It's Good to Know That Someone Has Your Back

Connecticut Small Business Development Center Opens UConn Storrs Headquarters

Hall of Fame 2014
School of Business Rolls Out Red Carpet For Five New Hall of Fame Members

Giving Back in Pride
Gift from Nayden Family Supports Business School's Pursuit of Excellence

Insights on the Frontier of Marketing
New Digital Marketing & Analytics Major Reflects Emerging Communication Trends

Exploring Global Markets
UConn Executive MBAs Experience Business in South Africa

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN
BUSINESS BRIEFS
ALUMNI NEWS & NOTES
Education is a truly transformative experience.

While it is incumbent upon our students to take advantage of the many wonderful opportunities they have here at UConn, we—the administrators, faculty and staff—have an equally formidable responsibility.

Education is never stagnant. We must be mindful of the changing business climate, tap the expertise and perspective of our business partners, and consistently deliver the knowledge and skills that our students require.

We must embrace change. This year the School of Business will adopt a new academic vision to guide us in our preparation of future entrepreneurs, executives and decision-makers.

In consonance with the University of Connecticut’s newly adopted academic vision, “Creating our Future: UConn’s Path to Excellence,” we have identified the following four areas for emphasis: creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship; sustainability and risk management; analytics and big data; and healthcare management and insurance studies. All are vital to economic growth and solving the world’s problems, be they personalized medicine and genomics, data management or protecting our planet. These areas of emphasis help focus our attention and guide our growth. They engage us with our business community. However, they do not mean we are turning away from the core functional education that our students seek and our business partners rely upon in the traditional areas.

At the UConn School of Business, we strive to be a globally-recognized provider of exceptional managerial and business leadership. We believe that academic excellence in a modern business education requires a global perspective. Our many goals include identifying and addressing business challenges, and recognizing our role as a partner in the success of business development, both in Connecticut and beyond. We believe our new academic vision will keep us sharply focused on those goals.

In this issue of UConn Business, we have the opportunity to introduce you to a very special family whose generosity will enable us to continue to invite the most deserving students to our ranks.

Denis ’76 CLAS, ’77 MBA and Brita Nayden ’76 have donated $3 million towards the new UConn Basketball Champions Center and for scholarships for student-athletes, with a very generous amount earmarked for School of Business students. Read about the Nayden family gift on page 12.

The School honors remarkable individuals by induction into the School of Business Hall of Fame. Denis Nayden has already earned this distinction. In this issue you will also enjoy reading about five of our remarkable alumni whose business accomplishments, character, and dedication to others have recently earned them similar recognition.

While each of their passions and stories is unique, I’m sure they share the mantra of alumna Amy J. Errett ’79 (CLAS), an entrepreneur, senior executive, venture capitalist and philanthropist. When asked how she accomplishes so much, she said: “Well, I don’t sleep a lot … I get up early and go to bed late, and I try to make every day count.” Their stories can be found beginning on page 7.

Our Storrs campus is bustling with the addition of headquarters for the Connecticut Small Business Development Center, now located on the second floor of the School of Business. The CTSBDC provides free, confidential business advising to entrepreneurs who are forming, or growing, a business. We certainly believe this partnership will be advantageous for our students, our university and many businesses throughout Connecticut. Find out how companies are benefitting on page 4.

As the summer draws to a close, the School of Business faculty and staff are excited for this academic year. Always a busy time, this year it is even more so, as we usher in new programs in Human Resource Management and in Digital Marketing & Analytics, a rapidly growing field with tremendous employment opportunities. Read more about the latter program on page 6.

Best wishes to all,

John A. Elliott
Dean and Auran J. Fox Chair in Business
Faculty & Research

Tim Folta, professor and Thomas John & Bette Wolff Chair in Strategic Entrepreneurship, was named editor for an upcoming 2016 issue of *Advances in Strategic Management* on the topic of "Corporate Strategy and Resource Redeployment." Folta was also appointed to the editorial board of *Strategy Science* and accepted as a fellow to the University of Strasbourg Institute for Advanced Study.

Hongju Liu, assistant professor of marketing, presented a research seminar on advertising spillovers in the pharmaceutical industry on May 2 in the School of Business.

Bill Ross, professor and ING Global Chair, along with co-authors Saerom Lee (University of Texas at San Antonio) and Karen Page (Penn State), were recently published in the *Journal of Consumer Research* for their research on the roles of empathy and justice in charitable giving.

Data released by Academic Analytics for the 2009-2013 period places UConn’s Management Department in first place (tied with Penn State) in per capita scholarly productivity. Known as the Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index, this ranking considers the research activity of 186 universities nationwide.

The Association for Information System’s (AIS) Senior Scholars’ Basket of Journals ranks UConn’s Operations & Information Technology Department in the top 15 schools worldwide for research productivity over the last five years and 10th in the top two premiere journals alone.

Faculty members retiring from the School this year include Walter Dolde, Linda Klein, Gim Seow and Jim Sfiridis.

Programs & Initiatives

The MS in Business Analytics and Project Management (MSBAPM) Program has been listed among the most prominent big data and analytics degree programs by BI Software Insight.

The School was recently recognized by *Insurance News Net* for its adaptability to the job market in expanding business programs at UConn Stamford, as well as strengthening its ties with the business community.

Fiserv, Inc., the Savings Bank of Danbury, and Greylock Federal Credit Union have partnered with the Financial Accelerator to develop a business case for enhancing the millennial banking experience through leading-edge technology from Fiserv.

IBM is partnering with the School as part of a nationwide education initiative to help expand and launch new curricula, as well as provide students with business knowledge and IT skills for data intensive careers.

The Financial Management undergraduate major at UConn Stamford has been accepted into the CFA Institute’s University Recognition Program, offering students exclusive support from institute member companies such as Barclays, CreditSights, and Atlantic Asset Management, including access to a wide array of research and financial analytic tools.

The School’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program completed its 14th consecutive year with 68 student volunteers assisting 650 taxpayers in completing their income tax returns. The IRS-sponsored program provides free tax assistance and tax return preparation services for individuals who are economically disadvantaged, as well as for international students and scholars.

UConn’s new research partnership in sustainable energy with the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology was awarded a supporting gift from the Satell Family Foundation, founded by Ed Satell ’57.

The Association for Information System’s (AIS) Senior Scholars’ Basket of Journals ranks UConn’s Operations & Information Technology Department in the top 15 schools worldwide for research productivity over the last five years and 10th in the top two premiere journals alone.

Want details?
View all business briefs, accolades, articles and media mentions at business.uconn.edu/pressroom
On June 25, the Board of Trustees approved a Master of Science degree and Advanced Business Certificate in Human Resource Management beginning fall 2014.

As of July 1, the Full-time MBA Program and Graduate Career Center have officially moved from the Storrs campus to the Graduate Business Learning Center in downtown Hartford.

Student Achievements

Two UConn teams (out of 200 entrants) placed in the 2014 Connecticut Business Plan Competition: UConn Stamford undergraduates Karlian Brown and Christian Tovar won three months of free co-working space in the Stamford Innovation Center; and Michael Maczka ’14 MBA won a $500 grant for Best Oral Presentation and $2,500 in legal services.

Doctoral student Margaret Luciano (management) was awarded a Society for Human Resource Management Foundation (in partnership with the HR Division of the Academy of Management) Dissertation Grant for 2014 to support her dissertation research.

Recipients of the 2014 Departmental Ph.D. Student Teaching Awards include: Biyu Wu (accounting); Yihong Xiao (finance); Won-seok Choi (management); Selcan Kara (marketing); and Gang Wang (OPIM). Wang also received the School’s Outstanding Ph.D. Student Teaching Award. Margaret Luciano (management) received the 2014 Outstanding Ph.D. Program-wide Student Scholar Award.

Event Roundup

On April 8, the MS in Business Analytics & Project Management Program hosted a career fair in Hartford with representatives from 10 companies and more than 60 students participating.

On April 24, the Accounting Department hosted more than 300 guests at its annual honors banquet and awarded 157 student scholarships.

On May 1, the 12th annual Real Estate awards banquet honored 28 students, alumni, faculty and businesses for their outstanding contributions and achievements.

On May 22, UConn Stamford hosted the first International Haitian Diaspora Summit on Education and Business to promote education, business and cultural exchanges between the State of Connecticut and Haiti.

On June 18, the School, together with Vichara Technologies, hosted “How Technology Can Drive Your Performance Edge,” a 100 Women in Hedge Funds event at the Stamford campus.

In Memoriam

Ernest A. DiMattia, Jr. ’81 MBA, former faculty member of the UConn School of Business and president and chief executive officer of The Ferguson Library in Stamford, Connecticut, passed away on June 28, 2014.
The sudden death of her father was a horrible personal tragedy for Dorothy Carlone’01 MBA and her family. But for the 14 dedicated employees at General Machine Co. in Berlin, pain mixed with panic, knowing that the company Walter Grzegorzek founded might not survive without him.

“You could just see the fear in their eyes,” Carlone said of that day in October 2011 when she broke the news. “The economy was bad, they had invested most of their lives in this business, and they didn’t know what our intentions were.

“We had huge orders pending with Hamilton Sundstrand that we needed to fulfill,” she said. “At the very least we had to keep going for a few months until our employees could find other jobs.”

Almost three years later, the company is thriving. General Machine has bought new equipment, is purchasing its own building in Southington, and is poised to bid on military contracts. “The future is promising,” Carlone said.

A Helping Hand with the American Dream

The Connecticut Small Business Development Center (CTSBDC), a free and confidential program offered to businesses with 500 or fewer employees, played a large role in General Machine’s evolution.

“Our job is to help fulfill the American dream,” said Emily Carter, state director of the CTSBDC. “We are there for small-business owners through the whole process—whether it is getting money to expand or setting in motion a dream of owning a restaurant on Main Street.”

The program is funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and the University of Connecticut. The headquarters is now located within the UConn School of Business in Storrs, and there are 15 other locations in the state, many on UConn campuses.

In just the first quarter of this year, the CTSBDC’s offices had more than 400 active clients and fielded more than 700 inquiries. Carter hopes that as the program becomes more well-known, that number will skyrocket.

“We don’t have a typical day or a typical client,” Carter said. “We have people who walk in and say, ‘I just lost my job. I have a lawn mower and I want to start a lawn-service business’ to a professor who thinks he or she can cure cancer.”

The CTSBDC employs experts in everything from finance to agriculture, marketing to management, she said. Small business is and will continue to be the driving force in the economy, Carter said.

Time and again, entrepreneurs make a difference in discovery, innovation and creativity, she said. But often they don’t have the luxury of spending months mulling over a decision, researching a financing option, hiring experts, or assigning a team of people to investigate the best way to update a web site.

CTSBDC adviser Shelly Koehler was there
within days after General Machine called seeking help.

"Shelly took time to learn about our history, product line, present situation and aspirations," Carlone said. "She evaluated General Machine’s financial position and provided a detailed analysis of where things are going well, where there’s room for improvement, and where we can grow.

"It’s good to know that someone has your back," said Carlone, who is now General Machine’s business manager. Although she had earned an MBA from UConn in 2001, Carlone’s career path had been heading toward education prior to her father’s death. Her mother, Mary Grzegorzek, Walter’s wife, stepped up as president, but there were aspects of the job that she had to learn. Carlone’s brother, Ray Grzegorzek, helps with the business and is a full-time police officer.

"I was surprised that this much help was available," Carlone said. "You often hear bad things about doing business in Connecticut, but this is a great program and it shows that the state really wants to help small businesses like my own."

The family takes a great deal of pride in keeping Walter Grzegorzek’s work alive.

"I’m very proud of what my father accomplished," Carlone said. "He came here from another country, not speaking the language, and here we are... his little company, securing contracts with UTC and NASA. This is very important work. I really appreciate what he built."

A Light at the End of the (Business) Tunnel

Don’t let the name fool you. Pennsylvania Globe Gaslight Co., of North Branford, is a family-owned, environmentally friendly, Connecticut-based company that has designed and manufactured indoor and outdoor lighting since 1995. In fact, it is the exclusive supplier to the University of Connecticut campus.

As the president of the business, Marcia Lafemia has plenty to worry about—in addition to financing.

"We had a growth spurt in 2012 and that’s when we reached out to the Small Business Development Center," Lafemia said. The company had received a large order on a tight deadline, and needed more money for labor costs and new equipment.

CTSBDC adviser Christopher Pisarz helped the company apply for a $100,000 matching grant, which it received in just a few months. He also helped Lafemia prepare a new business plan and budget. In return, the company pledged to use a percentage of its financial assistance to bring contracted work back to Connecticut from out-of-state.

"In this tough economy, we appreciate any help we can get," Lafemia said. "Prior to dealing with the CTSBDC, I never would have thought that government could be so human and approachable."

Since 2012, Pennsylvania Globe Gaslight has hired three new employees, bringing the staff to 15. Last year, sales were up nine percent.

"We feel very fortunate to be the lighting supplier for UConn. We are a Connecticut business. I think people like knowing that they are paying their taxes and the money is generating business within the state," she said. "It’s just an overall win."

Financing is the Top Concern

For most small businesses, like Pennsylvania Globe Gaslight Co., accessing capital is the number one request for help, Carter said.

"Our teams know all about loan programs so the customer doesn’t have to devote months to researching it themselves," she said. "We have taken the burden out of that process and tried to cut out the run-around. Entrepreneurs want everything done as quickly as possible. Our goal is no ‘hand-offs’ and to decrease frustration for the companies."

Another goal of the CTSBDC is to help companies increase their exports, and trade advisers are available. The organization also offers emergency preparedness training.

"We’ve all learned it isn’t advisable to wait for the next hurricane to think about what the business would do if the data was lost or the power is out for a week," Carter said. "We try to prepare for business interruptions of any kind. The small business community is way behind in getting those plans in place."

The location on the UConn campus makes it ideal for both alumni and students, Carter said. She welcomes alumni who are interested in starting a small business, connecting with other entrepreneurs, or investing in a new company.

UConn students are also benefiting from the program. Currently the CTSBDC employs four student advisers who are gaining experience working with small business clientele. A student intern is helping with Facebook and other social media inquiries.

Long-term Care Required

Long-term Plan

Kristin Delfau knows a few things about juggling a busy schedule. She runs Delfau Tax & Financial Services, from her Danbury home, while taking care of her children. She is also the author of a book titled, Turbo-Mom’s Guide to Saving Money Without Wasting Time.
Insights on the Frontier of Marketing

New Digital Marketing & Analytics Major Reflects Emerging Communication Trends

The rapidly rising demand for digital marketing expertise and the accompanying explosion in job openings has prompted the School of Business’ Marketing Department to offer a new undergraduate major in Digital Marketing & Analytics at the Stamford campus.

Digital Marketing & Analytics students will learn how to use marketing analytics to gain insights into consumer behavior and to develop digital marketing strategies. The major takes a comprehensive approach that covers all aspects of marketing and includes developing strategies for creating, branding, and positioning digital products and services; dynamic pricing, digital distribution, social media and digital communication; and integrating digital marketing into a firm’s overall marketing strategy.

The new major supplements a certificate in Digital Marketing & Analytics, already available for business students at Storrs, and a minor in Digital Marketing & Analytics, offered to non-business majors at the Storrs, Hartford, and Stamford campuses.

“This will put our students on the frontier of marketing,” said Robin Coulter, professor and head of the Marketing Department at the School of Business. “There is tremendous excitement among students, faculty and the business community. We’re very enthusiastic about the curriculum and the abundant opportunities that await students who pursue these fields,” she said.

In fact, a quick check of the job-hunting web site Indeed.com found 25,000 marketing jobs, many requiring digital media and analytical expertise, all within 50 miles of the Stamford campus.

Lee Manning, human resources director for Coca-Cola Northeast, said the company recruits employees with digital marketing and analytics skills. “The world is changing at a very quick pace,” Manning said. “People have to keep up with the different types of communication. It is important to be quick and nimble in business today, and to stay ahead of the curve.”

For instance, Coca-Cola recognizes the importance of the growing Hispanic market and employs digital marketing experts to explore how its beverages are viewed by those consumers, what questions they may have, and the best way to target information to that consumer demographic.

Proficiency in marketing analytics is rapidly becoming a requirement for many marketing positions and the ability to use analytics to inform marketing strategy is central to leading marketing organizations. Graduates who can strategically use digital analytics to gain and act on insights into consumer search, decision making, purchase activities, and the success of marketing activities are increasingly in demand.

Bernard Gracy Jr. ’85 (ENG), vice president of strategy, Digital Commerce Solutions at Stamford-based Pitney Bowes Inc. said every company today either has to have a digital marketing strategy—or face extinction.

Pitney Bowes is a global technology giant that provides shipping and mailing solutions, data management and engagement software and location intelligence for two

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School of Business Rolls Out Red Carpet
For Five New 'Hall of Fame' Members

Five luminaries of the business world were inducted into the UConn School of Business’ Hall of Fame on May 2 at the Hartford Marriott, surrounded by dozens of family members, friends, colleagues and admirers.

Inductees included James V. Agonis ’71, retired CEO and president of AirKaman Cecil, Inc.; Kevin A. Bouley ’80, president and CEO of Nerac, Inc.; Joanne L. DeBlasis ’76, ’83 MBA, president, Accident & Health Division, Navigators RE; Amy J. Errett ’79 (CLAS), CEO and co-founder of Madison Reed; and Lisa Klauser ’90, president, Shopper and Consumer Marketing, Integrated Marketing Services.

In addition to their remarkable and inspiring business careers, the inductees have all been leaders in their communities, said John A. Elliott, dean of the School of Business. The inductees spoke briefly about their career journeys and how UConn shaped both their professional and personal lives. They join more than 100 other alumni who have been recognized since 1993.
Retired CEO James Agonis Finds New Purpose In Helping Abused, Drug-Addicted Costa Rican Orphans

Throughout his successful career, including serving as president of his own company, UConn alumnus James Agonis ’71, dealt with giants of the defense industry.

Ten years after his retirement, his focus has switched to abused and defenseless children, who are trying to establish a happy childhood in a Costa Rican orphanage.

"Most of the times when I visit the orphanage, I go out in the backyard and cry like a baby because of the horrible things these children have experienced," said Agonis, who is the principal supporter of the Hogar Cuna orphanage.

Some of the 18 children who live there have been attacked by their own family members, have lost both parents in car crashes, or were born addicted to heroin.

"I pick them up and I hug them until I finally have to put them down because my arms are sore and I can’t do it anymore," said Agonis, the retired CEO and president of AirKaman Cecil Inc. of Jacksonville, Florida.

With unwavering tenacity, Agonis earned a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the School of Business in 1971. It took him seven years to complete his degree because he often had to take semesters off to wait tables to earn enough money to pay for additional schooling. "I’m extremely proud of my UConn education," he said. "UConn provided the foundation, and I’ll be forever grateful to its faculty and advisers for my success."

Agonis and his wife, Glenna, presented a $100,000 gift to the Accounting Endowment for Excellence in the School of Business in 2011. "I have tremendous empathy for the student struggling with academics because of an after-school job," he said. "It would be my dream to help someone like that get through school."

With his finance and accounting skills, Agonis worked for the federal government and then spent 20 years with Kaman Aerospace Corp., a Fortune 500 company and defense contractor in Bloomfield, progressing to group vice president. He then formed his own company, AirKaman Cecil, a fixed-base operator managing the daily functions of an airport in Jacksonville, Florida. Customers included Boeing, Grumman, the Navy and Coast Guard. AirKaman Cecil experienced tremendous growth under Agonis’ leadership, which he credits to strategic management, innovative marketing and customer relations.

He and his wife now enjoy family, traveling, international big-game fishing and watching UConn basketball. Agonis also donated $125,000 to establish a scholarship fund named in honor of UConn women’s basketball Assistant Coach Chris Dailey.

"I have watched Chris Dailey for more than 20 years, and to me there is no better person in women’s basketball," he said.

"She’s the most selfless person, working in the background, being a mentor, coach and friend."

Kevin Bouley’s Passion Is Promoting Connecticut’s Brainpower, Creativity, Inventions

It was supposed to be Kevin A. Bouley’s moment in the spotlight.

But instead of highlighting his own professional achievements at the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, Bouley ’80, took the opportunity to praise some people he admires.

Alicia Echevarria ’13 (ENG), he said, is designing a new bridge column that is more resilient during earthquakes. Eric Sirois ’09 (ENG) is developing a trans-catheter, aortic-valve technology. And Michael Zilm (ENG) is creating biomimetic bone scaffolding. All three aspiring entrepreneurs are graduate students from UConn’s School of Engineering.

"There is an emerging culture of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship taking root at UConn," Bouley said. Partnerships between various disciplines and schools within the university are reaping amazing results.

"We need to leverage the state’s investment in our system of higher education and use it to build our economic future via new innovations," he said. "The potential economic benefits of new technologies being commercialized in Connecticut… are enormous."
Bouley is the president and CEO of Nerac, a research and advisory firm for companies developing innovative products and services. Based in Tolland, Nerac’s team of analysts address corporate concerns ranging from intellectual property strategies, to competitive business threats, and scientific reviews.

Bouley earned his Bachelor of Science degree in finance in 1980. He became vice president of Nerac in 1987, and maintained that position until acquiring the company 12 years later. Under his direction, Nerac has enjoyed strong growth, more than doubling in size.

Nerac has five times been named to the Deloitte & Touche prestigious Technology Fast 50 program for Connecticut, a ranking of the 50 fastest growing tech companies in the state.

Bouley is also an active "angel investor," nurturing innovation, investing money and resources in start-ups, many of which are hosted within Nerac’s building. He works regularly with UConn’s School of Business and School of Engineering, alumni and members of the local business community to bring more business-development programs to fruition by connecting entrepreneurs and potential investors.

"I have reached an age where I care less about my resume and more about leaving a legacy to the next generation," he said. "A critical component of this legacy is to inspire, teach and mentor students and other budding entrepreneurs in Connecticut."

He envisions the Tolland business corridor, including UConn, as a regional destination and growing hub of entrepreneurial activity, drawing the best and brightest. He would also like to see a rebirth of manufacturing in the state.

Bouley has served on many technology and business associations, and currently serves on the UConn School of Engineering Advisory Board and the Connecticut Center for Entrepreneurial Innovation Advisory Board. He is a recipient of the UConn Alumni Association 2007 University Service Award and the UConn School of Engineering 2010 Distinguished Service Award.

Not only did UConn enrich his career path, Bouley said, but it is where he met his wife, Lorraine ’80. They have two daughters. Richter is a sophomore in the UConn School of Nursing, and Turner is a high school student.

Taking A Risk On Yourself May Bring Career Rewards Counsels Insurance Expert Joann DeBlasis

If she could offer one piece of advice for new business graduates, Joann DeBlasis ’76, ’83 MBA, would tell them to take risks. "Taking on a new position, as scary as it might be, enables you to grow in your career," she said. "Many people get stuck in a rut because they are afraid if they try something new, they will fail. My advice is to push for it."

What makes her thoughts particularly striking is that DeBlasis has spent her professional career assessing and insuring against financial risk. The humor in those contrasting perspectives is not lost on her.

As a president at Navigators RE, a division of Navigators Management Co., Inc., DeBlasis is responsible for the accident and health division. She has enjoyed a lengthy career in the reinsurance industry, starting with Cigna in the early 1990s.

Her accomplishments include starting a health-reinsurance product line for three separate insurance companies, where she supervised all facets of administration, underwriting, pricing, marketing and financial management.

She has hired many people during her career and seeks a few key traits in a new colleague. "I want to work with someone who has a passion for what they do," she said. "Equally importantly, they must have the ability to get along with other people. I think it is important to always be polite and treat people how you would want to be treated. That means being honest when something goes wrong and offering appreciation and recognition for success."

DeBlasis earned a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the UConn School of Business in 1976. Although her guidance counselor pressured her to attend a different institution, she never regretted her decision to attend UConn.

Her college days, she said, were filled with wonderful experiences and lifelong
friendships. She was joined at the Hall of Fame ceremony by four good friends from college, with whom she has shared all of life’s struggles and joys. She later earned her MBA from the UConn School of Business’ Hartford campus, attending classes at night while working full-time.

"It was extremely challenging to attend school in the evening after working all day," she said. "But I thought it was important to earn my MBA. I knew it would lead to new opportunities."

In 2012, she established a scholarship to benefit students at UConn’s Stamford campus. "I was very fortunate that I graduated from college debt-free because my parents were able to pay for my education. Some people graduate with huge debts. I decided to establish a scholarship to help others get through their education and pass along my good fortune."

DeBlasis is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Connecticut Society of Certified Public Accountants. She lives in Connecticut and has two adult sons. In addition to spending time with family, DeBlasis enjoys golf, travel, fitness and gourmet cooking.

Unrelenting Optimism, Enthusiasm for Innovation Drive Success of Entrepreneur, Venture Capitalist Amy Errett ’79(CLAS)

To appreciate why Amy J. Errett ’79 (CLAS) is phenomenally successful in business, you first have to grasp her fearless enthusiasm for life. She describes herself as a “horseback riding, fly-fishing, black-diamond snowboarding, wine collecting, San Francisco Giants-loving Californian.”

She also appreciates great food, nature and everything high-tech. She revels in trying something new.

"I come from an athletic, outdoor family; people who are real ‘doers.’ I like to travel, explore and enjoy nature and the outdoors," she said. "I pretty much like to have a good time."

Errett earned a Bachelor’s degree in Liberal Arts from UConn in 1979, and an MBA in finance from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania in 1988. During her multifaceted career, she has worked as an entrepreneur, a senior executive, a venture capitalist, and as a passionate advocate for social change.

Before beginning her own business in February, Errett was a general partner and ran the San Francisco Bay-Area office of Maveron, a leading venture capital firm. She has also served as the CEO and as an owner of Olivia, repositioning the travel business as a complete lifestyle company. During her tenure at Olivia, she was named the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year for Northern California.

Errett also founded and served as CEO of The Spectrem Group, a worldwide strategic consulting, information and merger-and-acquisition advisory firm. After selling the company, she joined the senior management team at E*Trade, where she diversified the company’s business beyond brokerage, and ran a $200 million business that encompassed the company’s growth areas.

"I think the two threads that tie my career together are that I love to build great teams of people to work together, and I like innovation. I’m a fan of the latest app, the newest technology and the best electronics,” she said.

"I don’t worry about failing. Some people would call me blindly optimistic,” she said. "I think positive energy just fosters and creates good things."

Her newest venture is Madison Reed, a company striving to transform the at-home, hair-coloring experience. Errett said she devised the company after her friends complained about the high cost of salon treatments and their concerns about the harsh chemicals in hair dyes.

The company, which launched in February, is named after her 11-year-old daughter. Madison Reed hair products contain no ammonia or harsh chemicals and the company employs 35 “on call” colorists who assist with everything from application techniques to selecting the right hair color.

Although she lives in California now, Errett is still a die-hard UConn sports fan. As a student athlete she played field hockey and dabbled in basketball. "I bleed blue. I’m a Husky forever,” she said. "Before each Final Four (basketball tournament), everyone counted us out. Look where we are today—and the best is yet to come!"

In addition to her family, work and
hobbies, Errett is deeply committed to humanitarian work. She chairs the Board of Directors of Glide, San Francisco’s largest non-government social services organization. “If we don’t look out for each other in this world, who will?” she said. “I think giving back is critical. It makes you a better leader and a better person.”

When asked how she manages to accomplish so much, Errett laughs. “Well, I don’t sleep a lot,” she said. “I also have a phenomenal assistant. I’m very focused on time management. I get up early and go to bed late, and I try to make every day count.”

Consumer Expert Lisa Klauser ’90: Resilience, Dissatisfaction with Status Quo Will Propel Students to Success

Lisa Klauser ’90, will tell you she’s living the American dream.

As president of Consumer and Shopper Practice for Norwalk’s Integrated Marketing, she supervises a team of 200 and works with well-known clients such as People magazine, Energizer Personal Care, Hillshire Brands and Barilla.

“I came to UConn planning to be a Spanish teacher,” Klauser recalled. “I tried a business course, and that was a game-changing moment for me. I loved the competitive side of American business. UConn gave me everything I needed to begin my journey.”

She credits her parents for giving her the values that have served her well. Her father only had an 8th grade education and sometimes worked three jobs to support the family. He taught her the value of hard work, dependability and always doing the right thing. Her mother bestowed on her the gift of confidence.

“[I’ve lived the American dream, but I think it is still unattainable for many],” said Klauser, who worries about the growing gap between the middle class and the poor.

Klauser has served on the Board of the University of Connecticut Foundation since 2012, and as she watches the next generation of students pass through the University, she experiences both a sense of excitement and caution.

“I want to instill the entrepreneurial spirit into students. We are blessed to have the most amazing university right in our backyard. The university has invested in high-caliber faculty, innovative programs, and its courses are well-tuned toward the business world. Hopefully UConn will shape the future of the next generations.”

“For our young adults today, I believe the most important thing they need is resilience. This is a challenging time in our country and in business,” she said. “It is important to be able to pick yourself up, reinvent yourself, and keep pursuing your goals, while still maintaining a strong moral compass and your integrity. I hope they carry a restless dissatisfaction with the status quo.”

Klauser earned a Bachelor of Science degree in marketing from the School of Business in 1990. She began her career at Nestle Foods, and later worked at Kraft Foods. She then spent 19 years at Unilever, most recently serving as vice president of Consumer and Customer Solutions for North America.

One of her passions is helping women in the workplace. She served on the Board of Directors of the Network of Executive Women for the Grocery Manufacturers Association of America. She also led the Women’s Interactive Business Network at Unilever. She has served as the vice chair for the Promotion Marketing Association.

Klauser was inducted into the Shopper Marketing Hall of Fame in 2012 and was named as one of the Top Women in Grocery in 2010 and 2011. In 2013, she was selected as one of Ad Age’s Top Women to Watch. She resides in New Jersey with her husband, Rick, and two teenage children.
A fondness for their days at UConn, and their desire to help young people have similar experiences, prompted Denis ’76, ’77 and Britta ’76 Nayden to establish a $1 million scholarship program specifically for college athletes who share the family’s interest in business, physical therapy or kinesiology.

“We are proud UConn grads and this is our way to share and give back, which we both believe in,” Denis Nayden said. Their $1 million gift for scholarships was part of a $3 million pledge to the University that includes $1 million for the Basketball Champions Center and a $1 million challenge grant to match support for the center from former Husky basketball players.

"Philanthropic support like this is absolutely essential to the School of Business and to UConn,” said Dean John A. Elliott. "Support for scholarships plays an absolutely vital role in recruiting the best students to UConn. The availability and generosity of a scholarship is often a crucial factor in a student’s decision about college choice. Private giving for scholarship allows the School of Business to continue to attract the most qualified students and support them while they are here.”

UConn President Susan Herbst also welcomed the generous philanthropic support from the Naydens. “UConn’s new academic plan sets impressive goals for the next decade for research, scholarship and undergraduate and graduate education, all designed to raise UConn to the ranks of the world’s greatest universities,” she said. "Private support from our alumni and friends, such as this gift from the Naydens, is absolutely essential in our journey.”

The Naydens graduated from UConn in 1976, Denis with a BA from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Britta with a BS from the School of Allied Health, now part of the Neag School of Education. Denis received his MBA from the School of Business in 1977, and went on to a successful career with GE and Oak Hill Capital Management, where he currently serves as managing partner. He has served on UConn’s Board of Trustees since 2001 and also has worked diligently on a variety of committees for the UConn Foundation.

"Our donation to the basketball center is an investment in a great program. Our challenge grant is meant to encourage participation by former players, who fully understand the spirit of competition, and our scholarship gift is designed to support student athletes, who share our interest in business, physical therapy or kinesiology. Its support for a great program and for giving young people a shot at a great education, wrapped up in a big UConn bow,” Denis Nayden added.

The incoming freshmen in the Class of 2017 were the most academically accomplished group to enter UConn in its history. With an average SAT score of 1233, they outpaced the preceding year’s incoming freshmen, whose average of 1226 had set the previous record. The increase in high performing students is a key factor in UConn’s rise from number 27 in the 2010 US. News & World Report to number 19 in 2013, said Elliott.

"We are so grateful and so proud that our alumni understand that support for scholarship helps the School of Business attract the kinds of students and scholars who elevate its stature,” according to Elliott.

Note: Denis Nayden is a member of the UConn School of Business Hall of Fame and has been a distinguished speaker at recent School of Business ceremonies.
PEOPLE

UConn Executive MBAs Experience Business in South Africa

Noel Petrolati, an Executive MBA (EMBA) student at the UConn School of Business, believes that understanding the history and culture of a country in which you conduct business is critical. As part of the EMBA program, she is learning how to apply concepts and theories from the classroom to guide impactful global business decisions.

Each year, a team of EMBA students travels abroad to enrich their experience and understanding of global business issues. The program’s latest destination was South Africa, a diverse, emerging global market that serves as the gateway to the African continent.

Petrolati and her peers returned equipped with new knowledge and insights, having visited with executives from an array of companies and industries. The business visits covered discussions on topics such as investments in the country, banking, business ownership, and various challenges and opportunities.

While in South Africa, students also explored its cultural history. One of the cultural highlights was The Apartheid Museum—the first of its kind—illustrating the rise and fall of apartheid, the system of racial segregation in South Africa that blighted much of its progress for half a century. EMBA students were also able to visit Robben Island; where Nelson Mandela served his prison term for his rebellion against the Apartheid regime. A guided tour of Johannesburg and Soweto—an urban section of the city—immersed the EMBAs in its turbulent history and diversity of people and cultures.

"To see and experience South Africa’s turbulent past and to see its economic development was enlightening," said Petrolati.

CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN SOUTH AFRICA: DISCUSSIONS

"Investing in South Africa: High Risk or High Return?" Mteto Nyati, Managing Director, Microsoft

"Finance and Banking in South Africa" Carolina Reddy, Head of Distribution and Sales, Standard Bank

"Challenges and Opportunities in the South African Real Estate Industry" David Stoll, Regional Head and Martin Kearns, Development Executive at Victoria and Albert Waterfront, both of Growth Point

"Retail Strategies for Low-Income Population" Suzanne Ackerman-Berman, Transformation Director, Pick n Pay

"Labor Market Challenges in South Africa" Nico Grobbelaar, Executive Director of Human Resources, Paarl Media Group

"Building a Successful Business in South Africa" Tony Gerrans, CEO, Grotto

"The Wine Industry in South Africa" Gary Jordan, Owner, Jordan Wines
Alumni News & Notes
Keeping connected with more than 40,000 alumni worldwide.

1960s

Scott S. Cowen ’68, ’10H has been elected to the board of directors at Barnes & Noble. Cowen was also presented with the 2014 Maimonides Award by Hillel International for his dedication to higher education in promoting a deep commitment to Jewish and secular learning. Cowen is a member of the School of Business Hall of Fame.

Ronald A. Pace ’69, ’72 MBA was elected to the Ariens Company Board of Directors. Pace is currently group president of interiors for the Kohler Company. He also serves on the boards of Road America as well as The Milwaukee Masterpiece. He is a guest lecturer and adjunct professor at Marquette’s Graduate School of Business.

Mark R. Shenkman ’67 (CLAS) received the prestigious 2014 Renaissance Award by Hillel International for his advocacy of higher education and Israel. Shenkman is a member of the School of Business Hall of Fame.

1970s

David E. Sturgess ’78 has been appointed senior vice president, secretary and general counsel of Affinia Group Inc. Prior to his appointment at Affinia, he led all legal activities at ReCommunity Recycling.

1980s

Douglas G. Elliot ’82 has been named president of The Hartford. Elliot joined The Hartford in 2011 as president of Commercial Markets and was previously the president of Hartford Steam Boiler. Elliot is also a member of the School of Business Hall of Fame.

Stephen M. Holcomb ’86 MBA has been appointed to chief executive officer at SmartPay Solutions. Holcomb is an experienced leader having worked with several companies in the insurance services and technology markets.

Brian J. Kelley ’86 MBA has been named interim chief executive officer at Alteva, Inc., a premier provider of hosted Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS). Kelley joined Alteva’s Board in November of 2013 and is currently the chief executive officer of Four Winds Advisors LLC.

1990s

Brian M. DiBella ’92 has been named president of Legrand North America’s Electrical Wiring Systems division. Prior to his appointment, DiBella was general manager of Wiremold and previously served as Legrand North America’s chief information officer.

Daniel C. Dipillo ’99 has joined PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP as an assurance partner. Dipillo will be focused on the industrial products and aerospace and defense sectors.

John P. Gianukakis ’98 MBA has been appointed vice president and treasurer of Frontier Communications Corporation. Gianukakis has 25 years of experience in treasury, financial services capital mar-
kets, insurance, bank relationships, and investment and commercial banking and information technology. Most recently Gianoukas was the senior vice president of finance and treasurer of Castleton Commodities International.

Joshua D. Goldfarb ’96 has joined Price-waterhouseCoopers, LLP as an advisory partner. Goldfarb will specialize in finance, technology and operations, focused on the financial service sector.

Nicole M. Lindsay ’96 has published a new book, The MBA Slingshot for Women: Using Business School to Catapult Your Career. Her book is a gender-based roadmap for women to develop the knowledge, skills and relationships to succeed in business school and beyond.

Robert T. Peterson ’95 MBA has been named chief executive officer at Millinocket Regional Hospital in Maine. Peterson is a seasoned healthcare executive with more than 25 years of experience. He previously served as patient care administrator for surgery and women and children’s services at Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor, Maine.

Scott Wulinsky ’96 has been appointed to chief accounting officer of Affinia. Prior to his appointment at Affinia, Wulinsky served as the director of regulated accounting at Duke Energy Corporation.

2000s

Shelly Abdella ’05 MBA has been promoted to senior vice president of finance and profitability at Webster Bank. Abdella joined Webster Bank in 2001 and has held positions such as financial analyst and vice president of finance with the financial planning department.

Robert Casey ’05 EMBA is currently the vice president and director of mutual fund compliance at Hartford Funds. Casey and his family moved from Storrs to Malvern, Pennsylvania in conjunction with the recent relocation of the Hartford Funds from Simsbury, Connecticut to Radnor, Pennsylvania.

Wade A. Gibbs ’00 has been named the adult ambassador for the 2014 Greater Hartford Walk to Cure Arthritis by the Arthritis Foundation, New England Region. As an ambassador, Gibbs will help the Greater Hartford Walk to Cure Arthritis reach its fundraising goal of $104,580.

Ryan J. Krueger ’06 has been appointed to managing director of equity research at Keefe, Bruyette & Woods. Prior to his appointment at Keefe, Bruyette & Woods, Krueger served at Dowling & Partners securities as partner and sector head.

Jose C. Oliveira ’00, ’01 MSA has joined Moriarty & Primack, P.C. as a tax manager. Oliveira is also a member of the AICPA and the Connecticut Society of CPAs.

Diana J. Piquette ’06, ’07 MSA has joined The Phoenix Companies, Inc. as second vice president, GAAP accounting and assistant controller. Piquette was most recently an audit manager at Deloitte & Touche, focused on life insurance accounts.

Gregg B. Schuster ’05 MBA, former First Selectman of Colchester, Connecticut, was appointed township manager of Pocono Township, Pennsylvania.

2010s

John P. Bonora ’11 MSFRM has joined First County Bank as the senior vice president, chief credit and chief risk officer. Bonora has also recently been honored as one of the Fairfield County 2014 “40 Under 40” business executives for demonstrating extraordinary leadership qualities.

Jeffrey R. Carlson ’14 Ph.D. (marketing) has successfully defended his dissertation titled “Two Essays on Matching Strategy in Paid Search Advertising.” Carlson has accepted a position at Donghua University in Shanghai, China.

Norman Massel ’14 Ph.D. (accounting) has successfully defended his dissertation titled “The Effect of Exemption from Mandatory Disclosure to the IRS on Firm Value and Behavior.” Massel has accepted a tenure track position as assistant professor at Louisiana State University.

John Tartaglio ’14 MBA was featured on the cover of the 2014 spring issue of UConn Magazine: Portraits of Strength. His story appeared among those of eleven alumni who spoke out about their enduring spirit, sharing their darkest struggles as well as their greatest triumphs.

Shuai Yang ’14 Ph.D. (marketing) successfully defended her dissertation titled, “The Effect of Exemption from Mandatory Disclosure to the IRS on Firm Value and Behavior.” Yang has accepted a position at Donghua University in Shanghai, China.

Matthew D. Dean ’10 Ph.D. has been appointed to associate professor of business with tenure at the University of Southern Maine School of Business. Dean is also the director of the Maine Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Southern Maine.
million customers, including 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies. It employs 16,000 people.

Gracy said Pitney Bowes used to receive calls from businesses, asking advice on the best location to open a storefront, or the ideal location for a new bank branch. They still do.

“But now what they want is to go global,” he said. “They have globalized digital storefronts that reach consumers around the world. They may want to do business with customers in Botswana, Estonia, Lithuania,” he said. “Digital marketing has never been more important. At Pitney Bowes, we are going through explosive growth.”

The School of Business faculty envisions graduates using their digital analytics and strategic marketing skills in traditional consumer and business-to-business marketing and sales organizations, social media organizations, online firms such as Amazon.com, as well as startups.

Although a general business major has been offered in Stamford for many years, this is the first specialized marketing major offered on the campus and joins the recently launched majors in Financial Management and Business Data Analytics.

“The Digital Marketing & Analytics major concept in Stamford makes incredible sense. Digital media is growing rapidly and the greater Stamford area is becoming a mini mecca for production,” UConn marketing professor Kevin McEvoy said. “We are very central to the marketing and advertising hubs of the world. There are numerous opportunities nearby.”

Meanwhile, students in communication sciences, professional sales leadership, economics and statistics, as well as graphic designers and digital media and design majors are expected to seek the digital marketing and analytics minor.

Approximately 18 percent of the students enrolled in the UConn School of Business are marketing majors.

The Digital Marketing & Analytics major will be available to undergraduate students in Stamford in Fall 2015.

With the help of CTSBDC business adviser Nelson Merchan, Delfau updated her website and platform, optimized search terms, and looked at ways to attract more life and long-term care insurance customers by networking with other professionals whose clients were interested in her services.

“With my CTSBDC adviser’s help, I’ve built a business model that allows me to understand what works best for my company and to grow each year at a sustainable rate,” she said. “He is someone I can bounce ideas off of and get honest feedback.”

Also, knowing that she has an appointment with her adviser keeps her on track with her business to-do list. “It’s like going to Weight Watchers,” she joked. “You don’t want to go and have gained weight. I don’t want to attend a meeting without making progress.”

Delfau said she found CTSBDC on her own after conducting online research. She wishes more business owners knew about the service.

"Because they are paid counselors, they have 'skin in the game,'” she said. “They truly have a vested interest in helping other people and helping their businesses move forward.”

The Connecticut Small Business Development Center is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and the University of Connecticut.
BYRON BUNDA ’14 came to UConn to do more than earn a bachelor’s degree in management.

He wanted to study at sea. He wanted to learn about entrepreneurship. He wanted to conduct research. He wanted to host a radio show. He wanted to lead student philanthropy. He wanted to feel the pride that comes with being part of UConn Country.

Byron did all of that and then some. He earned more awards and honors than we can fit here. Now he’s making his dream to become an entrepreneur a reality.

THANK YOU to every donor who helped Byron get to where he is today.
Call for Memorabilia
Share the moments that mattered

2015-2016 will mark the 75th anniversary of the UConn School of Business! To help celebrate this exciting milestone, we invite you to share your memorabilia, pictures and personal stories with us!

For more information and to submit items electronically visit 75th.business.uconn.edu or email 75th@business.uconn.edu. Submissions can also be sent via postal mail to: UConn School of Business, ATTN: 75th Anniversary, 2100 Hillside Road – Unit 1041, Storrs, CT 06269-1041.

Please identify names, places and dates as much as possible in your submissions – no detail should be considered too trivial.

Unless otherwise indicated, all submissions will be deemed property of the University and reviewed for potential transfer to the University Archives for inclusion in the University of Connecticut Memorabilia Collection.

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