In 2011 it was agreed in the Bryan School that we would strive to be recognized as the premier business school among regional public universities. Our mission was framed with that in mind. Combined, our vision, mission, and values drive our decisions in the Bryan School. But what does it mean to be the premier business school among regional universities? Let me explain.

UNC Greensboro is both a national university by classification and reach, and a regional university at the same time. As a general rule, any public university that is not among the one or two primary universities, often referred to as flagship universities (think of NC State and UNC Chapel Hill), and that has a city or direction in its title is considered to be a regional university. Becoming the premier business school among regional public universities results from a reputation for great academic programs and great research published by the faculty members. That reputation typically translates into great rankings.

DEVELOPING REPUTATION

There are three key drivers of reputation for a business school. One is around students and programs. This area explains about one-third of a business school’s reputation. Key elements of this driver are enrollments and student qualifications, quality of the curriculum and the faculty, student support services, placement rates and starting salaries, and opinions of other faculty members and administrators around the US, as well as of students, alumni, and recruiters. We are told repeatedly that the quality of our education is extremely high, but we need to gain better traction with recruiters and get the word out about the significant value our graduates can bring to organizations.

Approximately two-thirds of a business school’s reputation is driven by the quantity of quality research produced by the faculty members. Many articles in top journals will raise the reputation of a school. Faculty members and administrators almost never see or learn about the academic programs of other schools, but they read the journals and attend the academic meetings related to research. Research provides visibility, and the higher the quality of the research (because it appears in the very best journals), and the greater the quantity of that quality, the higher the opinion.

Before you get disgusted and stop reading because you think this has nothing to do with educating students, let me say that you are mistaken. The purpose of research is to advance knowledge by developing and testing new ideas to help organizations and leaders improve. When executives and managers go to industry conferences and read articles in trade journals about improving some aspect of their strategy or operations, most times the root of that information was in an academic study or experiment that was published in an academic journal. Additionally, faculty members take the results of their research into their classrooms to share with students perhaps as much as five years before it is published in journals or reaches the textbooks. The result is that research provides students with a competitive advantage over other students whose faculty members are not engaged in research.

The third driver of reputation is promotion. Building reputation requires a comprehensive bundle of actions and activities. It requires a variety of advertising, PR, and outreach.

While there are many things we can do, the truth is that we need your help. We need you to tell others about the great education the Bryan School offers and encourage your friends and employees to complete their undergraduate degree, or a graduate degree, in our online or face-to-face programs. We need you to contact the Bryan School when you have thorny problems in your organization that need a consultant’s eye and objectivity (this is research for us). We need you to engage with the Bryan School to fill your intern and full-time hiring needs. We need you to serve as mentors to our students. The list goes on and on, so if any of these strikes your fancy, or if you have other ways you wish to engage, please email me at mcbanks@uncg.edu.

Warm Regards,

McRae C. Banks, Ph.D.
Margaret & Harrell Hill Distinguished Professor and Dean
Bryan School of Business and Economics
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Have you heard the one about those lazy and entitled millennials? Generational stereotypes are the basis for a great deal of humor, but they can be damaging for young professionals entering the workplace. While higher education has been focused on the millennial generation for years, many in the business community are still struggling to understand these younger employees. The Bryan School is taking an active lead in promoting dialogue with and about this generation through outreach to employers and participation in the National Millennial Community.

EMPLOYER OUTREACH

The Office of External Affairs in the Bryan School developed a series of “Ed Talks” to enhance relationships with local businesses. One highly-requested topic is the recruitment and retention of millennials. Lizzy Tahsuda, Manager of Career & Professional Development in the Bryan School, has researched the topic and shares her expertise on how employers can best connect with and leverage the talents of millennials.

“In just a few years, millennials are projected to make up over 50% of the global workforce. It is not only important, but necessary for employers to create strategies around this generation and recognize the value millennials have to offer.”
- Lizzy Tahsuda

“Research shows that millennials have unique qualifications that, if honed, can be extremely advantageous to an organization. However, employers can get wrapped up in the common stereotypes of this generation, which can deter them from seeing these skills. I encourage employers to try to understand the roots behind the labels, and learn how to work with millennials rather than against them,” said Tahsuda.

NATIONAL MILLENNIAL COMMUNITY

The National Millennial Community (NMC) was founded in 2015 by Bill Imada, Chairman and Chief Connectivity Officer of IW Group. He felt a need to change the conversation about the millennial generation, so he sought out high-quality students from lesser-known universities who he felt deserved a voice. The Bryan School was invited to represent the state of North Carolina.

Lasse Palomaki, first-year MBA student; Jim Skinner, first-year MBA student; and Jade Murphy, a senior pursuing a BS in Information Systems were selected to represent the Bryan School. Junior Yun Kim serves as a program alternate this year, and will become a full member of the community next year. The students have participated in calls with executives from national companies including FINRA, BuzzFeed, and Bank of America. Students also have the opportunity to participate in trips to major metropolitan areas to visit a number of major companies. The students share their insights and opinions with businesses eager to understand millennials as both employee talent and potential customers.

Senior Jade Murphy has been the most active UNCG member of the NMC. She took part in a group event in Atlanta where the millennials visited and spoke with executives from Coca-Cola, UPS Capital, Edelman, and AT&T. She also traveled to Los Angeles in late January where she visited and spoke with executives at CBS Television, Warner Brothers Pictures Entertainment, Disney/ABC Television Group, Nestlé USA, and Walt Disney Imagineering.

Murphy said, “Speaking with executives who genuinely care about how we, as millennials, receive our information and what appeals to us was very eye opening. I believe 100% that companies can definitely benefit from some of the knowledge and talent that millennials possess. I thought that becoming a part of the National Millennial Community would help change the common stereotypes and stigmas surrounding the millennial generation - and it has!”
**THEORY INTO PRACTICE: HANDS-ON LEARNING ADDS VALUE FOR STUDENTS AND THE GREATER COMMUNITY**

Bryan School students enjoy access to a broad range of hands-on learning opportunities within a diverse mix of business environments. Through this coursework, they learn to integrate classroom theory and application with firsthand experiences, all while enjoying the flexibility to pursue their career interests.

“Our role is to prepare students to move from academia to practical business,” explains Assistant Dean for External Affairs Joe Erba. “We create an environment where they feel safe to experiment using their academic skills under the umbrella of the Bryan School. The students gain new perspectives on how businesses work and they come to understand the cultures within those companies, which enables them to form opinions about the type of firms for which they may want to work. Just as important, the projects give employers a chance to check out potential future employees.”

**REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES**

The project sounded simple. Students in the Fall 2016 Textile Products Production Management course were tasked with proposing a design improvement for two clothing items produced by VF Corporation. They soon learned that suggesting a change meant considering every cut of fabric, stitch, or button that goes into a product. They also had to provide rationale for the changes and then address the effects on materials, production, pricing, and marketing.

“We get the students out of the classroom and into the real world,” explains Consumer, Apparel, and Retail Studies (CARS) Department Head Dr. Nancy Hodges. “I find the opportunities incredibly important, especially as a teaching and learning tool. It’s something they can leverage when looking for their dream jobs.”

For senior Rachel Singleton, the experience expanded her view of the apparel design business. “Working with VF allowed me to relate what we learn in our classes to procedures and jobs within the industry and to understand the importance of the curriculum and how it will be used at our jobs in the future.”

“This project provided a unique opportunity to benefit both the students and VF,” says Kerrie Rogers ’11, VF Jeanswear patternmaker and CARS alumna. Rogers witnessed the importance of bridging the gap between industry and class theory while enrolled as an undergraduate student. “While the students received exposure to our company, processes, and job roles, we were able to see the talent growing in Greensboro by the students’ innovative design solutions.”

Senior Jessica Perry describes the VF project as “eye-opening.” “It is so different when you’re one person who makes a garment from start to finish compared to actually being in a company that produces a wide range of garments with multiple functions and attributes.”

Both Perry and Singleton emphasized how welcoming, supportive, and helpful their contacts at VF were to them throughout the project. The VF team was similarly impressed with the students.

“In my opinion, this collaboration between our Product Development/Pattern Teams and the CARS students generated a lot of energy and some great ideas that will definitely be shared with our design teams,” says Chattie McGill, senior product development manager with VF Jeanswear. “The students talked about how much they gained, but I hope they realize the profound influence they had on us as well.”

**A WIN-WIN COLLABORATION**

Just as students strengthen their marketable skills and broaden their understanding of various strategies firsthand by participating in these projects, statewide businesses and organizations benefit as well. Students in the Fall 2016 Advanced Marketing Management course collaborated with Fordham’s Cleaners along with three non-profit organizations—Work Family Resource Center, William Black Lodge, and NC Families United—to create comprehensive marketing plans.

“It’s valuable for students to have hands-on experience with marketing to see how it all fits together and what challenges companies face,” says course instructor
Sara MacSween, who teaches in the Department of Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Hospitality, and Tourism. “This project provided the four organizations with a fresh look at their marketing needs while providing students with a valuable experience. It’s a win-win situation for students, the Bryan School, and community.”

“I have often found that you can spend years reading books and memorizing theories, but the textbook approach lacks the true learning potential that would be offered by real-life situations,” said Stephanie Ryan ’16, who, along with a team of three classmates, worked directly with Work Family Resource Center to create a new marketing and rebranding plan.

“The opportunities I found at the Bryan School helped me prepare for thinking on my feet and remaining flexible while still delivering quality work.” - Stephanie Ryan

“We thoroughly enjoyed working with the team of students assigned to our project,” says Suzanne Isenberg, development director for Work Family Resource Center. “They were such professionals and were so thorough in their exploration of the marketing opportunities for our organization. The final marketing plan was stunning in its thoroughness and depth. We walked away with so many great suggestions—including a thorough SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of our organization, mass email templates, social media suggestions, and affordable advertising and marketing opportunities. We’ve already followed up on one of the marketing opportunities and plan to advertise with them this quarter.”

### HIGH-SPEED SALES

Students in MacSween’s Fall 2016 Professional Selling course went to great lengths demonstrating their sales skills during a partnership with the Martinsville Speedway. Blake Collins, the Speedway’s communications manager, challenged them to develop and utilize innovative sales approaches that would attract new NASCAR fans. The students employed a mix of strategies—social media promotion, email blasts, printed flyers, and word of mouth.

“The Martinsville Speedway and UNCG partnership is a great opportunity not only for the School, but for the students as well. With this opportunity, the students take on a business action plan while developing their own marketing and sales platforms in a real-world environment.” - Blake Collins

Throughout the course, the students conducted research, made sales pitches, answered objections, tracked the number of race attendees, and analyzed their follow-up techniques to measure effectiveness. The effort increased sales for the Speedway and raised $2,500 for the Bryan School’s North Carolina Sales Institute (NCSI), which promotes sales education and develops sales leaders through research, educational programs, and corporate partnerships.

“The Martinsville Speedway sales project was a way to introduce a real sales situation into our course,” said NCSI Director Jim Boles. “While it is not the typical sales setting for which we prepare our students, it did require them to put many of the skills we teach in Professional Selling into practice.”

“Before this project, the most relatable sales experience I had was selling Girl Scout cookies,” says senior Hannah Easterly. “I knew when starting this project that I would not be able to jump in front of cars waving a handmade sign to draw sales. I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of resources I had at my disposal. I soon discovered that many small businesses throughout Greensboro enjoy supporting students.”

Easterly found handling objections challenging, but she says the experience improved her active-listening skills and boosted her confidence as a salesperson. “Although my ideal career is not sales specifically, every business career involves some sales, even if it’s only selling yourself to employers or clients.”

The Bryan School’s learning community is characterized by a spirit of inquiry and a pursuit of continued improvement. Through these hands-on projects and community outreach, students grow into principled leaders and exceptional problem solvers with global perspectives, innovative mindsets, and a commitment to improve the organizations in which they work and the communities in which they live.
It was an unseasonably warm February evening as students lined up outside the JCPenney at Four Seasons Town Centre, eagerly waiting for the doors to open for the Bryan School’s inaugural Suit Up event. By the time the event ended at 9:30 p.m., 316 students had entered to shop for deeply-discounted professional wear. Many were buying their first suit. Sixty-seven students received free suits and accessories, thanks to the generous support of donors.

“I need a suit for my future profession and for what I’m doing now, which is trying to find an internship,” said junior Andre Hedgepeth. “I thought this was a great opportunity.” He plans to wear his suit for the first time at the UNCG Spring Career Fair.

The Bryan School is only the second school in the nation to co-host a professional dress event with JCPenney, thanks to a relationship that Manager of Career and Professional Development Lizzy Tahsuda established with the company while working at the University of Oklahoma. The store provided major discounts (averaging 70% off) on professional wear, while the Bryan School provided promotional support and volunteers for the event.

“Suit Up was a fantastic opportunity for students who may otherwise not be able to afford business professional attire. Owning a new suit to wear to networking events, career fairs, and interviews increases a student’s confidence when speaking with employers, and allows them to focus on their skills and experience rather than what they are wearing. We are grateful for our partnership with JCPenney and so appreciative of our donors as they are an integral part of the success of this event.”
- Lizzy Tahsuda
Seven years ago, Dr. Vas Taras was looking for a new way to teach international business when he launched a program called “X-Culture”. Since then the program has received international media attention and several awards, including a recent “Nurturing Employability” award from the Wharton Reimagine Education conference. This fall the program involved its largest group to date – around 4,200 students from 128 universities in 40 countries. It has also grown into a versatile research tool for those studying cross-cultural collaboration and performance in global teams.

X-Culture was created in 2010 when Taras was preparing a new international business course and thought it would be useful to partner with a professor in another country who was teaching a similar course. The students at both schools could work together virtually to experience the rewards and challenges of cross-cultural collaboration. Taras sent out a call through the Academy of International Business mailing list. What happened next was an early sign of how rapidly X-Culture would develop and grow. Within an hour, Taras received dozens of responses from professors around the world. In that first go-round, about 400 students from seven countries participated, with the number of participants growing every semester since then.

Here is how the program works. Participants are put into teams of about seven students, each residing in a different country. The teams communicate online using the same tools their corporate counterparts use, such as email, Skype, Facebook, Dropbox, Google Docs, and the like. A number of companies submit their real-life international business challenges, and each team chooses one.

A live webinar at the start of the program allows students to meet with a company executive to learn more about the business, industry, and challenge. Throughout the two-month process leading up to the final project, teams face weekly deadlines and, at the end, students are evaluated on more than 100 performance dimensions. Getting—and keeping—a place on an X-Culture team is not simply a matter of signing up. Students first must pass a readiness test. Each week, students assess their teammates to ensure everyone is contributing. Nonproductive students are excluded from the competition.

Last semester teams completed projects for seven diverse companies, including Reidsville, NC-based Plastic Revolutions. As the largest plastic recycling plant on the East Coast, the company faces dual challenges of finding plastic to recycle and selling pellets they make from recycled plastic. Students helped identify opportunities for expansion in both of these areas.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
Companies receive creative, well-researched, and well-reasoned strategies for moving forward, while winning teams and individuals can earn cash prizes and even land consulting contracts and full-time jobs. In terms of scope and scale, there is nothing else like it in international business education.

John Hagan, owner of Plastic Revolutions said the experience was very helpful. In fact, his company plans to work with the program again next semester to gain additional insights.

“"We thought some young, energetic students could help us. It’s been great. The students really got us thinking about and analyzing what we’re doing in a different light. They had great feedback and we were impressed with what we got. We loved the enthusiasm. This new generation knows all about sustainability."

- John Hagan

In 2013, X-Culture added an annual symposium for top X-Culture participants. The 2016 symposium, co-organized with the Academy of International Business, was held aboard a cruise ship based out of Tampa. Before the conference, the top 50 students from the academic year participated in three webinars to prepare their presentations. Once on board the ship they took part in professional development sessions, then presented their reports to representatives from Sykes (the world’s largest process outsourcing company) and Forcier (a company specializing in research and development in Africa).

Early on Taras realized that, with its strong participation around the globe, X-Culture could help researchers study how people function in teams, particularly global virtual teams. Research has now become a key part of X-Culture efforts. “We collect an enormous amount of data each semester on what affects a team’s performance—personality types, cultural intelligence, leadership skills,” Taras says. “No one else in the world has this kind of data on international teams.” Taras is planning to encourage scholarly research utilizing those data by hosting a research “hack-a-thon” for academics each summer. He hopes to invite international business professors to the first event this summer at UNCG.

Another new component of the X-Culture program will be educational travel opportunities related to international business. This summer, students will have the opportunity to take part in a trip to Miami, FL where they will meet with executives from Hard Rock International, tour the port of Miami and the Miami airport, take part in professional development workshops, and meet with community leaders.

“What started out as an attempt to add an experiential project for an international business course has led to a global partnership of hundreds of educators and researchers, tens of thousands of students, and dozens of businesses,” said Taras. “We have a clear vision, a detailed plan, and a schedule to change three industries: business education, research, and consulting, by replacing the archaic ways of one-way communication with a much more effective large-scale open-source collaboration.”

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Does your company have a business challenge that would make a good case for an X-Culture competition? X-Culture is particularly interested in projects with a strong international focus, such as companies seeking to expand into new markets.

Nonstudent professionals are welcome to participate in X-Culture competitions. Sign up to test and augment your own skills or encourage your employees to do so.

Do you have ideas related to teamwork or cross-cultural interactions that you would like to study? X-Culture may be able to assist you with data collection.

For more information, contact Dr. Vas Taras at v_taras@uncg.edu or 336.256.8611.
The Bryan School’s 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award was presented to Steve Strader during the annual Emeritus Advisor Society and Awards Dinner in September. This annual award is presented to alumni who have achieved outstanding success in business. The award recognizes exceptional achievement and significant contribution to the recipient’s profession and to the business community.

Steve Strader received both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in business studies from the Bryan School. His career began in corporate and commercial banking, where he spent 20 years in progressively responsible positions with NCNB, NationsBank, and Bank of America. He moved to the automobile industry with Driver’s Mart Worldwide (later acquired by AutoNation) where he ultimately became Senior Vice President of Retail Operations.

Over his career in both banking and the automotive industries, Steve was often assigned to areas where the business was underperforming. He developed a reputation as a turnaround expert. Steve also embodies the UNCG motto of Service, and has been involved with a wide range of philanthropic and volunteer causes.

“The Bryan School has a tremendous number of very impressive alumni, so to stand out among this group is truly something remarkable. Steve built an outstanding career as a problem solver while also serving his community. We are proud to honor him.” - Dean Mac Banks

BRYAN STUDENTS RECOGNIZED AS SPARTANS OF PROMISE

At the UNCG Alumni of Distinction Awards dinner leading up to homecoming, ten outstanding UNCG seniors were presented with the third annual Spartans of Promise awards in recognition of their exceptional achievement in both academic and service endeavors. This year, half of the Spartans of Promise came from the Bryan School.

HUGO COICAUD
Finance Major with a Minor in Economics from Le Havre, France
Member of the UNCG men’s soccer team, Spartan Investment Club, and Lloyd International Honors College
Career Objective: Work in the asset management industry before establishing his own investment management company

ROUVEN WAHLFEDLT
International Business Major from Welbert, Germany
Captain of the UNCG men’s soccer team, member of Lloyd International Honors College, member of the Golden Chain Honor Society, active volunteer for a number of youth sports camps
Career Objective: To become a business consultant

ANTONIO ROBERSON
Information Systems and Supply Chain Management Major with a Minor in Communication Studies from Charlotte, NC
Active with Activities & Campus Events, Peer Academic Leader, active community volunteer, recipient of the EUC Employee of the Year Leadership Award and the NCDVA Scholarship
Career Objective: Career in information technology or marketing/public relations

OLIVIA ROBINSON
Business Administration Major with a concentration in Human Resources from Wilkesboro, NC
Student Government Association, Spartan Orientation Staff Leader, Peer Academic Leader, Bryan School scholarship recipient
Career Objective: Work in hospital and health management leading to owning her own assisted living facility for the elderly

ANTONIO SOUTHERN
Business Administration Major with a concentration in Human Resources and a minor in Information Systems from Greensboro, NC
Student Government Association Attorney General, Resident Advisor, member of the Golden Chain Honor Society, recipient of Resident Advisor of the Year award, active community volunteer
Career Objective: Obtain master’s degree in higher education and work at UNCG as an administrator
**TAKing BUSINESS across BORDERS**

Lasse Palomaki ’16 calls himself a collector of quotations.

Whenever he finds a quote that resonates with him, he instantly writes it down. Most recently, he’s been guided by author Will Durant, who famously summarized the words of Aristotle in this way: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

“Every day starts from zero, and every single day provides opportunities for development,” he said. “Being successful is a habit, not just one single act.”

For Palomaki, practicing excellence meant returning to UNCG as an MBA student to continue to learn business theory, apply his knowledge practically, and grow his professional network.

A native of Finland, Palomaki moved to North Carolina as a high school student to study and play soccer. After graduating from high school in nearby High Point, Palomaki enrolled at UNCG as a student athlete.

“I heard UNCG had a very diverse student body, which was important to me as an international student. The business school had – and continues to have – a great reputation. It was the right fit for me.” - Lasse Palomaki

After graduating in May with a bachelor’s degree in international business and business administration with a concentration in human resources management, Palomaki decided to return to his alma mater. The Bryan School of Business and Economics’ mission statement, which focuses on developing problem solvers and global leaders, was a big factor in Palomaki’s decision.

Additionally, he was attracted to the way the program could be tailored based on his professional interests. Palomaki, who wrote his undergraduate honors thesis on foreign direct investment, is very interested in international business and organizational development.

“I love the fact that we can work across the world and it’s so easy to keep in touch,” he said. “I’m very interested in multinational companies, especially the collaboration techniques that teams within those companies practice.”

He’s also looking forward to continuing the close relationships he has built with Bryan School faculty.

“The professors have been absolutely wonderful. I didn’t expect to make connections like that,” he said. “In Finland, students typically don’t have the opportunity to get to know their professors on this level. At UNCG, I had relationships with nearly all of my professors as an undergraduate.”

Outside of the classroom, Palomaki serves as student president of UNCG’s chapter of Beta Gamma Sigma, an international honor society that encourages and honors academic achievement in business. Membership in Beta Gamma Sigma is the highest recognition a business student can receive.

His long-term goal? A career in organizational development consulting and, later, a doctoral degree.

“Organizational development is an opportunity to do what I really enjoy – help others learn and develop themselves – while working in the business world,” he said. “It’s the ‘golden path’ for me.”

Story by Alyssa Bedrosian, University Communications
Photography by Martin W. Kane, University Communications
When Jane Debbage was preparing to graduate with her MBA from the Bryan School in May 2016, she had a few job offers to consider. One was with a major Piedmont employer where she had worked as an intern. The other was from a small, family-owned business in Asheboro, NC. It was a major decision, and she took some time to consider what each position had to offer. Then she chose the job that she thought would give her the most opportunity to grow – she picked the small business, Thermaco.

Thermaco, Inc. is a leading separation technology company in the highly specialized field of oil and grease extraction from wastewater. Simply put, they create grease traps and other tools that allow restaurants and other commercial entities to collect oils and other harmful materials before they reach municipal wastewater systems. This is important because these materials can cause significant and expensive damage to pipes and other infrastructure.

Like most small to mid-sized businesses, Thermaco isn’t a household name. It is, however, one of the many important economic drivers in North Carolina. In fact, according to ReferenceUSA.com, 90% of businesses in Guilford and Forsyth counties hire less than 50 people.

Debbage isn’t the only Bryan graduate to find a fulfilling position at Thermaco. Marketing Manager David Lillard (BS ’06) has been with the company since 2010. Company president Randy Batten has been happy with the can-do attitudes that both Lillard and Debbage have brought to the 33-year-old company.

“As a small company we wear a lot of hats and we do a lot of things together, and the onboarding process may be a little bit shorter than in some larger companies,” said Batten. “Jane was willing to roll up her sleeves and take on projects and responsibility. Even though she may not know all the ins-and-outs of our products and industry yet, she was willing to jump in and contribute right off the bat.”

Debbage said that one of the things that led her to Thermaco was this piece of advice from a professor: “Don’t choose your first job. Choose your first boss. That’s the one who will mold you the most.” She said that she views Batten and Lillard as valuable mentors who are helping her make a successful transition to the working world.

“I would want people to know, especially students in the marketing department and the business school in general, that there are a lot more opportunities out there at small and medium-sized businesses than I think they realize. There are a lot of smaller businesses that are growing, and that are looking for talent.” - David Lillard

“We know that by teaching students to become exceptional problem solvers we’re preparing them to succeed in a variety of workplaces,” said Employer Relations Specialist Bramley Crisco. “Working in small to mid-sized businesses not only gives our graduates the opportunity for career success, but it gives many of them the personal satisfaction of being able to stay in the Piedmont Triad region. We’re proud to help provide the human capital local employers need.”

Crisco is working to build more connections with small to mid-sized companies interested in participating in hands-on student consulting projects, employer spotlights, or recruiting opportunities. Interested businesses should contact her at bkcrisco@uncg.edu or 336.334.4159.
THE TEAM

It started in a dance appreciation class. Randy Wadsworth ’95 admits he signed up because he thought it would be an easy A. Instead, he gained both an appreciation for dance and a new friend in fellow freshman Damion (Dame) Moore ’95. They were both marketing majors and ended up sharing several classes together during their time at UNCG. They became roommates, then fraternity brothers. They shared the goal of graduating and getting corporate jobs, and they both succeeded.

“We both went our separate ways, but we stayed in contact the entire time,” said Wadsworth.

Randy spent twelve years with the Ford Motor Company, living in Mississippi and Tennessee before returning to North Carolina. He then spent seven years with Wells Fargo. Damion spent those years with Nortel Networks, spending a few years living in China and traveling throughout Latin America and Asia. Then, the company hit troubled times.

“I got laid off,” said Moore. “I was fortunate that I received a pretty generous severance package, and I had a choice. I could get back into corporate America and work for someone – which certainly had its advantages – or I could roll the dice on cooking for a living.”

Damion developed an interest in cooking at a young age, and worked in restaurants throughout college. He loved the hustle and energy of a kitchen, so he took a chance and started a catering business. There he developed, among other things, a collection of outstanding chicken dishes. In 2008 Randy and Damion got serious about the idea of working together, and started developing the plan for what would become Dame’s Chicken and Waffles.

GETTING STARTED

After starting their first restaurant in Durham in 2010, they used their success to open another location in Greensboro, and a Dame’s Express on the campus of Duke University. This year, they opened their first franchise location in Cary. They have also opened a production facility in Mooresville where they create their waffle batter and famous schmears. Their growth has been deliberate, well-planned, and self-funded, with a focus on quality.

“When we started off we had to be self-sufficient, because it was during the mortgage crisis and we couldn’t get a lot of money in terms of loans. We had to be creative in terms of bartering for advertising and those kinds of things,” said Moore. “We relied on our own abilities and skills from day one, even if it meant we had to take baby steps.”
“When celebrities call you to make a reservation, you know you have good food. So, we just knew it came down to management and maintaining the quality of the food and service,” said Wadsworth. “That’s what we really harp on.”

Their love for UNCG is reflected in the name of their company. Hinshaw Holdings is named after the residence hall where they lived. The duo both credit their time in the Bryan School and their corporate experiences for laying the foundation for their current success.

“I loved the Bryan School environment. There were a lot of group projects, great interaction with fellow students, and an open door with faculty. I felt compelled to work hard because I saw the effort of the professors and instructors and because my classmates pushed me.”
- Damion Moore

“We absolutely love UNCG. I couldn’t have picked a better school to go to, in all honesty. I don’t think my life would have been as good as it is now if I went to a different school,” said Wadsworth. He also remembers some words of wisdom from professor Lew Brown (now retired).

“He said, ‘I can teach you everything I know about business, but in the end it all comes down to common sense and making good decisions,’” Wadsworth says. “That stuck with me. Often, the solution is right in front of you. Don’t make it too complicated.”

They say that their time in corporate America gave them the skills to understand all aspects of business.

“It really taught me how they organized everything, how they handled their HR, how they protected their company,” said Wadsworth. “I learned all these things from working in corporate America and took that knowledge and brought it to my company. A lot of people look at us like, ‘You have a little chicken joint and you’re trying to run it like a Fortune 500 company?’ But you have to have that kind of confidence to be successful.”

**CREATING A LEGACY**

As they’ve built their businesses, they’ve expanded the ways they give back. They recently established a scholarship fund to help Bryan students who need an extra hand with books and expenses.

“Since the day we’ve opened I think we’ve given away more than we’ve actually put in our pockets. We’re high on charity. We have an annual volunteer appreciation event, and do things with domestic violence organizations. The reason we thought of UNCG is, that’s the foundation of it all. That’s where we all started, and we remember,” said Wadsworth.

“We thought about it and said we’ve been blessed, there’s no reason we can’t help a kid who’s coming along who needs books or whatever,” he continued. “We want to leave a legacy for our kids. Once we’re gone, that scholarship will still exist. Our kids will know the true meaning of giving something with a caring heart.”

“We often get asked about our definition of success. It’s not necessarily the number of stores we have or how much money we make. There’s more to it than that. For us, it’s how many jobs we create, what we pay in taxes for the community, and how our people grow and prosper. It’s not just monetizing what we do, it’s how we help other people fulfill their goals.”
- Damion Moore
North Carolina’s lush, fertile soil provides an ideal base for native and European grapes, and the state’s wine industry has seen exponential growth over the past decade. NC now ranks as the 10th wine and grape producer in the nation with an economic impact of $1.7 billion statewide.

In 2013, Bryan School researchers partnered with the North Carolina Wine and Grape Growers Council to develop a five-year strategic plan for the Council that identified key areas of direction including increased brand recognition, enhanced marketing efforts, focused tourism strategies, and support for regulations that equalize peer state advantages and manage costs.

“One of the hallmarks of the Wine Council initiative was to listen to the members and to hear what they were asking for so that we could get a full understanding of and respond to the industry’s needs,” explains Dr. Erick Byrd, associate professor in the Department of Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Hospitality, and Tourism. “We visited 110 wineries, many of which are located on old tobacco farms in very rural and remote locations.”

Byrd oversees these initiatives with Executive-in-Residence Sam Troy. They even coined a phrase for the family-owned wineries. “We call them mini-conglomerates,” says Troy. “They are growing the grapes, making and selling the wine, and running a retail and wholesale operation—everything that a large corporation does, but with a handful of people. Now the industry has a plan to work from, and most actions in the plan have been taken, allowing them to compete nationwide with the larger wine states.”

Larry Cagle, a Wine Council board member and owner of WoodMill Winery, agrees. “The strategic plan was the most comprehensive document I’ve ever seen for the North Carolina wine industry.”

Cagle’s 52-acre winery and farm has grown 1,000% since its establishment in 2007, forcing him to adapt to the challenges created by rapid growth.

“The Bryan School is our secret weapon, and they have been a huge asset in providing us with solid, unbiased information that allows us to identify problems and make long-term, sound decisions.” - Larry Cagle

Enveloped by the majestic Blue Ridge Mountains, Raffaldini Winery (Ronda, NC) resembles the winemaking region of Tuscany. Owner Jay Raffaldini has sponsored several of the seventeen project initiatives conducted by the Bryan School over the past eight years, including a business plan for his winery that won the 2014 Small Business Institute’s Project of the Year Award.

“The collaboration used a multi-level, multi-faceted approach,” says Raffaldini, a member of the Bryan School Board of Directors and a contributor to the initial concepts for the projects. “The industry is still evolving and doesn’t know what it needs, and the fact that you have the flexibility and bandwidth to attack these on a multi-disciplined scale is quite positive.”

Taylor Pittman was one of three MBA students whose capstone class conducted the groundwork and presented the award-winning report for the Raffaldini plan. “I chose the project because it covered a wide range of aspects of business. I liked the fact that it was a real project with feedback from a business panel. We had a one-on-one relationship with Jay, and he saw that we had ambition—and that what we didn’t know, he could teach us.”

To meet the offshoot demand created by wine tourism, Raffaldini is utilizing research provided by the report to incorporate Italian-style dining at the winery. “I think the key to a successful business is knowing what you know and knowing what you don’t know,” he says, “and I didn’t know anything about the hospitality restaurant area. I was able to provide my investors and developers with an independently-researched, turn-key plan for the restaurant, and the students’ findings helped me fine-tune the model going forward.”

“The wineries agree to work with the students because of the reputation we have gained with the Council,” explains Byrd. “The Council is open to our input, and they respond very positively. We support each other and it’s a good relationship.”
Mix career guidance and food trucks and what do you have? The Bryan School’s inaugural Back to Business event! The day-long event featured a series of informational panels for students, followed by an evening celebration to kick off the new academic year. Over 500 students participated in the event, with over 250 students attending multiple panel sessions.

“The purpose of Bryan Back to Business was to inspire career-readiness and professionalism in our students. Our goal was to give students access to industry leaders and professional role models to encourage them to start thinking about their post-graduation pursuits earlier. We also wanted to show our students that we value them and want them to succeed,” said Lizzy Tahsuda, Manager of Career and Professional Development for the Bryan School.

During the panel discussions, students heard first-hand from recruiters, graduate students, alumni, and faculty. The guests shared their experiences and advice. Each 45-minute panel was repeated at least twice between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., allowing students to find opportunities to balance their class schedules with the panel discussions.

“The Back to Business panels gave me valuable lessons and potential relationships with leaders in the Greensboro community,” said senior George Mihtsentu.

After the panel sessions, students met at UNCG’s baseball stadium for the Back to Business party. Party-goers were welcomed with free food trucks and music. In addition, students who attended at least two panels received a free Bryan School t-shirt and were entered into a drawing for prizes.

Students played corn hole, danced, and started building their Bryan School peer network. Students also had an opportunity to network with representatives from Speedway and Red Ventures, who sponsored the party.

“This event was amazing, and was an interactive way to connect with my peers outside of the classroom.” - Tyran Speed, Senior

“The feedback we received was very positive and it is awesome to hear students describe how the event has inspired them in some way,” said Tahsuda. “We are so excited to continue Bryan Back to Business as an annual tradition!”

GETTING BACK TO BUSINESS
Dr. Dora Gicheva is hailed as an engaging and dedicated teacher who understands how to make economic theory relatable for her students. She’s also a native of Bulgaria, a graduate of Colgate and Yale Universities — and the professor who uses desserts to make her point. It’s a simple yet effective way to teach the importance of investment. “I ask my students, ‘Would you rather have one cookie today or two cookies later this week?’ to get them thinking. Our money grows when we save or invest it, but so often we prefer to consume more today, which means having less in the future.”

The lesson sticks. One semester, Dora’s students surprised her with a cake after the final exam to thank her. “Now I make sure to share a sweet treat with my students at the end of the semester, after they’ve had to listen to me talk about desserts for weeks.”

INVESTING IN STUDENTS SO THAT THEY INVEST IN THE CLASS
Dora teaches courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. She has a reputation for bringing classroom learning to life in both. “What is of greatest importance in teaching is that students are invested in a class,” she says. “I remind them that economics is a social science. It is very important to me that they are engaged in various issues — be they political, social, or economic —outside the classroom, and that they are comfortable drawing connections between the material I teach and current events, scholarly research, or their career interests.”

To this end, she asks her students to read news stories. She then guides dialogue around what they read and see on TV, relating it to the economic theory they’re learning. Making the content relatable is very important to her: When UNCG Entrepreneur Day introduced her to the late Phil Rees ‘85, founder and General Counsel of Wellington Healthcare in Atlanta, Dora worked with the alumnus to arrange repeat visits so that subsequent classes could have the benefit of learning from him.

“Phil Rees discussed the long-winding road he took from member of a rock band to Bryan School economics student to highly successful entrepreneur,” Dora says. “His talk was the perfect combination of inspiring career success story and a first-rate account of the labor market in the nursing home industry, which placed much of the material I had been teaching in context.”

“RIDICULOUSLY SMART. KIND. DOWN-TO-EARTH”
Her student feedback shows that she is the kind of professor who both pushes and supports her students. “It’s always awesome to meet a professor, like Dr. Gicheva, who is so ridiculously smart, but also kind and down-to-earth,” says Zachary Blizard ’16, who will begin the MA in Applied Economics program at the Bryan School in the fall. “Her teaching style is foundational, challenging, and open. She puts a lot of time into making sure her students understand, but she also expects her students to push themselves and attempt problems that might be slightly out of their grasps.”

“Dr. Gicheva inspires me. She makes me view math in a new light. Now I see it as a tool that can be used to answer some incredibly interesting questions.”
- Zachary Blizard ’16

Her students see the many ways that economic theory can be applied to solve problems, and that’s the ultimate win for her. “Knowing that I have helped convey how versatile and pertinent the field of economics is constitutes a major reward for me.”
Step into a staff meeting with the new Office of External Affairs team and you’ll notice that the room is never quiet. Assistant Dean of External Affairs Joe Erba may tease the team about how much they talk, but he actually loves it that way. He’s a proponent of “intrapreneurship” – entrepreneurial thinking within established organizations. That comes with a certain amount of energy – and conversation.

The Office of External Affairs consists of 10 positions responsible for career and professional development, marketing, graduate recruitment, employer relations, executive education, and alumni relations. All but two positions were created or redefined and filled within the past 15 months.

So far, the team has put on new events including Suit Up and Bryan Back to Business. They have hosted company spotlight events, reached out to new employer partners, produced new marketing tools, and met with graduate prospects across the state. Within the next six months they plan to launch a new Bryan School web site and host a major event for elected officials and C-suite professionals. The team will also welcome a new professional development specialist focused on helping undergraduates.

“Our organization is focused squarely on helping to build the brand of the Bryan School in the eyes of our many external audiences, including students (past, present, and future), the business community, and our broader social networks. Our success is a result of our engagements,” said Erba.

MEET CRYSTAL JOSEY
cjosey@uncg.edu
336.334.3762
Crystall Josey joined the Bryan School in January as the new assistant director of alumni relations and event management. Her role is to ask alumni to engage. Specifically, she’s seeking alumni interested in speaking with current students, participating in events, and spreading the word about the Bryan School. Interested? Contact Crystal today!

MEET BRAMLEY CRISCO
bkrisco@uncg.edu
336.334.4159
Employer Relations Specialist Bramley Crisco serves as the contact point for businesses and organizations looking to partner with the Bryan School. She makes it easy for businesses to find recruiting opportunities and connect with classes for consulting projects. She can also help businesses take advantage of “Ed Talks” – short educational presentations on current topics.

Focused on Student Support

Bryan Undergraduate Student Services is the home for a team of professional academic advisors dedicated to assisting students in every step of their Bryan School experience. Through their designated advisors, undergraduate business students can access a wealth of resources invaluable to their academic success and personal development.

For Nadia Clark-Brown, who has been a member of the advising team since 2012, advising and empowering students is a calling. “From day one, this has been the job for me. Supporting students and being the catalyst for their development is something I love.”

From the first week of orientation until graduation, academic advisors oversee each student’s progress within their programs. Regular one-to-one advising meetings are held between students and their advisors, ensuring that students receive the opportunities to discuss their concerns and communicate their objectives, both inside and outside of the classroom. Advisors are well-equipped to provide essential advice and resources.

Topics discussed during advising meetings are personalized to meet individual needs. The discussions are based on the student’s academic status, course progress, major requirements, and potential concerns.

To assist students efficiently, Bryan Undergraduate Student Services actively collaborates with on-campus services and the surrounding community. Frequent collaboration allows the office to always keep students informed on the latest news, events, and opportunities that support their growth and development.

Ms. Clark-Brown’s words assure that student growth and success is in good hands. “It is a beautiful thing we have here. Our whole advising team has the same goal, the same passion – to support, guide, and develop our students throughout their journey, and to ultimately see them walk the stage.”

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Almost 20 years have passed since management professor Nir Kshetri made a career-altering discovery in a small village in Nepal. An assistant professor at Kathmandu University, he’d been working as a trainer for various projects sponsored by the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization, the German Technical Cooperation, and the Nepal Agricultural Development Bank. The goal was to help Nepalese farmers modernize the way they go about farming and selling their commodities.

“It was obvious that farmers’ lives could be significantly improved by helping them adopt inexpensive technologies and manage in a better way,” Nir says. His work set the stage for the research he would conduct well into the future: studying how the most advanced technology could transform the least developed countries.

Over the next 20 years, Nir became an expert in advancing technologies long before the larger population even heard of them: cloud computing, cybersecurity, big data—and one of the newest technologies of our time, the Internet of Things, which gives everyday objects network connectivity.

“With the Internet of Things, we can put sensors in cows, in soil, in streetlights,” says Nir. “We can design a sensor to do whatever we need it to do. Coffee growers in Vietnam, for example, are using sensors in root irrigation systems so that they can give exactly the right amount of water and nutrition. This greatly increases productivity. The sensors let farmers know how to improve their crops in whatever way they need to be improved.”

And now, they are affordable for everyone—a game changer, especially for countries with little to no resources.

**SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE POSSIBILITIES**

Currently, Nir is writing a report on the many possible applications of the Internet of Things. He hopes it will be his swan song. “The same technologies that can help big, multinational companies manage in a better way can also help less developed countries. There are so many possibilities to solve problems from pollution to healthcare issues to farming challenges.”

In short, Nir is constantly ahead of his time. Certainly that was one factor in the decision to honor him with Bryan School’s 2016 Senior Research Excellence Award in April. In addition, his work is recognized around the globe. He’s delivered keynote speeches all over the world, published seven books and countless journal articles, and received more than two dozen awards. Perhaps one reason for his success is his remarkable thirst for knowledge. Just consider his degrees—two bachelor’s, three master’s, and a PhD.

Nir’s desire to know more and to share his knowledge is passed on to his students, a quality that earned him two Bryan School Teaching Excellence Awards as well. He’s developed ten courses based on his vast experience in technology and international business. In some of the courses, he takes students to Paris and the Czech Republic to visit companies and study how organizations function in different parts of the world. He’s known for incorporating practical, hands-on learning experiences that prepare his students for real-world work settings.

“We have a high-quality student body. They are motivated and diverse. And the faculty is strong. We are a university very much focused on teaching and very much focused on research, and I have been happy to pursue both.”

- Nir Kshetri

**ABOUT DR. KSHETRI**

**Research Topics:** Cybersecurity, blockchain, big data-led economic and social development, global entrepreneurship

**Most Recent Publication:**

**Recent Media Mentions:**
U.S. News & World Report and SiriusXM Satellite Radio (Toronto studios, Canada) about NSA hacking

**Recent Presentation:**
“Escaping the Cyber-insecurity Trap”, at Pacific Telecommunications Council’s Annual Conference in Honolulu, HI (January 2017)
BRYAN SCHOOL RECOGNIZED BY THE PRINCETON REVIEW
The Bryan School of Business and Economics at UNCG has been named an outstanding business school by The Princeton Review. The Bryan School was named in the 2017 edition of the annual book “The Best 294 Business Schools.” In addition, the Bryan School was named #6 in the nation for “Greatest Opportunity for Minority Students.”

ALUMNAE RECEIVES LEADERSHIP AWARD
Bryan alumnae Becky Levin was named one of AACSB’s 2016 Influential Leaders. Launched in 2015 to honor notable alumni from AACSB-accredited business schools, the AACSB Influential Leaders initiative recognizes business school graduates for the positive impact they make on society, and the inspiring example they set for others. As a magna cum laude graduate of the Bryan School, Becky Levin built a successful multimillion-dollar executive recruiting business and worked to build diversity of race and gender on corporate boards. She and her husband Mark then co-founded the nonprofit organization The Possible Project. This Massachusetts-based youth program teaches high school students in at-risk environments how to start and run their own business, and provides experiential learning and mentorship.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD
The Global Consortium of Entrepreneurship Centers presented UNCG with the 2016 Excellence in Entrepreneurship Teaching and Pedagogical Innovation Award last October. The award recognizes the Entrepreneurship Cross-Disciplinary Program for its experiential learning component, focus on community engagement, and collaboration with the Integrative Community Studies/Beyond Academics Program (ICS) for intellectually and/or developmentally disabled adults.

DIXON HUGHES GOODMAN GIFT
The Bryan School of Business and Economics received a $165,000 gift from accounting firm Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP (DHG) to support a scholarship and professorship. The DHG Scholarship Fund will support scholarships for high-achieving accounting students in the Bryan School. The DHG Term Professor of Accounting will support a term professorship for a senior faculty member serving as the head of UNCG’s Department of Accounting and Finance.

HOMECOMING 2016: BACK TO BRYAN
Alumni were welcomed back to the Bryan School during Homecoming 2016 with the first alumni summit and courtyard party. Bryan alumni Joan Evans, Executive VP for Innovation and Transformation at Cone Health, and David Pruitt, CEO of Performance Bicycle, shared critical skills for emerging business leaders. With wisdom and humor they openly shared lessons learned during their paths to the C-suite.

Following the panel, alumni gathered for a party in the courtyard which featured live entertainment from “Liverpool: Carolina’s Beatles Experience.” Braving the cooling temperatures, alumni networked with fellow Spartans and reconnected with favorite faculty members. The event is expected to become a new annual tradition.

“The first annual Bryan Alumni Summit was a great way to engage Bryan alumni across the Triad and beyond in an evening of networking, the latest business insights, and live music. We had a fantastic turnout for our first year and the Bryan School Alumni Association Board of Directors is looking forward to expanding on this new tradition next year,” said Skylar Mearning, President of the Bryan School Alumni Association.

Learn more about opportunities to connect with the Bryan School as an alumnus by contacting Crystal Josey, assistant director of alumni relations and event management, at 336.334.3762 or cgjosey@uncg.edu.

FACULTY RETIREMENTS
Two long-time faculty members will retire at the end of this semester: Dr. Stuart Allen (economics) and Dr. Nicolas Williamson (marketing). Both have a strong track record of excellence in teaching and research and have positively impacted thousands of students. In fact, former students and friends of Allen have established an endowed scholarship in his name; friends have chosen to support Williamson with contributions to the Marketing Enrichment Fund. Gifts to either may be made at bryan.uncg.edu/give.
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN EXCEPTIONAL PROBLEM SOLVER?

“It is all about insight and belief. If you don’t see the root of the problem, all your efforts are worthless. An exceptional problem solver ought to believe in his or her people and himself or herself.”
- Guoyin Wang (Junior, Accounting Major)

“I have found that excellent problem solvers have the keen ability to listen to and observe from others. I don’t know what I would do without leaning on others in my team at work to collaborate on ideas and work together to develop the solution.”
- Jordan Hall
(‘15, BS in Business Administration with a concentration in HR)

“‘Analytic’ is one of the keywords. I’ve spent 95% of the time analyzing, 2% looking for simple solutions, and 3% coming up with possible solutions that I have in mind.”
- Harmony Luu
(Graduate Student, MS in IT & Management)

CONSUMER, APPAREL, AND RETAIL STUDIES CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

JOIN US FOR A GALA CELEBRATION!

Dinner, Silent Auction, and Fashion Show

Enjoy fashion designs by current and former students inspired by the department’s 10 decades of fashion history.
Friday, September 29, 2017
Revolution Mill Events Center, Greensboro
6:00 p.m.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

$75 (early bird)
$95 after August 1
Discounted tickets available for Young Alumni (2012 graduates and later)

Purchase tickets and find complete details at cars.uncg.edu