

The Bottom Line

News from the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business

Spring 2023

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Message From Dean Theodore Richardson

As Florida Tech enters the next chapter, welcoming our new president, John Nicklow, Ph.D., I am confident that the Bisk College of Business will play an integral role in the strategy of the university toward excellence and student success.

The college strives toward students becoming critical thinkers in the world of finance, accounting, entrepreneurship and management at a STEM university. Our contributions are centered in collaboration with the College of Engineering and Science, the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts and the College of Aeronautics to create future leaders, understand markets and create wealth. The college's centers are focused on entrepreneurship, the expansion of female entrepreneurs, innovation, business analytics, industry standards (ISO), cryptocurrency and blockchain.

Artificial intelligence will capture more market share, especially in financial markets, and create tools that identify opportunities for new markets and technological innovation. Our College of Business Advisory Board, composed of excellent business leaders both locally and internationally, advises the college on curriculum improvements and how to be thought leaders in business to give our students a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

At our college is a center for ethical decision-making to inform students about the implications of their decisions on humanity while focused on wealth creation. All the tenants of the Bisk College of Business create an environment for students to be future entrepreneurs or contribute to the business success of any organization.

I hope all of you consider the Bisk College of Business a place that lets you imagine the possibilities for future business success.



Respectfully,
Theodore R. Richardson III, Ed.D.
Dean, Bisk College of Business

Panthers on the Rise

ANUK WEERASINGHE '02

Anuk Weerasinghe '02 was featured in *CEO Magazine Sri Lanka* in a profile about his journey to co-founding Kasper Global Pvt. Ltd.



BRYAN HUDSON '10 MBA

Bryan Hudson '10 MBA started work at a nonprofit association that services Virginia's hospital and health care system members with cost-effective resources, which keeps them in operation and may offer lower costs to patients.



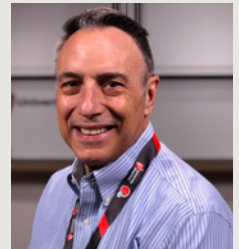
DAVID MAGIDSON '03 M.S., '04 MBA

David Magidson '03 M.S., '04 MBA, was promoted to chief systems engineer of the Joint Program Executive Office Armaments and Ammunition team (JPEO A&A) with the United States Army.



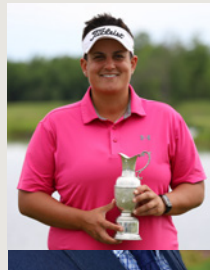
KIM FATICA '11 MBA

Kim Fatica '11 MBA passed his certification exam to become a Certified Broadcast Television Engineer (CBTE) through the Society of Broadcast Engineers.



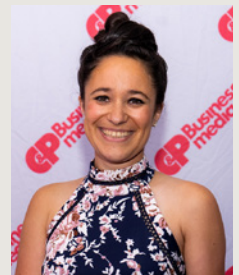
DANIELA IACOBELLI '09

In August 2022, Daniela Iacobelli '09 claimed victory at the Wildhorse Ladies Golf Classic, her fourth Epson Tour win.



MARIE ZAHN '11

Marie Zahn '11 was chosen as a 2022 *Cape & Plymouth Business Media 40 Under 40* honoree, an award that spotlights top young business leaders who excel in their industry and show dynamic leadership.



A+ ACCOLADES

The Bisk College of Business and its programs continue to be recognized as some of the best in the nation. Some of our most exciting recent accolades:

The Princeton Review

- Top 50 online MBA program

OnlineMastersDegrees.Org

- No. 1 online master's degree in project management
- No. 2 online master's degree in finance
- No. 5 online master's degree in accounting





Student Spotlight

Ashley Rants

VOLLEYBALL STAR AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION FRESHMAN ASPIRES TO BUILD MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Ashley Rants, a redshirt freshman volleyball player majoring in business administration, recently came to Florida Tech as a transfer from the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

She is interested in one day owning a nonprofit for mental health to help others going through issues similar to those experienced by her and her family.

“My family has had problems, each of us individually, with mental health growing up and just seeing those effects firsthand,” Rants says. “Friends, family, everybody that it affects and how much it wasn’t talked about as I was growing up from a young age to now. [Mental health] awareness has improved a lot, but I think there’s still a lot of work to be done, and I thought, ‘Why not start with me?’”

Rants says she loves Florida and the beach, and that Florida Tech is a great place to study business administration, as there are many opportunities to gain hands-on experience. She has enjoyed growing closer with her team during her first year as a Panther, and she looks forward to becoming a stronger volleyball player.

“With our team, I can feel the bond and the strength that we build together and that we’re going to be stronger every year, and I just love that feeling,” she says. “So, every moment is best with the team, even at our lowest of lows. It feels so good to know that this exact moment is gonna make us stronger.”

“ [Mental health awareness] has improved a lot, but I think there’s still a lot of work to be done, and I thought, ‘Why not start with me?’ ”

— Ashley Rants



PANTHER BASKETBALL ALUMNUS WINS ON AND OFF THE COURT OVERSEAS

In addition to his athletic success, Chris Carter has learned a new language and published a children's book

Last year was a big one for Chris Carter '15.

In 2022, the business administration and men's basketball alumnus learned German, passed a citizenship test, got engaged, wrote a book in two languages and won a championship as captain of the Rostock Seawolves, a team in the German ProA basketball league.

After Carter graduated from Florida Tech, where he played three seasons, making the Sunshine State Conference tournament every year he was a Panther, he signed his first professional contract with BIPA Odessa of the Ukrainian Basketball SuperLeague, the top level of basketball in Ukraine.

He joined Sports Club Rasta Vechta, also of the ProA league, for two seasons in 2017–18 and 2018–19. He helped the club win the ProA championship and move up to the Basketball Bundesliga (BBL), the top division of German professional basketball.

In 2019–20, Carter was a member of the Niners Chemnitz team, which he helped lead to a league-best 25-2 record before the season was cut short due to COVID-19. From there, he joined the Seawolves.

"I have to credit much of my success to Florida Tech," Carter says. "Playing under coach [Billy] Mims gave me the opportunity to not only learn from a former pro coach and understand that coaching style, but to also learn from a leader. The leadership skills he taught me have stayed with me during my pro career."

On May 21, 2022, Carter led the Seawolves to victory over the Tigers Tübingen in the ProA championship, advancing the team to the BBL.

"I have been through a lot during my career, but even at 30 years old, I still feel like I'm going into my prime," Carter says. "There is definitely still a lot of basketball left for me."





Basketball, among other things.

Having spent virtually all of his adult life living abroad, surrounded by different languages, Carter sees athletics as a bridge between cultures. This, paired with his lifelong ability to connect with young people, led Carter to writing *Ivy*.

A children's chapter book available in English and German, *Ivy* is about a young woman who, through hard work, perseverance and dedication, overcomes numerous obstacles to become a professional basketball success—not unlike Carter's own story.

"I am so proud of Chris and all that he has achieved in his professional career since leaving Florida Tech," Mims says. "What an amazing year it has been for him!"

"He is one of our all-time greatest players and one of the finest young men I've ever had the pleasure to coach. Chris Carter is an outstanding ambassador for Florida Tech and truly is the epitome of being a Panther for life."



Happenings

CAREER FAIR

Florida Tech hosted its All Majors Career Fair Feb. 1 at the Charles and Ruth Clemente Center for Sports and Recreation. The fair featured recruiters from companies such as L3Harris Technologies Inc., Embraer, Deloitte, Leonardo DRS, Piper Aircraft Inc., the FBI and the U.S. Army.

FLORIDA TECH HOSTS HIGH SCHOOL BUSINESS COMPETITION



The Bisk College of Business (COB) hosted its 24th Annual High School Business Ethics Competition in December 2022.

Sixteen students competed from four high schools: Astronaut High School, Rockledge High School and two schools from Viera. The competition is designed to encourage students to explore ethics, reflect on how ethical principles are related to decision-making in the business world and evaluate the ethical adequacy of actual decisions made by managers.

Supported by L3Harris Technologies Inc., Community Credit Union and Brevard Public Schools, this year's challenge involved the issue of the "Incredible Shrinking Potato Chip Package: Cost vs. Price vs. Value."

The four teams were given one hour to formulate an ethical solution. Judges came from a variety of career fields and included members of the COB advisory board, as well as several community members.

This year's winner was Rockledge High School. The competition awarded \$192,000 in merit scholarships and cash to the teams. All participants were guaranteed a minimum merit scholarship of \$12,000, renewable for three additional years if they enroll at Florida Tech.

"A key program for the Bisk College of Business Center for Ethics and Leadership is to demonstrate community involvement in ethical decision-making," COB Dean Theodore Richardson said. "As a result of the Gene Cavallucci Ethics Fund, Community Credit Union and Florida Tech, the Bisk College of Business conducts a high school ethics competition that we hope provides high school students education with respect to the boundaries of wealth creation in business. The college also hopes that local students decide to make Florida Tech their home for higher education. I congratulate the teams from Rockledge, Viera and Astronaut High for their dedication to ethical decision-making."

WEVENTURE WBC HOSTS ANNUAL IMPACT SUMMIT

On Aug. 25, nearly 300 business owners and entrepreneurial leaders from across industries attended weVENTURE Women's Business Center's 2022 IMPACT Summit leadership development conference.

The annual networking and training event was hosted at the Hilton Garden Inn Cocoa Beach Oceanfront and featured inspiring speakers and breakout sessions followed by a networking luncheon.

The opening session featured the keynote address from Shari Elia, head of global business development at Amazon Web Services, during which she spoke about ways companies of all sizes can foster a culture of innovation. Participants then chose one of three breakout session tracks: personal development, communication or business strategy. Finally, the morning concluded with a panel discussion featuring two local entrepreneurs who dove into the "Shark Tank" program as seen on TV and emerged with golden tickets.

"This conference is designed specifically for female entrepreneurs and professional women from across all industries," said weVENTURE WBC executive director Kathryn Rudloff. "By offering three tracks for the breakout sessions, we wanted to allow everyone to have the opportunity to attend training directly applicable to their own career and work."

STUDENTS TAKE FIRST IN IACBE CASE COMPETITION

Florida Tech students Chad Blasius, Joshua Braithwaite, Farran Barker '22 and Matthew Bowden teamed up to win the 2022 IACBE case competition.

The students and their advisor, instructor Tim Muth, traveled to Nashville for the October competition, which was held in conjunction with the IACBE South Region Conference. IACBE is an organization that accredits business schools, including the Bisk College of Business.

The case required students develop recommendations to improve the experiential-learning software platform for CapSource, a small educational technology company, and develop a pricing model to make it attractive to students and universities.

The students presented their case to a panel of industry and academic judges. They also shared an attractive brochure they developed, which impressed the judges, Muth said. Also, the students wore matching red ties. The judges were impressed and said they looked very professional, he said.

Another smart business move: They bought the ties at Goodwill for \$1 each. Each student won a paid internship with CapSource.

KATHLEEN CALLAHAN SCHOLARSHIP

Florida Tech has received over \$2.1 million from the estate of John and Maria Callahan to create the endowed Kathleen Callahan Scholarship.

The scholarship is in memory of their daughter, a special education teacher and advocate for helping underprivileged children. It will recognize an outstanding undergraduate student (or students) with learning or physical disabilities or emotional or behavioral challenges who demonstrates strong academic performance.

"This scholarship will be transformational for hundreds of students for decades to come," said Gary Grant, senior vice president for advancement.

John Callahan, Ph.D., was an associate dean and professor of management at what is now the Bisk College of Business. He retired as professor emeritus in 1998. He passed away in 2018 and was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery, having served his country in both the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army.

Maria Callahan enjoyed the activities and events of campus life at Florida Tech. Over the past 10 years, she has sought to ensure the scholarship will

positively impact the lives of students with disabilities. The scholarship is a comforting way to honor Kathleen's passion after her tragic passing.

"The Kathleen Callahan Scholarship will help students achieve their academic goals and support them getting to graduation despite personal challenges," said Brian Ehrlich, vice president of enrollment management. "We know that the needs of the students are real, and supporting them on their journey to graduation is the most important thing."

The first scholarships will be awarded for the fall 2023 semester.

SANJAY RISHI '85 M.S. DISCUSSES FUTURE OF THE WORKPLACE

Sanjay Rishi '85 M.S. offered insight into the future of work and the workplace during his lecture, "The Workplace You Need Now," at Folliard Alumni Center in February.

Rishi is the CEO of JLL Workplace Dynamics, a workplace management and strategy company. The global business innovates and delivers a full suite of products and services that blend human, digital and experiential elements to build, manage and improve spaces to transform how people work every day.

He is also the author of *The Workplace You Need Now: Shaping Spaces for the Future of Work*.

The talk discussed the work industry's transformation since the COVID-19 pandemic and how workers are seeking a better balance of workspace opportunities. Rishi offered insights into the future of work and workplaces as more workers seek remote opportunities and ways for office spaces to meet their needs.

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI AWARD



Robert "Bob" Seemer '85 MBA received the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business Outstanding Alumni Award at the university's annual Alumni Awards Gala March 25 in the Clemente Center.

Seemer is a management consultant and trainer for organizations and individuals seeking performance excellence. Inspired to achieve excellence in athletics, he was a Cocoa High School All-American in basketball, the captain of the Georgia Tech Division I varsity basketball team, and a draftee of the NBA's Milwaukee Bucks.

Seemer earned his bachelor's degree from Georgia Tech and earned his MBA at Florida Tech in 1985, noting that it was a pivotal landmark in his career. Early in his career, he held industrial engineering, management and leadership positions at United Parcel Service (UPS), Boeing Commercial Airplane Co. and Florida Power and Light (FPL). After leaving FPL in 1991, he and Maria, his wife-partner, created Competitive Technologies, a consulting and training firm. After selling Competitive Technologies, the Seemers created Electronic Training Solutions to capitalize on the world's early transition to digital learning.

2023 WOMEN WHO ROCK AWARDS

weVENTURE Women's Business Center and presenting sponsor Bank of America recognized the winners of the 2023 Women Who Rock Awards at a sold-out luncheon honoring all 61 nominees in March. In her opening remarks at the event, weVENTURE executive director Kathryn Rudloff summarized the purpose of the annual awards and gathering:



"To celebrate the accomplishments of our sisters in business and recognize outstanding women doing impactful work in our community. We celebrate their accomplishments and rejoice in the opportunity to recognize their excellence. Why? Because empowered women empower other women."

2023 WOMEN WHO ROCK AWARD RECIPIENTS

Female Small Business Owner of the Year

Darlyne McGee
Owner, Silhouette Hair Design Studio

Executive of the Year

Janice Zilch '93 M.S.
Vice president and integrated product team lead of multi domain command and control in the global surveillance division and Melbourne site leader, Northrop Grumman Aeronautics Systems

Excellence in Mentorship

Paulette King-Morin '94
Coach, author, writer, poet, blogger, social media influencer and filmmaker

Women Trending in Tech

Sarah Farris
Director of engineering, Guardian Manufacturing

Excellence in Caregiving

Teri Jones
Founder, Elderly Compassionate Care and Macedonia Education Technology and Career Academy

Zonta Yellow Rose Award for Excellence in Community Service

Diana Adams
Executive director, Brevard Heart Foundation; member, West Melbourne City Council



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Doctor of Business Administration Program Update

DBA STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: ERIC DEMIRJIAN '08 M.S.

Eric Demirjian '08 M.S. is in his final semester in the DBA program. In March, he defended his dissertation, "Artificial Intelligence Superteams & Augmentation: A Mixed Methods Analysis of High-Functioning Virtual Team Members and Standard Occupational Classification Factors."

When not focused on his studies, Demirjian serves as the director of Test and Evaluation Threat Resource Activity (TETRA) for the U.S. Geospatial Intelligence Foundation.

Demirjian says he has been challenged by both his professors and cohort members during his time in the program, all of whom have helped him grow into the researcher and scholar he always wanted to be.

"I often look back on my decision to pursue my doctorate," he says. "Honestly, it was the value I felt I received from obtaining my master's from Florida Tech many years ago, and the continuous ways it has served me in my everyday work, that first drove my decision. There was not a month that went by where an opportunity, decision or outcome was not touched by my master's degree work. This same feeling, only greatly magnified, continues in the DBA program. I am truly excited about the next phase of my business and academic life."

DBA GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT: LT. COL. JAMES CROOK '22 DBA

James Crook is an active-duty Army officer serving as the department head and professor of military science in Florida Tech's Army ROTC program.

Crook is a human resources officer by trade and has nearly 20 years of experience leading human resources teams that provide full-spectrum human resources support to geographically dispersed personnel.

Crook's dissertation found that many knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) are enhanced by service in support of combat operations, and senior officers often share the highest-rated KSAs.

Crook plans to continue his research on the influence of service in support of combat operations and how it impacts the KSAs of service members. This summer, Crook will transition from the Army to a corporate role in human resources and people operations.

"The DBA program at Florida Tech enhanced and broadened my technical knowledge, while enhancing my research abilities, and I look forward to applying these new skills in the workforce," Crook says.

Dissertations and Conferences

FALL 2023 GRADUATES

Thomas Santomauro '03 M.S., '22 DBA

"Knowledge Integration, Complex Adaptive Systems, and the Choice of Foreign Entry Mode: Internationalization From a Knowledge-Based Perspective"

James Crook '22 DBA

"Employment Transitions from Active-Duty Army Officer to Civilian: An Exploration of the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Possessed by Combat-Experienced, Army Field-Grade Officers"

Christopher Rehkop '22 DBA

"Franchising: A Microfoundational View of Personality Relationships Towards Franchisee Financial Performance"

CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

Congratulations to Stephen Dansky, current DBA student, on presenting his paper, "Inflation is Caused by Animal Spirits," at the Indian River State College Economics Conference.