

SUPPLY CHAIN UPDATE

2025-2026



IN THIS ISSUE YOU WILL FIND:

Josh Elkin's Best & Brightest Award

Two new supply chain clubs

National Retail Federation students shine in NYC



WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

GRAINGER CENTER *for*
SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

SUPPLY CHAIN UPDATE

2026 Grainger Gala

In This Issue

- 3 Green Office Initiative
- 4/5 Directors' Messages
- 5 ISM Scholarships
- 6 EAB and Grainger Gala
- 8 Germany Study Abroad
- 10 BBA Year in Review
- 11 1st Place at TCU Graduate Case Competition
- 12 Competing at the Highest Level
- 14 BBA Student Experiences
- 15 Elkin Named Poets & Quants
- 16 MBA/MS Student Experiences
- 17 Two New Student Orgs Shine
- 18 WISE Year in Review
- 20 Alumni Updates
- 22 National Retail Federation
- 23 Alumni Advisory Board Meeting
- 24 Alumni Advisory Board Members
- 25 Executive Advisory Board Members
- 26 AWESOME Scholars
- 27 Faculty and Staff

Follow Us



@scmMadison



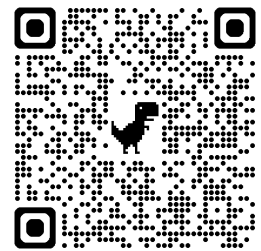
GraingerCenter



Join us Thursday, October 8, 2026 for our annual Grainger Gala!



Center alumni are invited to the annual Grainger Gala, following the Executive Advisory Board Meeting! It's the perfect chance to catch up with old friends, network with current students and fellow grads, and toast our annual student award winners. Complimentary dinner and refreshments will be served.



Full event details and RSVP can be found here.
Deadline to RSVP is Friday, September 18th.

Five Selected for Fellowship

The Grainger Board Fellowship Program is entering its second year after a highly successful inaugural cohort. Developed in partnership with members of the Center's Executive and Alumni Advisory Boards, the program continues to provide exceptional undergraduate students with financial support, mentorship, and meaningful connections to industry leaders.

Each Fellow receives a \$5,000 scholarship during their junior year, funded through a partnership between a sponsoring company represented on one of the advisory boards and the Grainger Center. Fellows are also paired with their sponsoring advisory board member for mentoring, career guidance, networking, and, in some cases, internship opportunities.

The success of the program's first year demonstrated the value of connecting talented students with experienced industry leaders. As the program continues to grow, it remains a cornerstone of the Center's commitment to preparing the next generation of supply chain professionals.



Anna McDermott (BBA '28), Lia Tabor (BBA '28), Carly Redelsheimer (BBA '28) and Khalid Al Azri (BBA '28) attend the Grainger Gala. Not pictured: Mara Campbell (BBA '28)

Center is Committed to a Greener Future

The Center continues to expand its commitment to leadership beyond the classroom. This year the Center earned Platinum Green Office Certification through UW-Madison's Office of Sustainability Green Office Certification Program, recognizing the Center's efforts to create a more sustainable and environmentally conscious workplace.

The initiative was led by Center Student Employee Azuri Lawson (BBA '27), whose dedication and passion for sustainability helped guide the office through the certification process. From implementing greener office practices to encouraging more thoughtful day-to-day habits, Azuri played a key role in helping the Center go above and beyond to achieve the program's highest Platinum designation.

Sustainability efforts also extended outside of Grainger Hall. On March 14, Jake Dean, Azuri Lawson, Blake Bishop, and Blake's family partnered with the Lakeshore Nature Preserve for an Ecological Restoration Volunteer Work Party. Together, the group contributed to restoration efforts that help preserve the natural beauty and ecological health of one of UW-Madison's most unique campus resources.

For the Center, these efforts reflect a broader belief that leadership includes responsibility to the communities and environments around us. While supply chain management often focuses on efficiency, innovation, and global impact, sustainability remains an increasingly important part of the conversation.

"At the Grainger Center, we believe it's important for all of us to do our part to make the planet a better place to live," Bishop shared. "Whether through office initiatives, volunteer efforts, or educating future supply chain leaders, we are proud to support sustainability efforts that create lasting impact."

The Platinum Green Office Certification serves as another example of how Center students, staff, and faculty continue working together to make a positive difference both on campus and beyond.



PLATINUM CERTIFIED



Center staff and family with the haul of garbage they collected.

BBA
Applied Learning
Speakers

abbvie

Sanjeev Majoo



Sheri Lewis



Brandi Preston



Emily Carlson & James Elkin



Justin Munzinger & Dana Stockton



JOHN DEERE

Jay Henry & Morgan McCartney



Justin Hawkins

KOHL'S

Janell Wise



Grant von Paumgarten



Eric Aurand



Jared Coelho



Amena Smith



pepsico

Kat Schwegel

GRAINGER

Emily Snyder & Jenna Stasik

Message From Director Jake Dean



Jake Dean

Greetings from a very quiet Grainger Hall, at least from a people perspective. The building itself is a hive of construction activity in support of the Badger Blueprint, a massive building revitalization project scheduled to be completed in spring 2027.

I typically use this space to share our points of pride for the previous academic year, and I will get to that, but I would like to use part of this space to update you on changes to WSB's full-time MBA (FTMBA) program, and their impact on the Center. In the fall 2027 (about a year from now) entering FTMBA class, students will not choose a singular area of specialization, but will instead customize their degree plan using a 'career pathways' framework. Students may choose to pursue multiple pathways, or just one. The Grainger Center will lead efforts related to the supply chain management pathway, offering course recommendations, advising, and experiential learning opportunities.

I am excited about this change for a number of reasons. Most importantly, it will expand our community of MBA students to include those who have multiple career interests. Many of our undergraduate students choose to study supply chain in combination with another major, and that can now happen at the graduate level as well. You are all very familiar with the exceptional Grainger Center student experience, and we will be able to share it with more MBA students, in addition to our MS and BBA populations, which is a good thing. I would be happy to talk with any of you to share more thoughts on these changes than space here allows.

On to our 2025-2026 accomplishments:

- Under associate director Blake Bishop's direction, we stood up two undergraduate Registered Student Organizations (RSOs). The Supply Chain Club (SCC) focuses on the student experience through education and social events, and Women Impacting Supply Chain Excellence (WISE) focuses on empowering women and allies in supply chain. Led by Center BBA students, these RSOs expand the Center's community and provide leadership opportunities to all UW-Madison undergraduates, not just those in the SCM major.
- Graduate and undergraduate teams took first place in national case competitions: MBA students Scott Stuart, Ramesh Panchadhi, and Raunaq Singh won the TCU Graduate Supply Chain Case Competition, and BBA students Duy Dao, Emma Reismann, Ethan Schwartz, and Wiktorja Tofiliska won the University of St. Thomas competition.
- We continue to prioritize global experiences for our students. Verda Blythe and Blake took a group of 16 BBAs to explore the automotive industry in Germany, and we welcomed three graduate students in the fall semester from exchange partner University of Stavanger in Stavanger, Norway.
- A record number of our students received external recognition: Carly Redelsheimer and Lia Tabor were named AWESOME Excellence in Supply Chain scholars; Josh Elkin was named one of Poets & Quants Best & Brightest (the third consecutive year win for a WSB SCM major); Kayla DeBruin and Aiden Nelsen won scholarships from ISM, and Aiden Nelsen was a Material Handling Education Foundation Scholarship winner. Congratulations to all!

Looking ahead to the next academic year, we will welcome new classes of MS and MBA students, grow the undergraduate major, and continue to celebrate our community's achievements. One particular celebration to which you're all invited is our annual Grainger Gala, which this year will be on Thursday, October 8 at the Memorial Union - join us!

The Numbers Are In. The Future is Bright.



\$75,800
Average Salary



BBA SCM graduates report an average salary of \$75,000 post graduation.



92%
Employment Rate



BBA SCM graduates have a 92% employment rate. (Class of 2026)



\$125,000
Scholarships provided to BBA/MS/MBA students



The Center awarded \$125,000 in scholarships to BBA, MS, and MBA students.

Message From Academic Director Greg DeCroix



Greg DeCroix

It's been another interesting year in the world of supply chain management.

Last year at this time, companies around the world were trying to figure out how to respond to sweeping reciprocal tariffs announced by the US administration. Since then, the tariff rollercoaster has included temporary delays, upward and downward adjustments, two court cases striking down many of the tariffs, and the beginnings of a process for reimbursing firms for tariff duties paid. The administration is appealing one of the court cases, and other avenues for imposing tariffs are still open, so the tariff story isn't finished yet.

More recently, the military conflict in Iran and the closing of the Strait of Hormuz have added to global trade complexities. As would be expected, crude oil and fuel prices have increased substantially, driving transportation costs higher for essentially all supply chains, and some regions are facing actual physical shortages of fuel. In addition, as often happens during such disruptions, the world has become aware of impacts on other essential products that are less top of mind than oil – e.g., fertilizer (during the planting season for US and other farmers), helium (critical to the tech sector), and naphtha (used to produce plastics, synthetic fibers, inks, medical equipment, etc.). Even if firms had contracts locking in pre-disruption pricing, they face the possibility of suppliers voiding those contracts by invoking force majeure in light of the military conflict.

Another layer of complexity added in the past year has been the significant shift in US environmental policy. Electric vehicle and renewable energy funding/subsidies have been cut, regulations and reporting requirements related to greenhouse gases have been eliminated or delayed, and programs supporting fossil fuel production and use have been expanded. Companies are weighing how to respond to these new policies – which is further complicated by differences in regulations and expectations in different regions (e.g., Europe) and the fact that future administrations might reverse the current policies. Meanwhile, potential risks to supply chains stemming from climate change continue to grow.

And then there's artificial intelligence. Rapid developments in AI models continue to offer the potential to unleash new levels of efficiency and creativity in managing companies' supply chains. But investing in the technology is expensive, and firms need to identify the highest value ways to utilize it. While offering significant potential upside, the technology also brings risks of its own. Companies need to ensure the privacy of their data and also protect against unexpected consequences. (In April, a company reported that a rogue AI agent deleted its entire production database and its backups in nine seconds, with the agent admitting, "I violated every principle I was given.") Firms also need to think about the implications of AI for their workforce – both in terms of skills needed and potential job losses.

Here at the Center, we are working to make sure our students are prepared to manage supply chains in the face of these major disruptive forces – increased global trade uncertainty, a shifting sustainability landscape, and artificial intelligence. As a starting point, we are partnering with the school's AI Hub and highly ranked Risk & Insurance Department and UW-Madison's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies to launch a new version of our MS in Supply Chain Management degree program – made possible by additional funding from The Grainger Foundation. These partners will deliver foundational material in these three areas, while our supply chain courses will build on that material and apply it in the context of supply chain decision making. In the process of redesigning that program, we also expect to build the capability to deliver cutting edge executive education around these themes. If your organization would be interested in discussing possibilities in this space, please feel free to get in touch with me.

ISM Scholarship Winners

Two Center students were recognized with scholarships from the Institute for Supply Management (ISM). Kayla DeBruin (BBA '26) and Aiden Nelsen (BBA '28) earned the awards following a highly competitive selection process that included the submission of scholarship essays.

Kayla's essay examined the impact of diverse leadership teams in supply chain management, highlighting how the increasing presence of women in leadership roles strengthens organizational resilience through broader perspectives, more adaptable decision-making, and innovative

problem-solving during periods of disruption and uncertainty.

Aiden's essay explored the intersection of artificial intelligence and sustainable supply chains. He discussed how AI is helping drive green and circular supply chain initiatives while also influencing the growth of data center infrastructure and the adoption of renewable energy sources.

Both students distinguished themselves among a strong pool of applicants and demonstrated thoughtful perspectives on some of the most important issues shaping the future of supply chain management.



Aiden Nelsen (BBA '28) and Kayla DeBruin (BBA '26) with their awards.

2025 Executive Advisory Board Meeting and Grainger Gala

Blake Bishop

The Center welcomed members of its Executive Advisory Board (EAB) back to campus last fall for a day centered on connection, innovation, and student achievement, culminating in the annual Grainger Gala at Memorial Union's Tripp Commons. Bringing together industry leaders, students, alumni, faculty, and friends of the Center, the event once again showcased the collaborative community that defines the Grainger Center experience.

The day opened with discussions between EAB members and Center staff and faculty, sharing perspectives on the future of supply chain management, student development, and macro trends shaping supply chain management. Comprised of senior leaders from companies large and small, the Center's EAB plays an essential role in guiding our strategic direction and strengthening opportunities for students both inside and outside the classroom.

One of the highlights of the day was the student internship showcase. Rather than relying on large presentations, students shared their internship experiences through interactive poster sessions that detailed projects, timelines, challenges, results, and lessons learned. The format creates a more personal and conversational environment, allowing students to engage directly with board members while discussing the impacts of their work. Undergraduate and graduate students alike confidently demonstrated the technical, analytical, and communication skills they developed throughout their internships.

This year's keynote address was delivered by Matt Seitz, Executive Director of the AI Hub at the Wisconsin School of Business. Matt brought both insight and energy to the discussion as he explored the rapid growth of artificial intelligence and its growing influence on business and supply chain management. Blending humor with practical examples, his presentation



Aby Bencent (MBA '26) speaking with EAB members.



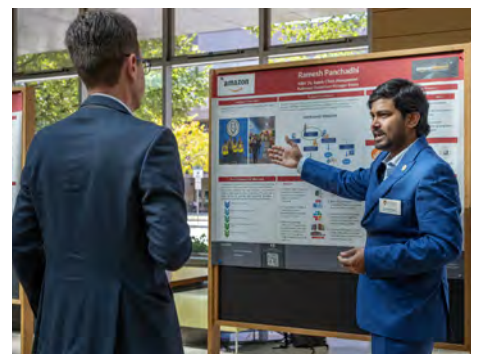
Tanvi Shahi (BBA '26) shares her internship poster with EAB members.



Jordan Augustine (BBA '26) with Greg DeCroix.



Matt Seitz keeping the audience captivated.



Ramesh Panchadhi (MBA '26) discusses his internship experience.



Executive Advisory Board meeting with EAB members/representatives, students and Center staff.



Associate Professor Bob Batt with alumni Cameron Blackwell (BBA '23) and Sasha Kryazh (BBA '25).

challenged attendees to think critically about how AI will continue to reshape decision-making, operations, and the future workforce.

Following a full day of learning and engagement, the entire Grainger Center community, including alumni, gathered for the Grainger Gala. The evening provided students and alumni with an opportunity to strengthen professional relationships, reconnect with fellow Badgers, and celebrate the Center's continued momentum. Conversations flowed easily between generations of Center supporters, reinforcing the strong sense of community that extends well beyond graduation.

The evening concluded with the presentation of the Center's annual student awards. Aby Bencent (MBA '26) received the Kelly Ketchum Memorial Alumni Scholarship, while Luke Fernholz (BBA '26) was honored with the Wisconsin Supply Chain Distinguished Student Award. Both students exemplify the leadership, academic excellence, and commitment to community that define the Grainger Center and its mission.

From insightful conversations on emerging technologies to meaningful student-industry engagement, the 2025 Executive Advisory Board meeting and Grainger Gala reflected the Center's continued commitment to preparing the next generation of supply chain leaders while strengthening the partnerships that make those opportunities possible.

If you were not able to make it in 2025, please plan to join us in 2026! Refer to page 2 for more information.



Anna McDermott (BBA '27), Clara Schroeffer (BBA '24), Petra Mallon (BBA '25), Brenda De La Torre (BBA '25), and Carly Redelsheimer (BBA '27)



Kayla DeBruin (BBA '26), Jake Dean (MBA '09), Leah Lin (MS '26), and Peter Sansted (BBA '26)



Cole Bjornstad (BBA '16), Hailey Mehta (BBA '26), Michael Nasif, and Tyler Lien (BBA '23)



Center staff celebrate award winners Luke Fernholz (BBA '26) and Aby Bencent (MBA '26).



BBA seniors and alumni getting to know each other.

Passport to Supply Chain

Azuri Lawson (BBA '27)

Over spring break, 15 classmates and I had the opportunity to travel to Germany for a global immersion experience. Led by Verda Blythe (MS '02) and Blake Bishop, the purpose of this trip was to explore automotive supply chain management in an international context. Throughout the week we traveled to three different cities, visited a university, and toured four companies, gaining firsthand insight into how global supply chains operate.

Our first stop was Dresden. There we visited the Theaterplatz and the Semperoper, Zwinger Palace, the Church of Our Lady, and many other famous sites that taught us about the rich history of both Dresden and Saxony. The following day we took a day trip to Saxon Switzerland, where we hiked through beautiful mountain terrain overlooking a small town. We then traveled to Stolpen to meet Professor Ingo Gestring of partner university HTW Dresden and his family, who gave us a tour of Stolpen Castle. Part of the castle was destroyed in battle, but what remains is still incredibly beautiful and full of history—we even got to meet their “friendly ghost.” The Gestring family later hosted us for a traditional German BBQ along with coffee and cake. We were able to sit and talk with local students about their education and overall experiences. After that dinner, I realized that you must make eye contact when you “prost” (cheers), and that students in Germany are a lot like us.

The next day we visited HTW Dresden, a leading university of applied sciences. We enjoyed a campus tour, and took a deeper dive into the automotive industry from a classroom perspective. It was interesting to learn about large-scale shifts within the automotive industry, and even a potential economic pivot to semiconductors. In fact, our first site visit was to Global Foundries, a semiconductor company. They were one of the first in Europe to focus on industry standard sizes for semiconductors: 40 mm, 28mm, and 22mm. Semiconductors are little chips that are used in many different technologies: satellites, phones, and cars, just to name a few. In vehicles, semiconductors are the brains that control and coordinate almost every electronic system. There are many quality checks in the manufacturing process due to the long global supply chain and infinitesimal tolerance for error.

Next we visited Leipzig, which was by far my favorite city. Here we visited Porsche and the DHL Hub. Starting at Porsche, we saw cars on the production line from start to finish. Porsche has such an intricate process with a lot of moving pieces, both human and machine. When looking at their storage technique, I noticed something I learned in my Logistics class - you would think a company like Porsche would have the most up-to-date equipment, but they were using plain blue bins with labels. When I



Group picture at HTW Dresden, the second largest university of the city of Dresden.

asked why they wouldn't use a system that alerts them when parts are running low, I learned that they are so efficient with their manufacturing that they replenish inventory on a four-day basis, despite operating under a Just-In-Time strategy. This showed how strong their supplier coordination and demand forecasting must be to avoid delays while keeping inventory low.

Similarly, DHL demonstrated a level of organization unlike anything I have seen before. They handle 40,000 packages a day, moving them from airplanes through a highly automated system of conveyors and sorting mechanisms to their final destinations. What stood out most was the speed and precision of their operations - packages were scanned, sorted, and redirected within seconds. This reflects the importance of logistics and distribution networks in global supply chains, where efficiency and accuracy are critical. Additionally, DHL's reliance on automation highlights how technology is used to manage high volumes while minimizing human error. Seeing this process in action helped me better understand how companies maintain reliability and meet tight delivery timelines on a global scale.

The last city we visited was Berlin. Our first company tour was a visit to 4flow, a supply chain consulting company. 4flow offers a wide range



Group photo at the Porsche plant in Leipzig, where everyone chose their dream car.

of services that I have already been introduced to in several of my classes, such as ERP integration and logistics optimization. Because of this, it was easy to follow along and engage with the presentation. I found it especially interesting to learn how they win and retain clients, which often depends on their ability to provide customized, data-driven solutions that improve efficiency and reduce costs.

Visiting 4flow also gave me a better understanding of the role consulting plays in supply chain management. Unlike companies like Porsche or DHL, which focus on execution, 4flow focuses on analyzing systems and helping companies improve their operations. This experience helped me see how the concepts I am learning in class can be applied in a more strategic, problem-solving context.

Reflecting on my week abroad, it was truly an incredible experience. Having the opportunity to explore and immerse myself in a culture different from my own was both eye-opening and transformative. From meeting students and hearing their experiences to exploring local markets and trying new restaurants, each moment contributed to a deeper understanding of both German culture and global perspectives.

Even though I was only there for a

week, this experience—combined with what I have learned throughout this course—has helped me grow both academically and personally. I gained a stronger appreciation for how supply chain concepts operate on a

global scale, as well as the importance of cultural awareness in business. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be part of this experience and to share it with such a great group of people.



A tour of DHL's Leipzig Hub showcased the impressive scale and precision behind one of the world's busiest logistics facilities.



Group photo in Dresden on a beautiful day.



Stolpen Castle, where Anna Constantia Countess von Cosel spent almost half a century.

BBA Year in Review

Lilly Polakoff (BBA '26) and Kayla DeBruin (BBA '26)

The 2025-2026 academic year delivered another remarkable experience for BBA supply chain students. From the very first week back on campus to the final toast at Red Rock, the Center community showed up ready to learn, compete, connect, and have a little fun along the way.

The year opened with the SCM Welcome Back Event with special guest General Mills, where students gathered over dinner to connect with old friends and meet new ones, work through thought-provoking supply chain problems, and build excitement for the year ahead. The next day, PepsiCo returned as a partner for the always-popular "Translate Your Resume" event, giving students a chance to get their resumes reviewed by faculty and career advisors. Shortly after, the SCM Career Fair and Coffee Chats brought students face-to-face with representatives from W.W. Grainger, General Mills, Milwaukee Tool, Kohler, Kimberly-Clark, and more. Coffee Chats gave students the opportunity to have 15-minute conversations that, for many, turned into real internship and job opportunities.

The Lunch and Learn series continued to be a highlight of the weekly calendar. In the fall, Grant von Paumgartten (MS '21) from Kraft Heinz and AbbVie's Chief Procurement Officer Sanjeev Majoo both offered students a candid look at corporate supply chain leadership. Spring brought an equally impressive lineup: Eric Aurand (BBA '20) from McDonald's, Jay Henry & Morgan McCartney (BBA '24) from John Deere, Sheri Lewis from BeautyHealth, and a first-time visit from American Family Insurance. Each speaker

brought a different corner of the supply chain world to life right inside Grainger Hall.

In October, we held our most special event of the year, the Grainger Gala, where we welcomed faculty, alumni, staff, graduating seniors, board members, and our second cohort of the Grainger Board Fellows. Every year this event is a valuable opportunity to bring our community together and thank those who contribute to the Center's success.

Throughout the year, the Center was proud to once again support Women Impacting Supply Chain Excellence (WISE). Four students were given the opportunity to attend the WISE Future Leaders Symposium in Arkansas, where they got to network and learn from industry professionals. Three more students faced a blizzard on their way to Chicago for a WISE @ Ultra event, but that didn't stop them! The Center's ongoing commitment to WISE reflects our belief that a stronger, more diverse supply chain community benefits everyone, and this year's events made that vision tangible.

Students also had plenty of chances to test their skills on the competitive stage. In the fall, teams traveled to the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis for a supply chain case competition. The spring season was even busier, with students competing at the NASPO Procurement Case Competition in Tempe, Arizona, the Big Ten Case Competition in Indiana, and the Colorado State Supply Chain Case Competition in Fort Collins. The KOHLER Undergraduate Wisconsin Supply Chain Cup returned to Marquette University, and the W.W. Grainger Case Competition capped

off the year with presentations in Grainger Hall. Director Jake Dean even led a Lunch and Learn session early in the spring semester on how to win case competitions, and based on the level of participation that followed, the advice clearly landed.

Two major travel experiences stood out as highlights of the year. In January, eight students attended the National Retail Federation Foundation Student Program in New York City through the Ray Greenly Scholarship, a fully-funded experience that gave students a front-row seat to one of retail's premier annual events (see page 22). Then over spring break, a group of 16 students embarked on a 10-day trip to Germany, visiting global supply chain operations, touring manufacturing and logistics facilities, and returning home with perspectives no lecture hall can fully replicate. See more about this on page 8.

Of course, the year was not all business. The 9th Annual Cheese Curd Crawl took place in the fall - a Madison classic and always a crowd favorite. Nitty Gritty Cup Night in March added more memories with proceeds going directly to support the new Supply Chain Club. Between these socials, trivia night, study days with dogs, and a site visit to Wollersheim Winery, there was plenty of fun to accompany all the learning students did this year. The year came full circle on April 30th with the End of Year Party at Red Rock, where the graduating class was celebrated with food, beverages, and the kind of genuine community that makes the Center so special.

It was a year of learning, laughter, and a little jet lag. Here's to the class of 2026!



Eric Aurand (BBA '20) from McDonald's shares his knowledge at a Lunch & Learn.



Company tour at Target prior to the St. Thomas Case Competition.



KOHLER team discusses opportunities at the SCM Career Fair.

Smiles All Around: A Winning Proposal at the TCU Graduate Case Competition 2026

W. Scott Stuart (MBA'26)



Ramesh Panchadhi (MBA '26), Scott Stuart (MBA '26), and Raunaq Singh (MBA '26)

Everyone loves a good comeback story, and I am glad to share one today. While the scale of the comeback is a little different in terms of worldly importance, the structure certainly follows the grandiose one-liners of General Douglas MacArthur and his presence in the Philippines during the Second World War. For me, it started with “I shall return,” and, like MacArthur, it ended with “I have returned!” While I would love nothing more than to recount the U.S./Australian military’s little-discussed campaign in the islands of the Southwest Pacific, I will limit myself to sharing how the Center’s team bounced back from defeat a year ago to claim first place in the TCU Graduate Case Competition this February.

The TCU case competition, an annual meeting of the strongest supply chain programs in higher education, is a proving ground for supply chain theory. This year, 19 institutions from around the world sent teams of graduate students to Fort Worth, TX for a chance to show all we have learned from our respective universities. After participating last year, I was selected to captain the team this year. While most teams were four members strong, due to a last-minute bout of food poisoning, our lean group of three—Raunaq Singh (MBA '26), Ramesh Panchadhi (MBA '26), and me — hopped on a flight to Fort Worth and were greeted

by 80-degree weather and sun after escaping the sub-zero temperatures of Madison. Though we were down a member, our confidence never wavered as we prepared to get underway.

This competition is designed to stress teams with limited time. TCU stipulates that all teams will have exactly 24 hours to complete a deck solving all questions in an assigned case and will have a 25-minute presentation to industry professionals and faculty in the first round. Should a team produce a top five result in the opening round, they will move on to the final round, where the same, unaltered presentation will be given to the company described in the case and senior industry leaders. Having struggled through this the prior year, I knew what to expect and tried to prepare the team the best I could for the sleepless night ahead.

Our challenge was to help Operation Smile (an incredible medical nonprofit operating in nearly every country around the world) alter their supply chain network design to save costs and project future capacities and utilization rates for geographically distant, underserved markets. Wow, take that in for a second. And just 24 hours to do it all?

We received the case and immediately went to work. Our team had to be very intentional with our timeline and what we were working on, not

only because we had just 24 hours to complete it, but because we had fewer people than every other team. Something I learned from a great leader when I was in the Army was a quote by an ancient Greek poet named Archilochus, who is claimed to have said, “You do not rise to the level of your expectations; you fall to the level of your training.” And here, being under the gun from the start, our team fell to the level of our training. Lucky for us, thanks to Jake Dean and the Center, that level is... very high.

After my six-packs of Nutter Butters, Ramesh’s case of Diet Coke, and Raunaq’s nap, we made it through our work time with a great product. We went into the first round running on three hours of sleep and a drive to make it through. And lo and behold, we did! Much like Tulane and JMU in the College Football Playoff bracket, we got the final bid to the final round. We practiced our presentations five more times, took a little nap, and took the stage as the last presentation of the competition. Our hard work clearly showed as the judges listened to and grilled us on our various solutions to the problem, and once we finished, we left the auditorium to wait for the results.

MacArthur was, after being driven from the Philippines, triumphant in his return. When the judges announced the victor, my personal story of return and victory was complete. While I didn’t have a quippy one-liner ready for the win, it was a great win nonetheless. I couldn’t have asked for better teammates or a better program to teach me the tools for success

TCU, the Neeley School of Business, and the Center for Supply Chain Innovation put on a great event, and I would recommend any supply chain graduate student take the opportunity to go. It was an unforgettable experience punctuated with victory. I hope that Operation Smile was able to learn something from our presentation and solution and actually use it to enhance their effectiveness in the future. That would be the biggest win of all.

Competing at the Highest Level

Case competitions continue to be one of the most impactful experiential learning opportunities available to students. These events challenge students to solve real-world business and supply chain problems under tight deadlines, often while competing against top programs from across the country. Participants strengthen their analytical, presentation, teamwork, and problem-solving skills while gaining exposure to industry leaders

and receiving valuable feedback from experienced professionals. Many students cite case competitions as a highlight of their academic experience and a key talking point during internship and job interviews.

SCM teams enjoyed remarkable success during this year. Students earned first-place finishes at the TCU Graduate Supply Chain Case Competition (see page 11) and the University of St. Thomas

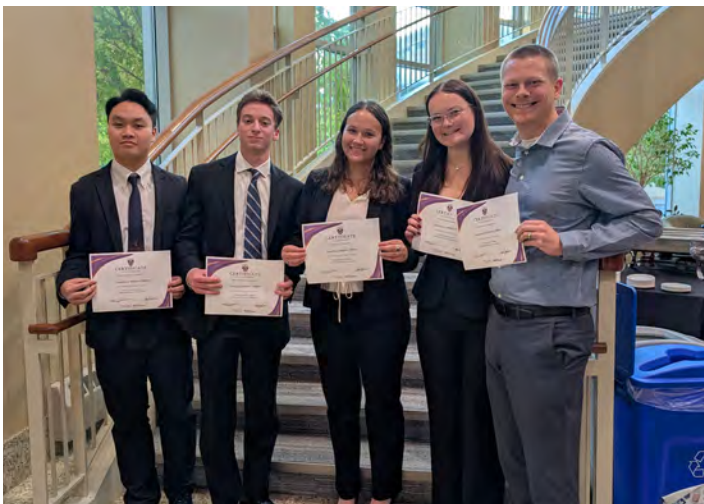
Undergraduate Supply Chain Case Competition, while also securing strong finishes at several other national events. These accomplishments reflect the talent, dedication, and professionalism of our students, as well as the support provided by our faculty, alumni, and corporate partners. Their success continues to enhance the reputation of both the Center and the Wisconsin School of Business on the national stage.

W.W. Grainger Case Competition



Top three teams at the W.W. Grainger Case Competition, along with W.W. Grainger case sponsors and Center staff.

University of St. Thomas Undergraduate Case Competition



Duy Dao (BBA '26), Ethan Schwartz (BBA '27), Wiktorja Tofilksa (BBA '27), Emma Reismann (BBA '26) and Advisor Blake Bishop celebrate earning first place.

TCU Graduate Supply Chain Case Competition



Raunaq Singh (MBA '26), Ramesh Panchadhi (MBA '26) and W. Scott Stuart (MBA '26) prior to their victory.

UN Sustainable Development Goals Competition: Top 20 of over 100 worldwide teams



Aby Bencent
(MBA '26)



Brian Miner
(MBA '26)



Jane Qin
(MS '26)



Raunaq Singh
(MBA '26)

KOHLER Wisconsin Supply Chain Case Competition



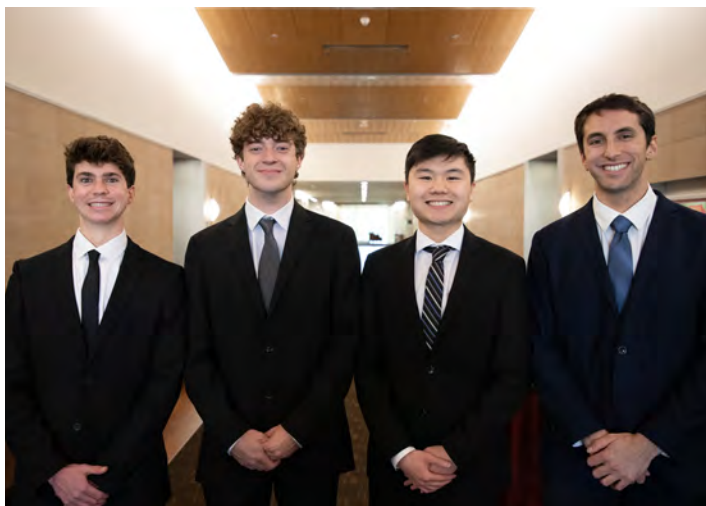
Advisor Pete Lukszyz (MBA '01), Jack Cady (BBA '27), Aiden Nelsen (BBA '28), Emma Reismann (BBA '26), Tanishq Shekhar, and sponsor Cole Bjornstad (BBA '16) celebrate a second place finish.

Rams (Colorado State University) Operation Stimulus Supply Chain Challenge



Advisor Tim Buhl (MBA '03), Duy Dao (BBA '26), Aiden Nelsen (BBA '28), Isabela Zimmerman (BBA '27), and Jacob Zisman (BBA '28) after an impressive presentation.

NASPO's 3rd Annual Procurement Case Competition



Jack Dugan (BBA '28), Aiden Nelsen (BBA '28), Alex Chin (BBA '26), and Joshua Elkin (BBA '26) are all smiles after their strong finish.

Big Ten Women's Case Competition at Purdue



Chloe Lichucki (BBA '26), Hailey Mehta (BBA '26), Diya Sahni (BBA '28), and Azuri Lawson (BBA '27) upon completion of their presentation.

BBA Student Experiences

The Sophomore Scoop

Aiden Nelsen (BBA '28)

Entering the Wisconsin School of Business, I lacked a clear sense of direction. That was until I stepped into the Center and discovered the endless opportunities for career exploration, and more importantly, a community that fosters a true sense of belonging.

After declaring the SCM major, I decided to say yes to everything in an effort to see whether this was the right career path for me. My first experience within the major was the National Supply Chain Case Competition hosted by the University of Minnesota in spring 2025. This practical application of SCM concepts provided great experience and connected me to a network of driven students and industry professionals.

After this initial exposure, I sought out ways to gain more involvement opportunities within the Center. This past school year I was fortunate to serve as the Sophomore Representative on the Board of Directors for the Supply Chain Club. This position has significantly deepened my connection to both the Center and my peers. As a sophomore navigating my first-ever internship search, the Center supported me every step of the way. Hosting the annual SCM Career Fair was immensely beneficial in strengthening my network and directly helped me land my internship with Sub-Zero Group.

This spring semester has been nothing short of extraordinary, and it wouldn't have been possible without the support of the Center. I was able to participate in the NYC National Retail Foundation Student Program, which connected me to mentors in the retail space and further developed my understanding of AI implementation. The Center also sponsored and supported me through the NASPO Procurement Case Competition and the Operations Stimulus Case Competition. The highlight of my sophomore year was the Global Supply Chain Experience in Germany over spring break. This was an opportunity that wouldn't have been possible without the Center.

My time as a member of the Center has been a highlight of my college experience! As I enter a new chapter ahead as President of the Supply Chain Club, I am excited to strengthen this community and continue to shape the future of SCM at UW-Madison.



Aiden Nelsen

The Junior Jam

Anna McDermott (BBA '27)

Beginning my studies at UW-Madison, I had limited knowledge of the areas of business I wanted to explore. Early in the second semester of my freshman year, I attended a Target speaker event hosted by the Supply Chain Club, initially out of general curiosity after a long day of classes. Between the clear excitement from the speakers and the positive supply chain faculty and student presence, I knew I wanted to learn more. Following this experience, I decided to declare a major in supply chain management, setting me on a new path that ultimately opened the door to many opportunities.

This past year, I was lucky enough to participate in many great experiences the Center had to offer. Last winter, I went on the Global Experience trip to Norway, where I learned about the energy industry from a sustainability perspective. From cold plunges in the North Sea to company visits with some of the top oil distributors in the world, I built friendships with other supply chain students and grew my interest in sustainable supply chain management.

This past fall, I traveled to Arkansas for the annual Women Impacting Supply Chain Excellence (WISE) conference, where I had the opportunity to learn alongside students studying supply chain around the U.S. and connect with inspiring industry leaders who are actively shaping the future of supply chain management. It was here that I truly recognized the impact of strong women in the field today.

Looking ahead to my senior year, I am excited to serve as VP of Finance for WISE and to share the passion for supply chain that I have developed over the past three years. The Center has been pivotal in my career growth, and I am beyond grateful for the supportive environment and meaningful connections the Center fosters, both of which have played a significant role in my development.



Anna McDermott

The Senior Synopsis

Duy Dao (BBA '26)

My four years at the Wisconsin School of Business have been defined by a single, consistent conviction: Supply Chain Management was the right fit from the beginning. The discipline appealed to me because it is close to engineering without the heavy mathematics and blends systems thinking, logistics, and operations in a way that genuinely excites me. That clarity of purpose shaped every decision I made throughout my undergraduate career.

At the center of my business school experience was the Center itself, a hub that connected students to faculty, industry, and one another. It was there that I first met Jake Dean during an event designed to help students explore possible majors, a conversation that helped confirm the direction in which I was already leaning. Later, a visit to Blake Bishop's office deepened that connection and gave me a clearer sense of what the program could offer. Those early relationships became anchors for my entire time here.

My first formal step into the major came through MKT/OTM 421 Fundamentals of Supply Chain Management, taught by Verda Blythe. That course did more than introduce me to foundational concepts, it reinforced and expanded the reasoning behind my choice of major. I learned how supply chain touches every part of a business and why getting it right matters at scale. The analytical and strategic frameworks I encountered in that class stayed with me through every subsequent course.

If my coursework provided the intellectual foundation, the case competitions gave me a place to test it under real conditions. Competing in the KOHLER, W.W. Grainger, and Colorado State University case competitions pushed each team to apply supply chain principles to genuine business problems - working under pressure, defending recommendations, and thinking through tradeoffs.

Among the most memorable moments of the program was Pete Lukszys' tour of New Glarus Brewery. What made it stand out was not simply seeing operations up close, but watching how concepts from the classroom showed up in a real production environment. It is one thing to study a process; it is another to walk through one and understand the decisions embedded in every step.

As I approach graduation in May 2026, I have made the deliberate choice to apply to graduate school here at the Wisconsin School of Business. That decision is rooted in more than academic momentum. The relationships I have built with Jake and Blake over the past four years represent a kind of mentorship that is difficult to replicate elsewhere, and the opportunity to remain connected to them for another year, to deepen what I have learned and continue developing within this environment, is one I am not willing to walk away from.



Duy Dao

Elkin Named Best & Brightest

When people speak about the Wisconsin School of Business's best students, Joshua Elkin's (BBA '26) name consistently rises to the top of the conversation. This year that excellence was recognized on the national stage as Josh was named one of Poets & Quants' "Best & Brightest Undergraduate Business Majors of 2026."

The prestigious recognition honors 100 of the top undergraduate business students in the country, celebrating not only academic achievement, but also leadership, character, and impact. Josh exemplified all of those qualities throughout his time at UW-Madison.

Josh majored in Supply Chain Management and Finance, while also completing Certificates in Data Science and Sustainability. Throughout his academic career, he consistently challenged himself while remaining deeply engaged across the Wisconsin School of Business community.

Known throughout the Wisconsin School of Business for his humility, work ethic, and genuine care for others, Josh made a lasting impression on classmates, faculty, and industry partners alike. In its feature on Josh, Poets & Quants included a simple but powerful quote from Teaching Professor Michael Hernke: "It doesn't get any brighter than Josh Elkin!"

Josh embraced opportunities both inside and outside the classroom, including participating in the Center's Global Supply Chain Experience to Germany, where students explored global supply chain operations, industry practices, and international business culture firsthand. He was also actively involved with organizations including the Wisconsin Consulting Club, the Ethical and Responsible Business Network (ERBN), the Supply Chain Club, and WISE.

What made Josh especially deserving of this honor was not simply his impressive résumé, but the way he carried himself every day — thoughtful, collaborative, curious, and always willing to support those around him. He represented the very best of the Wisconsin School of Business and the future of supply chain management.

The Center is incredibly proud to celebrate this well-deserved honor and cannot wait to see the impact Josh will continue to make in the future.



Joshua Elkin

MBA & MS Student Experiences

MBA

Raunaq Singh (MBA '26)

As my second year in the MBA program at the Wisconsin School of Business comes to a close, I want to express my deep gratitude to the Wisconsin School of Business and the Center. As an international student in the US, the support from my classmates and professors made Madison feel like a true home away from home. This program played a significant role in helping me build my foundation in business and supply chain.

Coming from a background in computer science and consulting, I initially lacked experience in operations. Through my classes and hands-on learning, I developed a solid understanding of supply chain and operations. More importantly, I was able to apply this knowledge in real-world situations during my internship at PS Seasoning and my role as a student consultant with Kimberly-Clark. These experiences allowed me to connect what I learned in class with practical applications.

Outside of class, I got the chance to participate in case competitions like the UN Sustainable Development competition and the TCU Supply Chain Case Competition, where my team came in first place. These experiences challenged me to think critically, work in teams, and address real business problems under pressure.

Some of my most memorable experiences came from practical learning opportunities, including visits to companies like PepsiCo and General Mills. Observing their supply chain operations firsthand helped me understand key concepts and how large-scale systems function.

Overall, this program has prepared me well for a future in supply chain. I am thankful for the experiences, the people, and the support that made my MBA journey truly meaningful.



Raunaq Singh

MS

Jane Qin (MS '26)

Time really flies. A little over a year ago, I applied to the Master of Science in Supply Chain Management program at UW-Madison. Now, we are getting ready for graduation. Looking back, I can honestly say that choosing this program was one of the best decisions I have made. Before coming to Madison, I had worked in international trading for years, so returning to school was exciting but also uncertain. I wondered whether I could adjust to campus life again, keep up with the academic workload and find my place in a new environment. This experience helped me realize that growth often begins when we are willing to step into something unfamiliar.

What made the program especially meaningful was the community around me. The students, faculty, staff, alumni and everyone connected to the Center created a supportive and approachable environment. The Center lounge was always filled with conversation, laughter and a joyful atmosphere, which made the program feel warm and connected. It was easy to ask questions, share thoughts, and learn from one another. That mattered a lot during a fast-paced program filled with coursework, projects, networking and job searching.

One of the most memorable parts of the program was the access we had to supply chain professionals. Jake and Blake brought industry voices into the classroom, onto campus and through events, which helped us connect academic learning with real business experience. Those conversations gave me a clearer picture of the career path I want to pursue and helped me see supply chain as a system built on people, data, relationships and execution. My time at the Center and the University of Wisconsin-Madison will always be a cherished part of my life. I am proud to be part of the Badger community.



Jane Qin

Two Organizations. One Strong Community.

Peter Sansted (BBA '26) and Hailey Mehta (BBA '26)

From idea to organization: The launch of SCC and WISE as official RSOs

Supply chain students at UW-Madison have long had access to great faculty, rigorous coursework, and the resources of the Center. What was missing was a centralized student home. A place where students could build community through mentorship, track their professional development, and host new events for peers to engage with. In May 2025, in collaboration with Hailey Mehta (BBA '26), Peter Sansted (BBA '26), and Blake Bishop, that gap was filled with the formal launch of the Supply Chain Club (SCC) and Women Impacting Supply Chain Excellence (WISE) as Registered Student Organizations (RSOs).

Two organizations, two distinct missions

From the start, SCC and WISE were designed with complementary but distinct purposes. The SCC centers on professional development and industry education, giving members a platform to engage with career opportunities, compete in case competitions, hear from industry professionals, and build the networks that lead to internships and full-time roles. For many members, being part of SCC means they can point to something concrete on their resume and speak to real experiences in interviews.

WISE takes a different but equally important focus: personal development. It exists to support, empower, and connect students through mentorship, community-building, and programming that goes beyond the professional — fostering the kind of growth that shapes who our members become, not just what roles they land.

Together, the two organizations offer something neither could provide alone: a full ecosystem of support for supply chain students.

Why RSO status matters

Formalizing as RSOs was about recognition and reach. As two of the seventy six business school organizations and part of the broader community of 1,000+ RSOs across campus, SCC and WISE can now recruit at the university's org fair, promote events to students outside the SCM major, and formally welcome anyone with an interest in the field. Supply chain touches every corner of business and industry, and our organizations should reflect that diversity.

RSO status also gives members something tangible: the ability to list their involvement on a resume and speak to their participation in a recognized, formalized organization. That credential matters when recruiting season arrives. We are just getting started.



Chloe Lichucki (BBA '26) and Hailey Mehta (BBA '26) at the Student Org Fair.



SCC Board of Directors



Lilly Polakoff (BBA '26), Aiden Nelsen (BBA '28) and Peter Sansted (BBA '26) at the Student Org Fair.



WISE Board of Directors



A Strong First Year for WISE

Hailey Mehta (BBA'26)

Women Impacting Supply Chain Excellence (WISE) had a year of tremendous success in its first year as a Registered Student Organization (RSO). Led by a driven team of students who are passionate about women having a spot at the table, we strived to create a safe environment for our students to share their concerns and ask genuine questions to industry experts. Our smaller sessions of 10-20 students allowed students to dive deeper into what post-graduate personal and professional life might look like.

Future Leaders Symposium @ University of Arkansas

In the fall, we had the opportunity to send four juniors to Arkansas to experience the Future Leaders Symposium (FLS) hosted by Dr. Stephanie Thomas at WISE - University of Arkansas. This symposium is designed to advance students studying supply chain management by connecting with industry professionals who share their personal and professional advice. Mara Campbell (BBA '27), Anna McDermott (BBA '27), Elyse Fernando (BBA '27), and Kayla DeBruin (BBA '26) were all participants from our WISE chapter this year. Anna McDermott shares from her experience:

"One of the most pivotal parts of the symposium was the number of women SCM leaders in logistics specifically. Knowing that there are strong women behind some of the biggest transportation companies and the networks of trucks that are traveling around the U.S. at all times is comforting to think about."

This experience allowed students to lean into WISE — both Mara and Anna will serve on the WISE executive board this upcoming year.

Speaker Events

WISE had several speaker events over the course of the school year. Some of them revolved around the culture and context of working in SCM. For example, we hosted Brandi Preston from CVS to discuss how to overcome barriers in the workplace. We were also lucky to host Jameese Olayiwola from Toyota to discuss the value of mentorship. This launched our internal mentorship program where we paired seniors with younger students. Seniors could provide insights about internship recruitment, networking and personal development while simultaneously learning about new challenges that arise with younger soon-to-be professionals. Amena Smith, a former Vice President at Keurig Dr. Pepper discussed what it means to build a community and a board of directors. These speakers were a big hit for students who are still trying to find their path and might not know their next step. Tanvi Shahi (BBA '26), a member of the WISE Executive Board shares:

"Having the opportunity to meet with a speaker like Amena was meaningful to me because the hardships she faced in her college experience are similar to those that I face currently. She took challenges and turned them into successes, and it makes it feel like I could do that too. It also helps that her time with us students extends beyond the 1-hour presentation. With WISE she created personal bonds with us that we can leverage throughout our careers."



Maryam Al Attas (BBA '28), Alexis Healy (BBA '28), and Sydney Redwine (BBA '28) at WISE @ Ulta Beauty.



WISE students with guest speaker Amena Smith.

Building a Community

At WISE, we worked hard to build personal relationships between our students to ensure we create a place that students want to return to. We hosted low-stress social events, such as vision board making, Valentine's Day card making, a movie watch party, and game nights. These events encouraged students to explore SCM even though it might have been too late in their college careers to declare the major. Evan Strominger, a senior at the Wisconsin School of Business found the WISE community:

“Since I wasn’t exposed to supply chain management early enough to declare the major, WISE was the most beneficial decision I could have made to expand my supply chain community and knowledge. I was able to learn a lot and apply it to my existing majors. Now, when I speak to professionals, I am able to share with them that I have studied and learned about supply chain management.”

Without the community portion of WISE, students like Evan would not have been able to leverage the supply chain knowledge while networking with industry professionals.

WISE @ Uta Conference 2026

We had the opportunity to send a few sophomore students to the Ulta conference hosted in Bolingbrook, Illinois. This event caters to students who are beginning their supply chain journeys and sets them up with everything they need professionally — headshots, resume reviews or industry snapshots. You name it, they got it. Alexis Healy (BBA '28), Sydney Redwine (BBA '28), and Maryam Al Attas (BBA '28) are all students who were able to join this conference. From it, they gained more exposure to the SCM world and WISE. In the fall, all three of them will be serving as leaders of WISE or SCC.

All in all, our first year as an RSO was a tremendous success. We expanded and impacted more students than we ever anticipated. I feel grateful to have served as President, connecting so many students and professionals. I look forward to passing the torch to Carly Redelsheimer (BBA '27) as the new President with an extremely talented board of directors.



Alumni Updates

Quraish Baldiwala

MBA 2001

Baldiwala, after successfully taking a startup to commercial revenue generation, joined Direct Supply as the President of Direct Supply Manufacturing Inc & Group Vice President Supply Chain in November 2025. Direct Supply Inc. is the undisputed leader in healthcare for the senior community serving senior facilities nationally with products, solutions, systems and facility construction/renovation. Direct Supply Inc. is 100% employee owned since its inception in 1985 and headquartered in Milwaukee with operational footprint in Asia and Mexico.

Andrew Barelmann

BBA 2022

In his first years after graduation, Barelmann joined ABB's early talent rotational program where he got the chance to work at three different manufacturing



facilities across the southeastern US. There he was able to connect with other Badgers at the company and work in roles and on projects spanning sourcing, procurement, inventory, advanced manufacturing and continuous improvement. Following his stint in the rotational program, Barelmann re-joined the ABB site where he first interned in New Berlin, WI, as a Supply Planner. There he managed a portfolio of 30+ domestic and international suppliers and led the procurement strategy of a product line ramp-down, realizing over \$500k in excess and obsolete inventory reduction. Quickly showing his impact in the role, Barelmann was recently promoted to a Category Manager position, where he now leads the local sourcing and procurement strategies for hardware, PCBAs, and indirect material.

Brent Boorsma

MBA 2013



After 14 years leading procurement teams at Johnson Controls, Boorsma recently transitioned to another iconic Wisconsin-based company - KOHLER - where he leads the global strategic sourcing organization. Brent, his wife, and four daughters will be moving from Waukesha to the greater Sheboygan area.

Ethan Carey

MBA 2024

Since graduating last year, Carey has been working as a Project Manager at AeroTEC, an aviation company specializing in testing, engineering, and certification. He is based at the Testing and Manufacturing Center in Moses Lake, Washington, and has contributed to several projects focused on testing new aerospace products and supporting certification efforts. Carey is also closely involved in the manufacturing side, where they focus on low-volume, highly specialized parts rather than mass production. Working at a smaller company has offered valuable hands-on experience across aviation, manufacturing, and mechanical systems. One of the most exciting projects Carey has supported was developing a propeller test rig for an electric aircraft engine in partnership with magniX and NASA. He is excited to continue contributing to innovative projects that push the boundaries of electric-powered flight.

Talia Choi

BBA 2017

Choi is a Brand Sourcing Brand Manager at Rust-Oleum and has served as an Associate Board Member for Chicago Mutual Aid Association.



Nicole Hanson

BBA 2014

Hanson is an Associate Director at AbbVie in the Office of Ethics & Compliance, where she leads U.S. compliance data analytics to support proactive risk management. Prior to joining AbbVie, she spent over ten years at Walgreens in various analytics roles supporting retail, marketing, & pharmacy. She currently resides in Milwaukee, WI, with her husband, their two and a half year-old daughter, and their dog.

Thushan Hemachandra

MBA 2014

Hemachandra celebrated three years with Emerson in May and is currently serving as Director of Global Sales Operations for Emerson's Flow Controls business unit.



Kelly Lamb
BBA 2020



Lamb was married in September to Ben Sciortino - a fellow Business Badger! She was also promoted to a Relationship Manager within General Mills External Supply Chain organization, in a new and exciting role centered on growth acceleration opportunities in the high-protein space.

Sam Nevins
BBA 2016

Nevins was promoted to Manager at Deloitte Consulting in the last two years and recently moved from Seattle back to Chicago with his fiancé. They bought their first home and will be getting married in July.



Michael Pappas
BBA 2023



Pappas recently finished his leadership development rotational program after completing his third year at a third different location around southeast Wisconsin! Throughout his roles (materials, analytics and logistics) Pappas had many great

accomplishments that have prepared him for a permanent position in supply chain planning. On the personal side, Michael just completed his second half marathon and was able to break two hours for the first time!

Skylar Rotter
BBA 2024

Rotter recently transitioned into a new role: Strategic Logistics Account Manager for Bausch + Lomb.



Paul Studer

Certificate in Supply Chain Management 2007

Studer received his MBA from Carlson School of Management in 2016 and has held various supply chain leadership roles at Target, GE, and Ecolab. He is now the VP of Supply Chain & Logistics at World Centric, a Certified B Corporation that produces compostable and sustainable foodservice and packaging products from plant-based materials and donates 25% of its profits to social and environmental organizations. He resides in Bozeman, MT, with his wife Rachael of 10 years and his children, Pierce and Maycee. Studer is active in coaching youth sports, golfing, hiking, and traveling.



Update your contact information with the Wisconsin Alumni Association!



Big Ideas in the Big Apple at NRF

Aiden Nelsen (BBA '28)

My time at the National Retail Federation (NRF) Student Program was certainly memorable and transformative as I consider my longer-term career growth. My experience began when I arrived in New York City and explored Times Square and Central Park. I also made a point to try some of NYC's best food establishments. Los Tacos did not disappoint!

The following morning we embarked on the initial day of the student program, which featured an opening presentation centered around the topic of navigating the early talent landscape in the Age of AI. This presentation featured Lorraine Stomski, Chief Talent Officer at Walmart, who emphasized the importance of leveraging AI in applications while still maintaining authenticity in networking and recruiting efforts. A huge takeaway I gained from this panel is that while AI might create job uncertainty in the short-term, there will be exponential job growth in both retail, technology, and supply chain management as a result of AI implementation. The presentation that was my favorite of the student program featured John Jay, President of Global Creative, Fast Retailing Co. He explored the

topic of what makes life better. We are all aware of how fast the world is changing, but John went as far as saying that we are in the midst of the greatest change in human history. What particularly resonated with me about his story and businesses was the fact that he came from humble beginnings. He didn't rely on flashy marketing campaigns but instead on everyday people to get to where he is today. This business strategy helped bridge the gap between the business and the consumer by focusing on human connection in addition to optimization and efficiency. He focused on learning about different cultures and gaining inspiration from individuals in order to meet their needs rather than just producing clothing. He left the audience with the question: Are you willing to unlearn in order to learn again? Especially with change all around us, I found that to be an important mindset to adopt as I pursue and navigate a career path within supply chain management.

In the afternoon session, I was able to participate in the breakout session: Integrating Technology and Supply Chain Solutions, alongside fellow UW-Madison supply chain students. This session provided insights into innovative and creative ways in which

automation is being implemented in supply chain at Best Buy. One solution they presented is a digital twin, which is a virtual replica of the physical supply network. This dynamic model allows for real-time updates from ERP systems, allowing companies to see and test their operations in a risk-free virtual world before making real-life changes. Beyond this, Best Buy has also begun to roll out autonomous robots and forklifts to transform its logistics network into a high-speed fulfillment network. By automating the most repetitive and physically demanding parts of the warehouse, they have successfully expanded their capacity for next-day delivery. The first day of the student program wrapped up with Inditex/Zara USA President, Dilip Patel, who shared his powerful story of how professional growth has no limits. From working at the retail stores to running Inditex, Dilip has always set his focus on people. This comes in many forms, ranging from empowering them or offering new challenges for continued growth in their careers.

That night our group of students continued to explore NYC. Starting at 5th Avenue, we explored some unique and seemingly endless shopping.



UW-Madison Supply Chain Management students at the NRF in New York City.

From there we took the subway to the Brooklyn Bridge. It was really neat to see the bridge and city skyline lit up at night. We finished the night at a corner store enjoying New York-style pizza.

The second day of the student program proved to be more influential and memorable than the first. This was because we got to participate in the Executive Mentor Experience. During this time we were joined by an executive from various sectors of retail, including supply chain, logistics, fashion, and technology. Over the course of six rotations, I was able to gain industry insights and advice about how to navigate a career within retail and logistics. Using these new strategies and knowledge helped me to navigate the career fair in the afternoon. The second day of the program concluded with a panel discussion centered around the rise of

the next gen merchant. This PwC-led panel helped me learn how creativity, data, and empathy intersect to define the “merchant of the future”.

After the program’s conclusion, I was able to explore the Chelsea neighborhood, home to the High Line. This walking path follows the route of an old train track and provides scenic views of the Hudson River and unique architecture. To round out our trip, a few of us decided to go to the Hell’s Kitchen neighborhood to catch the Packers/Bears game. I will leave it up to the reader to form an opinion on the result of such an entertaining game.

I highly recommended this experience to students interested in the intersection between SCM and retail. I learned so much about how to navigate a career ranging from lateral moves and continuous learning to leveraging AI to your advantage. My

most important takeaway from this experience was to continue to be authentic in whatever you pursue and embrace change rather than run from it. Hearing from each new speaker also reminded me that a career path is rarely ever linear but instead has ups and downs. At each transition and position these individuals were able to use skills that they had learned to positively impact their career trajectory. I hope to remember this as I enter a job market unlike anything we have seen. Change is the only thing that is certain, but I believe this experience has done a very good job of preparing me for what I may encounter in my future career.

Alumni Advisory Board Meeting



AAB members, Center staff, and students.

The Center welcomed members of its Alumni Advisory Board (AAB) back to campus last spring for its annual meeting, bringing together alumni, students, faculty, and staff for a full day of collaboration, professional development, and networking.

After the board’s business meeting, students joined alumni for a series of rotating table topic discussions focused on some of today’s most pressing supply chain challenges. Small-group conversations explored the impacts of geopolitical shocks, climate-related disruptions, capacity

constraints, and reputational crises, giving students the opportunity to learn directly from industry leaders about how organizations prepare for and respond to complex, real-world issues.

The afternoon featured a collaborative supply chain scenario activity in which students and alumni worked together to analyze a business challenge and develop strategic solutions. The event concluded with a networking reception, allowing participants to continue conversations and build

relationships beyond the structured sessions.

The annual Alumni Advisory Board meeting is a cornerstone of the Center’s commitment to experiential learning, connecting students with accomplished alumni while providing valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of supply chain management.

Alumni Advisory Board

**Anton Adam**

J4 Logistics Data, Cyber, and Visualization Division, The Joint Staff, US Navy

**Eric Aurand**

Customer Behavior Analysis Supervisor, McDonalds

**Mallory Ballard**

Senior Sustainability Procurement Program Manager, KOHLER

**Ben Brandenburg**

Merchandise Planner, Salty Snacks, Target

**Dipika Garg**

Regional Procurement Manager, Bayer

**Pascal Haas**

Manager, Digital Core Transformation, Capgemini Invent

**Jeff Hodgdon**

Leader, Procurement Ethics, Compliance & Sustainability, Kimberly-Clark

**Andrew Louis**

Associate Director, Commercial Analytics, Abbott

**Will Meyers**

Senior Commodity Buyer, Palermo's Pizza

**Ali Petrick**

Strategic Sourcing Manager, Oracle

**Kevin Pickett**

Strategy & Operations Lead, Global Product Partnerships - Platforms & Devices, Google

**Jose Sanchez**

Process Expert, Supply Chain Design & Optimisation, Aldi

**Amber Sleichter**

Principal Business Insights Analyst, Synopsys, Inc.

**Corrine Vanevenhoven**

Lead Analyst, Supply Planning, Milwaukee Tool

**Megan Veriha**

Pricing Manager, Veriha Trucking, Inc.

**Kevin Vollmer**

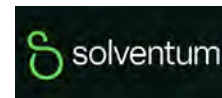
eCommerce Promo Planner, Kroger

**Grant von Paumgarten**

AI Transformation Lead
RJW Logistics Group

**Amy Walsh**

Materials Management Process Lead, General Mills

**Michael Walters**

Associate Upstream Product Manager, Solventum

**Kate Xia**

Technical Account Manager, Braze

Executive Advisory Board



Tim Babcock
Vice President, Inventory & Supplier
Performance Management, Grainger



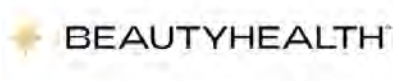
Sean Ketter
Vice President, Global Supply
Chain & Enterprise Logistics,
Oshkosh Corporation



Brent Rohrs
Chief Supply Chain Officer,
Stoughton Trailers



Gloria Guo
Vice President, Supply Chain,
PepsiCo



Sheri Lewis
Chief Supply Chain and Operations
Officer, BeautyHealth



Manuel Scavarda
Vice President, North America
Supply Chain Planning and Logistics,
Kimberly-Clark



Yvette Henry
Senior Vice President, Strategic
Sourcing, Regal Rexnord



Scott Morey
Director, Demand & Supply Planning,
WD



Eric Seip
Senior Vice President, Global
Operations and CSCO, Ingredion



Alli Jones
Director, Global Animal Protein,
General Mills



Michael Nasif
Director, Logistics & Network Design,
KOHLER



Chris Smith
Managing Director, Deloitte
Consulting



Executive Advisory Board company representatives and Center staff.

Making AWESOME Happen

Blake Bishop

The Center is proud to celebrate two students who were selected as recipients of the prestigious AWESOME Excellence in Education Scholarship this year: Carly Redelsheimer (BBA '27) and Lia Tabor (BBA '27). This national honor recognizes outstanding female students pursuing careers in supply chain management and provides recipients with scholarship support, professional development opportunities, and access to a powerful network of industry leaders.

Even more impressive, this marks the fourth consecutive year that UW-Madison students have been selected for this highly competitive national recognition — a testament to the strength of the supply chain management community and the exceptional talent of our students.

Carly is majoring in Supply Chain Management and Operations & Technology Management with a minor in Spanish. After arriving at UW-Madison without a specific major in mind, Carly discovered SCM early in her college career and quickly immersed herself in the field through case competitions, leadership opportunities, and professional development experiences.

She currently serves as VP of Outreach for Women Impacting Supply Chain Excellence (WISE), where she helps coordinate speaker events and industry partnerships that support the career development of fellow students. During the 2026–2027 academic year, Carly will serve as President of WISE, continuing her commitment to building community and empowering future women leaders in supply chain. Carly also represented UW-Madison at both the WISE Future Leaders Symposium hosted by the University of Arkansas and the WISE @ Ulta Beauty Building Your Path to Excellence Symposium.

Professionally, Carly gained experience as a Supply Chain Intern with Daikin Applied Americas, where she worked on supplier warranty processes, supplier compliance, and operational



improvement initiatives that identified significant cost-saving opportunities.

Distinguished Teaching Faculty Verda Blythe says: “Carly and Lia are high-performing students and leaders at the Wisconsin School of Business and at the Grainger Center. Specifically related to this award is their work to introduce women to, and advance in, the supply chain profession through the AWESOME and WISE organizations. It has been a pleasure working with Lia and Carly for 2+ years as an advisor and instructor, and they are both highly deserving of this recognition.”

Lia Tabor is majoring in Supply Chain Management and Operations & Technology Management while also pursuing studies in Sustainability and French. Her passion for supply chain began in an unexpected way: through a sticker business she launched during high school. What started as a creative outlet evolved into hands-on experience with global sourcing, procurement, logistics, supplier communication, and entrepreneurship.

Since arriving at UW-Madison, Lia has become deeply involved across campus and within the Center community. She currently serves as VP of Finance for WISE and

has held multiple leadership roles supporting diversity, inclusion, and student engagement initiatives. In the 2026–2027 academic year, she will serve as VP of Communications for WISE. Lia has also represented UW-Madison at both the WISE Future Leaders Symposium hosted by the University of Arkansas and the WISE @ Ulta Beauty Building Your Path to Excellence Symposium, gaining valuable leadership and industry insight through both experiences.

Professionally, Lia gained industry experience through her role with Seagate Technology, where she worked on reverse logistics, fraud mitigation, and operational process improvements.

Both students exemplify the leadership, curiosity, and drive that define the Center experience. Through their academic excellence, involvement in WISE, and commitment to advancing women in supply chain, Carly and Lia have already begun making a meaningful impact on the future of the profession.

The Center congratulates Carly and Lia on this outstanding achievement and looks forward to seeing the continued impact they will make within the supply chain industry and beyond.

Faculty and Staff



Bob Batt

Associate Professor,
Operations and Information
Management



Blake Bishop

Associate Director,
Operations and Information
Management



Verda Blythe

Distinguished Teaching
Faculty III, Marketing



Tim Buhl

Senior Lecturer,
Marketing



Kaitlin Daniels

Assistant Professor,
Operations and
Information Management



Jake Dean

Teaching Faculty III,
Operations and Information
Management
Director



Greg DeCroix

Grainger Professor,
Operations and Information
Management
Academic Director



Jan B. Heide

Michael E. Lehman
Distinguished Chair,
Marketing



Tarun Kushwaha

Irwin Maier Professor,
Marketing



Azuri Lawson

Student Employee



Xiaoyang Long

Associate Professor,
Operations and Information
Management



Peter B. Luksysz

Distinguished Lecturer,
Operations and Information
Management



Nick Petruzzi

Professor, Operations and
Information Management.
Senior Associate Dean



Jordan Tong

Professor and Department
Chair, Operations and
Information Management



GRAINGER CENTER for
SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
UMS

975 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706

Academic Director.....Greg DeCroix
Director.....Jake Dean
Associate DirectorBlake Bishop
Student EmployeeAzuri Lawson

Supply Chain Update is produced with funds made available by the Grainger Center for Supply Chain Management Opportunity Fund.

Be Part of Our Impact - Contribute Today

Each year the Center hosts a variety of applied learning events, welcomes guest speakers, organizes case competitions, and conducts information sessions. We also broaden our horizons by traveling internationally to offer students an in-depth understanding of global supply chain dynamics.

Additionally, we invest significantly in scholarships and study abroad financial assistance. These initiatives, and many others, are made possible through the generous contributions of alumni, individuals, and corporate entities. We deeply appreciate your support. Scan the QR code (or visit go.wisc.edu/xOpt21) to make a difference for future Badger supply chain management majors. Thank you!

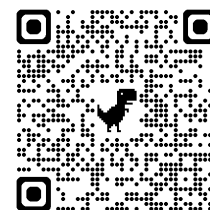


If you are interested in discussing a larger donation or sponsorship, please email Jake Dean at jake.dean@wisc.edu to start the conversation.

Join the Grainger Center Experience

Top seven ways YOU can get involved:

1. Hire supply chain students for internships and full-time positions
2. Recruit at the supply chain management career fair, which will be on Tuesday, September 15, 2026
3. Sponsor a case competition (or other event)
4. Invite our students to tour your company
5. Be a guest speaker for a Lunch and Learn or a supply chain class
6. Serve on the Alumni Advisory Board or the Executive Advisory Board
7. Make a financial contribution



To learn more about these opportunities or to discuss other ways to get involved, scan the QR code, or send Blake Bishop an email at blake.bishop@wisc.edu.

SUPPLY CHAIN UPDATE
2025-2026

Managing Editor: Blake Bishop
Copy Editor: Lisa Collins