTube for the skateboarding dogs, Tiedt hopes they'll stay for the power to change the world.

Chasing a dream from Madison to Microsoft

Ask Tiedt what first drew her to the intersection of business and technology and she'll tell you it was the free soda.

During a family trip to Seattle in the early 1990s, the self-described "farm kid from Iowa" got the chance to job shadow her aunt at Microsoft.

Continued on page 16

"I get most excited when YouTube faces a really hard problem and we have to try to solve it."

—DANIELLE TIEDT (BBA '96)





Collaboration is a big part of Tiedt's job—including her recent participation in WSB's Trusted to Lead brand campaign.

There, she saw a company and culture—complete with perks like complimentary soda and an employee soccer field—unlike anything she'd ever seen before.

"For me, that was really life changing," Tiedt says. "I was like, wow, I definitely need to work there. That's why I care so much about job shadowing. I believe a lot in the importance of seeing yourself do something you otherwise might not have normally done."

She knew getting to Microsoft would require a world-class education. As someone who's always based her decisions on data, she was drawn to the Wisconsin School of Business' high ranking for undergraduate education—while also being attracted to a less quantifiable but equally important factor: the unique appeal of Madison.

"The city felt so big and cosmopolitan," says Tiedt. "And it really felt like the opportunities there were endless."

After landing at WSB, Tiedt studied marketing while remaining focused on her goal of working at Microsoft. Shortly after graduation, the dream came true when she secured a coveted internship with the company, which led to a permanent product manager position—and a chance to finally cash in on those employee perks.

Adding to her excitement was the rapid pace of technological evolution at the time. Over the next 15 years of her career at Microsoft, she'd experience some of the most radical changes to personal computing the world had ever seen.

“With marketing campaigns...we're trying to get from concept to launch in a matter of days.”

—DANIELLE TIEDT (BBA '96)

"I really lived through the internet revolution *and* the mobile revolution," she says. "Microsoft was like my second college. I got to tackle so many hard challenges and really see what it took to transform a company to meet the expectations of what consumers wanted at the time."

The role of a lifetime

That experience came in handy when she made the transition to another company on the cusp of a user-driven technological revolution: YouTube. With the proliferation

of smartphones and other technology—plus a growing demand for streaming content—video creation and consumption were skyrocketing. It quickly became clear that the Google-owned company needed someone to bring the quirky video platform into the mainstream and showcase how essential YouTube creators and their videos are to both viewers and advertisers.

These days, creators use their YouTube channels to host everything from live videos and podcasts to both short-form and long-form storytelling and shopping. Much of Tiedt's job as CMO involves working directly with these creators, responding to their needs and concerns, promoting YouTube's features, and implementing even more new services to support them—all at a pace as rapid as the latest viral craze.

"We're in a very fast-moving industry, so we have to figure things out quickly," she says. "With marketing campaigns at most companies, you can talk about things in terms of months, but we're trying to get from concept to launch in a matter of days."

And there's a lot at stake. In many cases, creators aren't just creators—they're creative entrepreneurs building businesses through YouTube. Through advertising and subscription revenue, content creation has become big business and every decision Tiedt makes can impact creators' bottom lines.

"The hard thing about a platform like YouTube is you could literally invest in everything and have it not be enough," she says. "So, you're constantly trying to figure out the biggest opportunities for growth at any given moment."

Building positive change

While metrics are important, Tiedt's vision for YouTube goes beyond just increasing views, likes, and profits.

When she looks to the future, she envisions a platform that's truly a force for good when it comes to tackling the world's most challenging issues: a creative ecosystem where, in addition to finding information about how to change a flat tire or learn a new dance, users can find trusted and vetted information on everything from health literacy to climate change.

"I think the next 10 years are really about how we ensure that YouTube has all the information that people need to make positive change in the world," she says. "There isn't all the content we need there today, but we're trying to make sure that we have the right tools and information in place to educate the world. I think that work is never done, especially as the world gets bigger and more complex."

While others might shy away from the challenge, it's an opportunity that Tiedt relishes. Because if her diverse career in technology and business has taught her anything, it's that seemingly big hurdles are scalable with the right people in place, all buying into a shared vision.

"I get most excited when YouTube faces a really hard problem and we have to try to solve it," Tiedt says. "I truly believe I have the best team on the planet, and working with passionate people trying to make the world a better place, that's what keeps me going and drives me to be better every single day." ◀

YouTube

BY THE NUMBERS

75+

Countries across the world where YouTube operates

\$35 billion

Contributed to the U.S. GDP in 2022 through YouTube's creative ecosystem

2 billion

Viewers of YouTube Shorts every month

390,000

Full-time equivalent jobs supported through YouTube's creative ecosystem

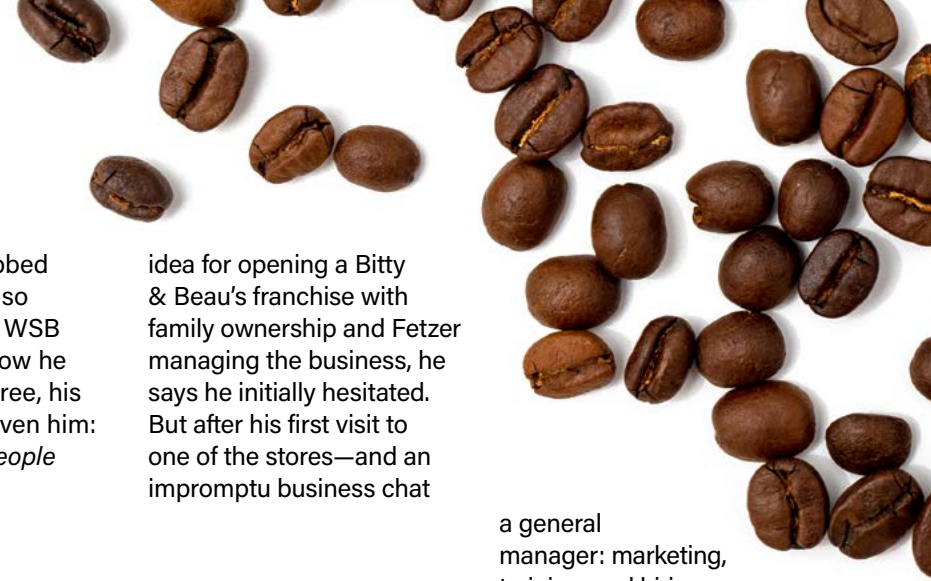
92%

Users who report sourcing information and knowledge from YouTube

Data from YouTube and "The State of the Creator Economy" report by Oxford Economics



Nick Fetzer is ready to put a smile on his customers' faces at the newly opened Bitty & Beau's Coffee franchise in Boulder, Colorado.



Grounds For Inclusion

Nick Fetzer is changing attitudes about disability, one cup of coffee at a time

BY CHRIS MALINA | PHOTOS BY REBECCA STUMPF

Like so many good love stories, this one starts at summer camp.

But this story doesn't end when summer's last campfire gets extinguished. In fact, for Nick Fetzer (BBA '23), it's just getting started.

Fetzer is the general manager and part-owner of the newly opened Bitty & Beau's Coffee franchise in Boulder, Colorado, a rapidly growing chain that focuses on employing and empowering individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

For Fetzer, it's not just a job. Rather, it's the culmination of everything he's done—and loved—in recent years, from volunteering at an all-abilities summer camp to finding career purpose through the Wisconsin School of Business.

"It's really my dream opportunity," he says. "This business introduces people to the world of disability. Customers get to see how capable individuals with disabilities are and just how much of an impact they can have."

For most people, celebrating your college graduation and grand opening of your business, all in the span of a few months, would produce more than a little anxiety. But love sometimes means taking that jump, and after all, when you're pursuing your passion—and feel prepared for it—who's got time to be nervous?

Pursuing a passion

Growing up in Houston, Texas, Fetzer says he was drawn to the University of Wisconsin–Madison from a young age. How and why he fixated on a Big Ten university more than 1,000 miles from home remains a hot family debate, but the young student and budding athlete set his sights on Wisconsin, where he'd eventually be recruited to the Badger soccer team and pursue a management and human resources degree at WSB.

Along the way, Fetzer began volunteering at a summer camp to fulfill a high school service requirement. There, he worked one-on-one with kids and adults with developmental disabilities—and a spark was ignited.

"I just fell in love with it," Fetzer says. "Camp became my happy place. There was so much love coming from both the campers and the workers."

Over time, Fetzer took on a larger role at camp, returning every summer throughout high school and college, getting his parents and two brothers involved as volunteers, and eventually joining the staff. Without fully realizing it, his

camp community rubbed off on him—so much so that when asked in a WSB management class how he hoped to use his degree, his response surprised even him: *I want to work with people with disabilities.*

idea for opening a Bitty & Beau's franchise with family ownership and Fetzer managing the business, he says he initially hesitated. But after his first visit to one of the stores—and an impromptu business chat

“Customers get to see how capable individuals with disabilities are and just how much of an impact they can have.”

—NICK FETZER (BBA '23)

"That was the first time I had heard myself say that out loud," says Fetzer. "Many businesses aren't tapping into that pool of potential employees because they see disability on a job application. My instructor, Tanya Hubanks (BA '94, JD '98, MS '98), grabbed onto that right away and helped put me on the path to doing what I'm doing now. I'm forever grateful for that."

Brewing up change

Nearing graduation, Fetzer received a business proposition from an unlikely source: his mom, Julia.

Having discovered Bitty & Beau's on vacation, she immediately saw a business that aligned with the family's values—and one that also happened to be expanding.

When she pitched the

with the location's owner, who happened to be sitting in the corner that day—he quickly changed his tune.

"I sat in that coffee shop and felt like I was at home," Fetzer says. "All the people coming through had smiles on their faces. I thought, why wouldn't I want to be a part of this?"

After deciding to move forward with the business, the family immediately hit the ground running. With ties to Colorado, the family chose Boulder as the location for their franchise and eventually discovered the perfect store location on a popular thoroughfare that Fetzer compares to Madison's State Street.

What followed were the nitty-gritty business tasks that come with being

a general manager: marketing, training, and hiring a team of nearly two dozen employees. Fetzer even recruited some of his camp team to join him as shift supervisors.

Then, on the last day of September 2023, the store officially celebrated its grand opening. Even on a busy college football Saturday, hundreds of people showed up to grab coffee and meet the employees—something Fetzer says overwhelmed him with emotion.

Now, he's focusing on building upon the store's initial momentum. And while he hopes customers are feeling the same love that he's felt, he's also wishing for something else as they pass through his doors: understanding.

"We're not a nonprofit. We want people to understand that this is a profitable business model, that working with individuals with disabilities can absolutely make a profit," Fetzer says. "Success is people walking in the door and seeing that this works. At the same time, when I see a smile on someone's face after an interaction with an employee that's also success. We're here to make profit, but also, we're here to make the world a better place." ◀

A Day In Their Lives

Hour by hour, see how 3 WSB grad students—Malgy Blue, Maija Inveiss, and Joe Tenpenny—are leveling up their business education

BY HALEY TOLLISON | PHOTOS BY PAUL L. NEWBY II

Any alum will tell you that the path to a graduate business degree is full of twists, turns, and competing priorities. Coming from a variety of academic backgrounds and career experiences, graduate students are juggling daily responsibilities—like full-time jobs and personal relationships—while also working towards their unique career goals. That's why graduate programs at WSB are designed to fit each student's lifestyle, professional objectives, and academic pace. New and expanded programs help Business Badgers launch, pivot, and accelerate their business careers with features like customizable learning, hybrid formats, and flexible timelines. Meet Malgy Blue, Maija Inveiss, and Joe Tenpenny, three graduate students who are defining their own academic paths and advancing their business careers—one day at a time.

MALGY BLUE

(BS '23, MS '24)

THE LAUNCHER



After earning his undergraduate degree in data science and economics from UW-Madison—and holding internships with JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Chime—Malgy Blue quickly realized that a career leveraging data was his destiny. He is pursuing the Master of Science-Business: Analytics to fine-tune his analytics acumen, see data through a business lens, and make strides towards his ultimate career goal. Blue dreams of becoming a chief product or technology officer at a mid-sized technology company in San Francisco.

DAY IN HIS LIFE

7 a.m. | Already out of bed, Blue heads out the door to attend a workout class near his apartment. He's been going to an indoor cycling studio to get out of his comfort zone.

8 a.m. | Blue returns home, gets cleaned up for the day, and hops on his laptop. Not only is Blue a full-time student, but he's also holding a full-time position at Chime as a product insights analyst. While working remotely, he sends messages on Slack and reviews his assigned tickets. With his team in San Francisco—two hours behind Wisconsin—Blue will have his morning tasks completed before his colleagues pour their coffee.

9 a.m. | He makes breakfast and walks to Grainger Hall for his first class: Data Technology for Business Analytics.

12 p.m. | Back on the clock at Chime, Blue hurries to a private room on the third floor of Grainger Hall. He attends meetings, performs A/B testing, and spends the rest of his shift coding in Python or SQL (see [page 13](#) for a definition).

4 p.m. | The workday is finished, but Blue has one more class to attend. He heads back to the second floor for Machine Learning for Business Analytics.

6 p.m. | Blue grabs a quick snack at home and drives to the Bakke Recreation & Wellbeing Center for his evening workout, one of his favorite after-school activities.

7:30 p.m. | After making dinner, he researches *Medium* articles and reads books to learn more about product management.

8 p.m. | If there's time to spare, Blue treats himself to a game of *The Legend of Zelda* on his Nintendo Switch.

9 p.m. | Blue has a full workday tomorrow, so he's off to bed. He's made it through another day of working, learning, and getting one step closer to his dream job.

About the Master of Science-Business: Analytics

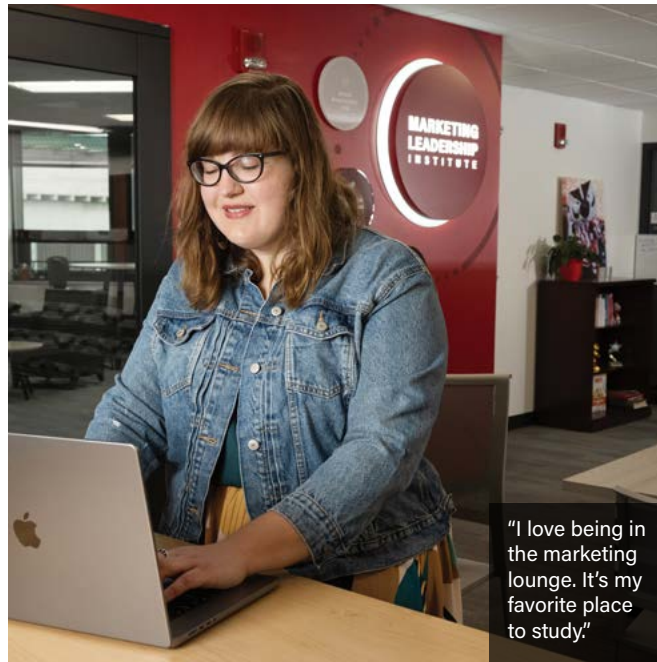
The one-year MS in business analytics sharpens skills at the intersection of data, technology, and business. Two days per week, students take in-person classes to cultivate skills in machine learning, data visualization, statistics, and more.

Continued on page 22

MAIJA INVEISS

(BA '17, MBA '24)

THE PIVOTER



Writing, editing, and website management were common tasks for Maija Inveiss, a former associate editor for *Madison Magazine*. But when the COVID-19 pandemic sent a shockwave through the journalism industry, Inveiss was tasked with multiple marketing projects to keep the magazine afloat—and instantly fell in love with the work. Ready to redefine her career path, Inveiss enrolled in the full-time MBA program with a specialization in brand and marketing management.

DAY IN HER LIFE

8:30 a.m. | Not much of a morning person, Inveiss wakes up about an hour before class, giving herself just enough time to get ready, pack a lunch, prepare her backpack, and head out the door.

9 a.m. | She listens to podcasts during her 15-minute walk to Grainger Hall. She arrives early to enjoy the classroom atmosphere and sharpen her focus for the day.

9:30 a.m. | As class begins, Inveiss starts taking detailed notes on her iPad. With ambitions of becoming a brand manager for a consumer-packaged goods company, she's determined to soak up as much information as possible. Some of her classes include Social Creative Marketing, Digital Communication Strategy, and Growth Marketing Strategies.

12 p.m. | Inveiss enjoys a bite to eat while attending one of WSB's student-led TED Talks or lunch and learn seminars. On days when she doesn't bring lunch, she stops by the food carts on Library Mall.

2 p.m. | While waiting for afternoon class to begin, she drops by the lounge in WSB's Marketing Leadership Institute to study, complete assignments, and connect with peers.



5 p.m. | After class, Inveiss busies herself with student organizations and club meetings, acting as the communications chair for the Graduate Business Association, the president of the Masters' Foodie Club, and the co-chair of the Graduate Marketing Network Case Competition.

8 p.m. | Finally home, she eats dinner with her partner and they kick back with a good cooking show—*Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* is among their favorites.

10 p.m. | A self-proclaimed night owl, Inveiss studies for exams, works on assignments, relaxes—and gets ready to do it all again tomorrow.

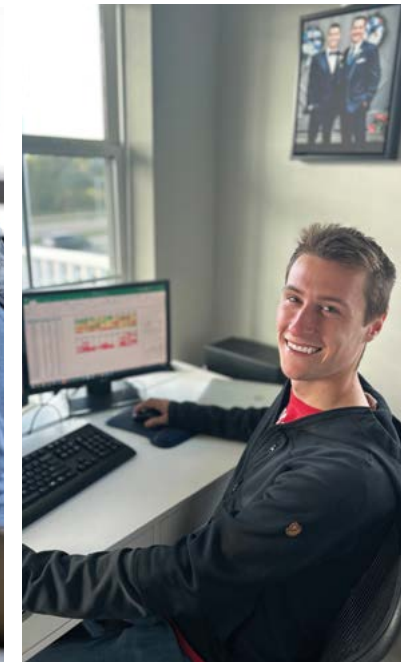
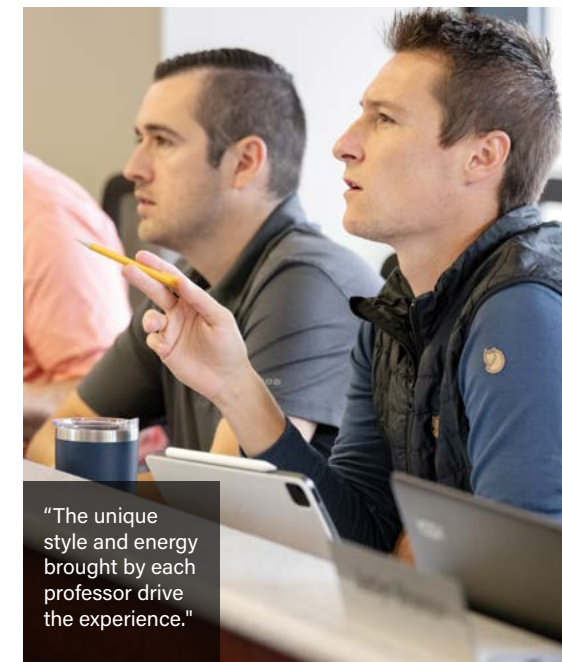
About the Full-Time MBA

The full-time MBA features a blended curriculum of core business fundamentals and specialized learning tracks for each student's unique career path. Operating fully in person, the two-year program prioritizes experiential learning and face-to-face connections with peers and faculty. Between academic years, students also participate in summer internships to apply their classroom knowledge and gain real-world experience.

JOE TENPENNY

(MBA '24)

THE ACCELERATOR



With his sights set on a C-suite position at an alternative investment management firm, Joe Tenpenny searched for a graduate program that would fill the gaps in his business knowledge, expand his worldview, and fast-track his career growth. He found the perfect match in WSB's professional MBA. Thanks to the mix of in-person and online classes, Tenpenny is earning his degree while keeping his role of vice president of operations at Blackthorne Capital Management LLC.

TWO DAYS IN HIS LIFE

Wednesday, 7 a.m. | The thought of French roast coffee lures Tenpenny out of bed.

9 a.m. | While working remotely, he makes trades, manages portfolio risk, and collaborates with his team. In between meetings, he walks his Cavalier King Charles spaniel, Molly.

4 p.m. | Exercise is a vital part of Tenpenny's routine, so he goes for a run. Afterwards, he reviews his notes, ensuring that he's ready to participate in the evening's class.

6:15 p.m. | He attends online class, which consists of breakout rooms and cohort discussions. During one of his scheduled breaks, he eats a quick dinner with his wife.

Saturday, 7 a.m. | Before his 20-minute drive to Grainger Hall, he meditates—and has coffee, of course—to prepare for the long day ahead.

8 a.m. | Tenpenny's school day begins, packed full of lectures, case study discussions, and the occasional exam. Some of his classes include Risk Management, Managerial Accounting, and Corporate

Financial Theory and Practice. These classes comprise the Financial Insights badge that he's currently pursuing.

12 p.m. | Tenpenny and his close-knit cohort members head to the Memorial Union Terrace for lunch by the water. They talk, laugh, and take walks before afternoon classes.

4:30 p.m. | Class is dismissed, but Tenpenny and his cohort always make the most of their time together. They attend soccer games, organize kickball tournaments, and enjoy each other's company while in Madison.

8 p.m. | After a long day of on-campus learning and cohort fun, Tenpenny heads home. He winds down by watching *The Office*—or another show that will make him laugh—with his wife and dog. ◀

About the Professional MBA

The professional MBA prioritizes flexibility and personalization, allowing busy professionals to earn a customized degree in as little as two years. Students participate in weekly online classes and attend monthly in-person meetings at Grainger Hall. After mastering business and leadership foundations in their first year, students tailor their MBA by pursuing badges in specific business disciplines.

1960–1969



Martin Feldman (BBA '64) is enjoying his eighth year of retirement in

Florida and is celebrating his 55th wedding anniversary this year. He took a wonderful trip to Barcelona, Spain, where he and his wife visited the Sagrada Família, Montserrat, and the Picasso Museum.

Steve Cain (BBA '68) recently celebrated his eighth anniversary of managing the Midwest office of Fairfield Capital Group, LLC.



Tim Eisele (BBA '69, MS '71) has retired after serving 22 years on the

Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame board of governors. Eisele is a freelance outdoor writer and photographer, covering natural resources for *Wisconsin Outdoor News*. He has freelanced for newspapers and magazines in Wisconsin since 1971 and received the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation's Conservation Communicator of the Year award in 1995 and 2009.

1970–1979

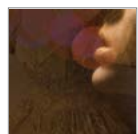
William D. Soman (BBA '70) recently retired from the practice of law in Miami, Florida. His firm, William D. Soman, P.A., concentrated on corporate and real estate business. The Montfort, Wisconsin, native was recently honored by the Florida Bar Association in recognition of his 50-year membership.



More Class Notes are featured in the digital issue at business.wisc.edu/update/fall-2023

Alan Crist (BBA '71, MA '79, PhD '87) is an executive search consultant with AGB Search, LLC. Four years ago, he was also appointed director of ExecComp, an AGB Search service that assists boards with issues of executive compensation to attract and retain top leadership.

John McKenzie (BBA '76) is happy to announce that July 15, 2023, was the grand opening of the McKenzie Regional Workforce Center—a partnership between the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dane County and the Madison Area Builders Association. This new \$10 million facility in Fitchburg, Wisconsin, trains young people and connects them with great jobs in the construction industry.



Marcia Babler (MBA '77) has shown her work at the Dubuque

Museum of Art Biennial, the Woman Made Gallery's sixth Midwest Open in Chicago, and the 2023 North American Print Biennial exhibit at Boston University. Babler has also worked with a nationally recognized poet on an exhibit collection titled "Journey to Healing."

IN MEMORIAM



John "Jack" Bolz (BS '50), Marian Bolz, and Anne Bolz passed away in May and June of 2023. Longtime supporters of the Madison arts industry, the Bolz family endowed WSB's Bolz Center for Arts Administration in 1993. Their generous support solidified the arts administration degree program and created a pathway to educate future leaders in the nonprofit and arts industries.



Bob Bruce (BBA '53) passed away on June 23, 2023. He was a lifelong supporter of UW–Madison and the Wisconsin School of Business, establishing the Robert Bruce Fellowship Fund and the Robert Bruce Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellow Fund. Bruce also played a key role in establishing UW Club Sports with his friend **Albert O. Nicholas (BS '52, MBA '55)**.



Steve Hawk (BBA '63, MBA '64, PhD '69) passed away on May 22, 2023. He launched WSB's Applied Security Analysis Program—now delivered through the Hawk Center for Investment Analysis—in 1970 with a pioneering approach that allows students to invest and manage real money as part of their WSB education.



Donald "Don" Condon, Jr. (BBA '74) passed away on March 19, 2023. Condon was a passionate contributor to WSB's Nicholas Center for Corporate Finance and Investment Banking. Known for his practical insights and global leadership experience, he also established a Condon Graduate Scholarship fund in 2001.



Donald Bredberg (BBA '79) is a partner with StoneCreek Partners and Adventure Entertainment

Cos., and has established a joint venture with Monumental Studios LLC. This venture will further expand his firm's client work involving film studio business planning, concept design, and studio services in the U.S., as well as select global regions.

1980–1989

Steve Bass (MA '81) will be stepping down as president and chief executive officer of Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) in 2024 after a long career in public media. OPB is Oregon's largest and most impactful news organization. He plans to spend more time pursuing his music as a clarinetist in various orchestras and festivals.



Jo Ann Heinrich (BBA '82, MS '86) created the volunteer organization Teens Who Care in Apple Valley, Minnesota, with her two children. Meeting monthly, the group of a dozen teenagers helped the community with an adopted street, sewer drains, and other projects. Heinrich and her son, Josh, were also asked to be in a volunteer video for the city's Facebook page.



Marc B. Scher (BBA '83) retired after 40 years at KPMG LLP.

He rose to national and global industry leadership roles at the firm after his promotion to partner in 1996. In his retirement, he will serve as the 2024-25 chair of the Healthcare Financial Management Association.



Steve Hasbrook (BBA '86) has come full circle with his new position as director of development for the Wisconsin School of Business, the

place that helped launch his more than 30-year business career in both the corporate and nonprofit sectors. Hasbrook couldn't imagine being in a better place. On, Wisconsin!

Mary Zellmer-Bruhn (BBA '87, MS '93, PhD '99) was appointed as associate dean of MBA and master's programs at the Carlson School of Management in July 2023 and named to the David M. Bond Fellowship for Ethics and Corporate Behavior.



Thomas Hazen (BA '88, MBA '95) recently retired from General Mills in the Twin Cities after a long career as an information technology analyst. As a senior lead instructor with Xtreme Xperience, where he has worked part time since 2014, Hazen travels to racetracks around the country, instructing and driving exotic supercars.



Robert Schwarz (MS '89) recently retired from

his position of adjunct lecturer in real estate at WSB after 11 years, where he taught commercial real estate development. He continues working as a consultant at RBS, Inc., where he produces market studies for affordable rental housing developments. He looks forward to having more time for reading, cooking, Nordic skiing, and road bicycling.

1990–1999

Brian Conom (BBA '90) was the Surgical Territory Manager of the Year for the third year in a row. He also earned the Royalty Award for the 13th time, and the Gold Award, exceeding quota in all three product categories. Lastly, Conom became the first person to win the Legacy Award for a second time!



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Amy Squitieri (BS '90, MBA '99) was named

chief operations officer and president of Mead & Hunt, a highly ranked national architecture, engineering, and construction firm headquartered in Middleton, Wisconsin. Her business operations, client relationships, and people-development skills have helped Mead & Hunt grow significantly, both organically and through mergers and acquisitions.



Laura Rauman (BBA '92) was recognized as a Notable Nonprofit Board Leader in the June 5, 2023, edition of *BizTimes Milwaukee*. She received this recognition as the founder and

president of Bloom360 Learning Community, a private school and learning community serving neurodivergent children and adults in Southeastern Wisconsin.



Mike Kopplin (BBA '93, MBA '95) has launched You Rule Academy to help

legal professionals become court show judges and legal experts in the media. Kopplin is an Emmy-nominated producer known for *Judge Judy*, *Divorce Court*, *Money Court*, and other unscripted projects.



Tricia (Adams) Check (BBA '96) is the department administrator of

the new Department of Plant and Agroecosystem Sciences in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at UW–Madison. The department launched on July 1, 2023, and is the result of a merger between the university's Department of Horticulture and Department of Agronomy.

Sang Ho Kim (BBA '96) is eager to connect with Badgers who are interested in doing business with Samsung SDS, Cheil Worldwide, GS Home Shopping, and Schaeffler Korea Corporation.



Heidi Meister (BBA '97) recently completed her 14th year at Citi.

She started at Citi in 2005 as a financial analyst and moved into operations in 2009. Meister worked at another company for four years and recently returned to Citi as a strategy leader.

Continued on page 26



Keenan Yoho (MS '98, MBA '00, PhD '06) was appointed visiting professor at SDA Bocconi School of Management and Politecnico di Milano as part of a one-year sabbatical. Yoho is conducting research on the Italian automotive sector to identify adoption rates of Industry 4.0 practices, as well as how the sector is realigning its global supply chain. He is living in Italy with his family and their 3-year-old German shepherd.

2000–2009

Katherine Bailey (BBA '01) recently joined Rockwell Automation as a commercial marketing manager. She is responsible for developing strategies that promote products and solutions for the company's global power-control business. Bailey is proud to join a team with many fellow Badgers.



Jenny Patzlaff (BBA '01) recently celebrated her second anniversary at the University of Wisconsin E-Business Consortium (UWIBC), where she serves as supply chain practice director. She enjoys being back on the UW–Madison campus and working with great UWIBC member companies who value professional development for their employees.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



JAY LAABS (BBA '98)

received a Luminary Award from the Wisconsin Alumni Association for his accomplishments in leadership, discovery, progress, and service. The founder and chief executive officer of Spaulding Ridge, a global business-technology consultancy focused on cloud computing solutions, Laabs was recognized for the company's commitment to volunteer service, inclusion, and creating personal connections. Spaulding Ridge is now one of the top workplaces in the consulting industry.



More Class Notes are featured in the digital issue at

business.wisc.edu/update/fall-2023



Jenny Bulgrin Venkat (BBA '02) founded Jenny BV Sales Coaching and Consulting in 2023, where she provides comprehensive sales coaching and consulting services for professionals, entrepreneurs, and startups worldwide.



Kinga Johnson (BBA '02) is an artist and the owner of Radiant Smiles Face Painting. The business has grown to include fine art (Aurealian Art), art gifts, and, most recently, mural painting (The Mural Studio). She is so thankful for a recent opportunity to design and partially paint a mural for the Waunakee Wings Memorial Mural project.



M Faisal Siddiqui (MBA '03) has taken on an elevated role

as chief operating officer of processes for Cancer Treatment Services International L.P. - South Asia, which is a fully owned subsidiary of Varian Medical Systems. The journey to this milestone has been fabulous and he remains a proud Badger!

Heather Good (MA '05) joined the Recreation & Wellbeing team at UW–Madison in April 2023. Good says it's been an absolute delight to work with this energetic and smart team.

Laura Gramann Richter (BBA '07) is approaching 10 years of running her business, Pieces into Place, which designs custom

closets for clients in Southeastern Wisconsin. She and her family recently moved to the Lake Country area of Wisconsin and have been enjoying lots of birdwatching activities with their nearly 2-year-old son, Henry.



Justin Vandehey (BBA '08) co-founded Disco in 2014 with his

brother, **Jeremy Vandehey (BBA '10)**. After growing the company to profitability, Disco was acquired by Culture Amp, a category leader in the employee experience space. Following the acquisition, the brothers started a popular business podcast called *The Bridge* to help entrepreneurs.



Sarah Lavelle (BBA '09) and **Erin Lavelle (BBA '06, MAcc '07)**

welcomed their fourth child, Lily, in August. They are hoping for four future Business Badgers!

2010–2019



Bruce Klink (BBA '10) launched East Superior Real Estate Partners, which

closed another Chicago acquisition in June 2023 and is seeking equity partners for future projects. Klink is also on the advisory board of Ladder Up, and enjoys family time with his wife, **Melanie Koch (BA '10)**, and baby girl.

Josh Dver (BBA '11) started a new position where he's spearheading all North American and Latin American sales efforts for a generative artificial intelligence (AI) platform that converts text and

imagery to video. He's excited to be a part of the generative AI space, which is evolving faster than he can type this note!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



JON FASOLI (BBA '09)

received a Forward Award from the Wisconsin Alumni Association (WAA) for his outstanding exemplification of the Wisconsin Idea. Fasoli was honored for his efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic to connect small business owners with Paycheck Protection Program loans and other federal relief funding. He serves as the chief product and design officer at Intuit Mailchimp and is described as a "champion of small business and the self-employed" by WAA. Fasoli was also named to WSB's annual "8 to Watch" list in the Spring/Summer 2021 issue of *Update* magazine.



Lauren Brischke (BBA '15) celebrated

her five-year anniversary on the Alumni Relations team at WSB. She also married her best friend, Nick

Mittelstedt, who serves the local community as a firefighter and paramedic for the Madison Fire Department. On their honeymoon, they went paragliding in the Swiss Alps and snorkeling in the Mediterranean Sea—and are excited for the next chapter!



Anna Cramer (MBA '16) began a new position as development

director of Hoyt Sherman Place. She will lead the fundraising efforts for this 100-year-old cultural staple of the Des Moines, Iowa, community.



Joel Greenspan (BBA '17) started his own business as a custom

footwear artist. Greenspan has landed work with several notable clients, including the NFL, Madison Square Garden, the NBA, and Radio City Music Hall. Currently, he's prepping for another season of the My Cause My Cleats campaign, where he creates custom cleats for the New England Patriots.



AJ Minucci (BBA '18) has completed his service obligations as a

surface warfare officer in the Navy after more than four years. He has accepted a position with General Dynamics Information Technology as a senior training specialist and is excited to instruct and train the Navy's next officers!

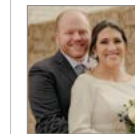
Emmy (Emily) Bildings (BBA '19) was recently awarded the 2023 CEO Award from Procter & Gamble, which represents the top employees across the company

for the year. She also started a new role as senior manager for Family Care Front End Innovation and Upstream.



Clayton Grow (MBA '19) started working for Time of Grace Ministry as

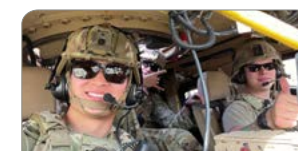
a business intelligence manager in 2017. He helped this Christian multimedia ministry reach record numbers of people in 2018 and 2019, and was promoted to director of operations in 2020.



Karl Krueger (MBA '19) and **Vanias Arias (MBA '18)** recently

celebrated their third wedding! After meeting in Grainger Hall during their MBA programs, Krueger and Arias got engaged in September 2020 and had a small legal ceremony in March 2021. They were finally able to celebrate with friends and family—first in Arias' hometown of Lima, Peru, and then in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

2020–2023



Paul Sohn (BBA '20) is deployed to Syria in support of Counter Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve as the explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) officer for his platoon. He is responsible for the management of three EOD teams and is tasked with rendering safe and disposing of various explosive hazards on the battlefield.



"I am excited to share that I have recently been included in the Wisconsin Inno's Under 25 Class of 2023! Blessed to be recognized amongst this great talent in our beautiful city. As a recent Wisconsin School of Business graduate I am honored to represent for the innovative Badgers and young Black Women out there looking to make a difference in the communities they are a part of."



—JAYLA THOMPSON (BBA '23)

Grace Colvin (BBA '21) is the founder of Strawberry Goose, a company specializing in organizational tools for young women. With a focus on planners, journals, and pouches, Colvin's products blend functionality with style, drawing from her own experiences in the business world.

Randeep Dang (MBA '22) has been promoted to a global profit and loss leadership position and is now the general manager of ventilation at GE HealthCare in Madison, Wisconsin.

Nick Woods (BBA '22) came back to UW–Madison to study law. He says that it feels nice to be back on campus. ◀

Feathery Flamingo Fun

PHOTO BY TAYLOR WOLFRAM

It started as a 1979 prank orchestrated by UW-Madison's Pail and Shovel Party—and is now an annual giving tradition with a fun, feathery twist. This year's Fill the Hill event offered extra flamingo fun as alumni and friends celebrate UW's 175th anniversary. Over 3,000 flamingos—each representing one gift—flocked to Bascom Hill on October 5–6, and 109 of those gifts were made to support experiential learning at the Wisconsin School of Business. ◀





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Rise and Shine

WSB alum opens eyes
with new coffee shop

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