

# MITCHELL

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FALL 2019



**ALL THAT GLITTERS**  
MCOB GRAD IS  
INSTA FAMOUS

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**DREAMS REALIZED**  
GILMAN SCHOLAR  
STUDIES IN KOREA

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**MITCHELL SCHOLARS**  
CLASS OF 2019









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**FEATURED LEFT:** Gilman Scholarship recipient, Sun Irene Souvannasy, studying abroad at Hanyang University School of Business in Seoul, South Korea.

**ON THE COVER:** Harika Ozkaya's Jewelry collection has made brought her Instagram fame with over 60,000 followers.

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MITCHELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

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## Different and Bad are not synonyms.

I am sitting in a coffee shop in the Denpasar, Indonesia airport. The terminal is full of people with screaming children. Actually, it is full of people but there are only two children screaming; these two have more than exceeded the quota for noise in this city for the next two weeks. I am trying to meet my deadline for having my Mitchell Magazine article completed on time but so far to no avail.

Mobile and much of the South were embroiled in a summer heat wave through most of October. There was only one day of relief—seven inches of rain fell on a Thursday afternoon causing historic flash flooding. This was followed by record low temperatures. Welcome to Fall in Alabama.

It is also hard to believe that finals are almost here. The semester is flying by. Halloween and Thanksgiving are through, with fall graduation and Christmas soon to follow. Speaking of graduation, South is holding college ceremonies as a part of the University Commencement weekend. It will provide a more personal graduation experience for the students but will also require a significant amount of preparation and coordination by the College and University faculty and staff. Our ceremony is scheduled for December 13—coincidentally a Friday. For those superstitious, keep your fingers crossed.

We have made an intentional effort to get this edition of Mitchell Magazine to the printer earlier this fall. The magazine features a number of interesting articles and people. MCOB Alumna Harika Ozkaya shares her journey to becoming “Insta famous.” Mr. Don Keeler, Senior Vice President for Human Resources at Austal gives graduates and others keys to a successful interview process. Also, Sun Irene Souvannasy, the first Mitchell College Gilman Scholarship recipient who is currently studying at Hanyang University in Seoul, South Korea is profiled. We also introduce this year’s class of Mitchell Scholars. This class sets another record for overall academic quality and achievement; the group consists of ten young women from across the United States. Included in the group is Josie Albin, Kansas’ Distinguished Young Woman for 2019. The edition also features Dr. Matt Howard, assistant professor of marketing and quantitative methods, and a number of other interesting and diverse personalities.

Speaking of diversity, I am still trying to complete my assignment at the airport but there are way too many distractions walking by. The airport is an interesting mix of cultures—native Indonesians, Chinese, Japanese, Indians, Australians, the odd European and the occasional American (most of which stand out—and

not in a good way). According to the Indonesian government, the population is mostly Native Indonesians (Batak, Toraja, and Sudanese), Chinese Indonesians, Malay Indonesians, and others—some three hundred ethnic groups in all. Indonesia is also the home of the largest Muslim population in the world—but there are six religions recognized by the government—Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. The primary religion in this part of Indonesia is Hinduism but not traditional Hinduism. Balinese Hinduism originated in Java and is a mix of Shivaism and Buddhism. Despite the number of differences, the people get along working together rather than against each other. In fact, the Indonesian national motto is *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). What a novel concept—perhaps someone could sponsor a Congressional junket to see how it works—it certainly couldn’t hurt. See you next issue.

*Bob Wood*

Dean, Mitchell College of Business



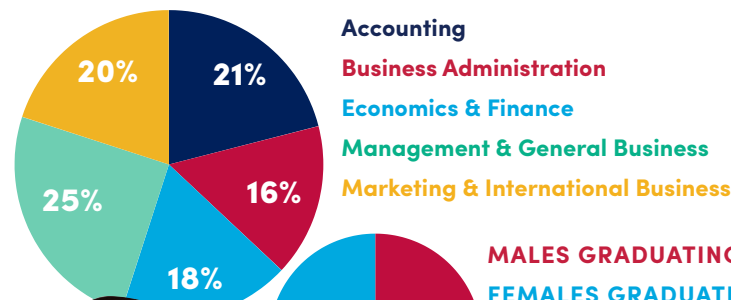
# Meet Sahilee Waitman

She is a leading example for today's Mitchell College of Business Student: Confident and dedicated, an advocate and catalyst for change, committed to supporting fellow students through empowerment and excellence. Student Government Association President, Sahilee Waitman, has a list of accomplishments and experiences that guide her today and will lead her to successes tomorrow.

## AREA OF STUDY: FINANCE

Waitman will graduate in Spring 2020 with a Bachelor of Science in Economics and Finance

## SENIOR BREAKDOWN BY MAJOR



Accounting

Business Administration

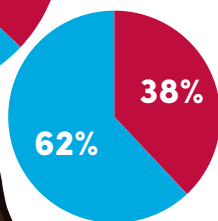
Economics & Finance

Management & General Business

Marketing & International Business

MALES GRADUATING IN E&F

FEMALES GRADUATING IN E&F



**B**

230

students certified on Bloomberg Terminals

**\$693,085**

under management by the Jaguar Investment Fund

**13,589**

Credit hours taught by MCOB Faculty: Spring 2019

**98**

Scholarships awarded in 2019

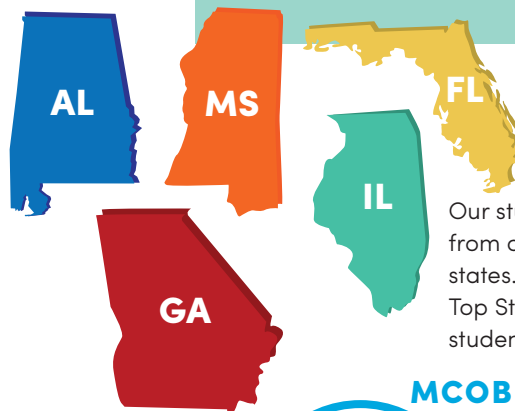
## ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

Perseverance and hard work is how Waitman earned the Presidential Scholarship here at South. During her academic career, she has received four scholarships.

*"College is a marathon, not a sprint. Some days will be more successful than others. Yet, if you continue to put your best foot forward, before you know it your resume is filled with amazing accomplishments you did not foresee coming."* —SAHILEE WAITMAN

## HOMETOWN

Growing up in the Netherlands, Waitman lost her dad at the age of 16. Knowing she wanted to follow in her father's footsteps she came to South. Waitman is bilingual. Her mother is Surinamese and her father is African-American.



## MCOB STATS:

**1,042**

Undergraduate Students

**125**

Graduate Students

**51**

PHD

**55**

MBA

**19**

MACC

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Waitman is a natural consensus-building leader. She promotes change from within.

## TOP 5 MCOB ORGANIZATIONS

- 1 AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION (AMA)
- 2 BETA ALPHA PSI
- 3 BETA GAMMA SIGMA
- 4 COLLEGIATE ENTREPRENEURS' ORGANIZATION
- 5 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

MCOB Student Organizations

**10**

**245**

Student Organizations At South





# MCOB XX

TWENTY YEARS OF MITCHELL  
1999-2019











## CATCHING UP WITH JULIE HARVEY

Mitchell Magazine  
recently caught up with Mobilian  
Julie Harvey, Continuous Improvement  
Manager, Chevron.

### **Tell us about Julie.**

I am married to Rick Harvey, a proud lifelong Mobilian and an alumnus of South. Even though I didn't know him in our college years, Rick and I were both raised with a strong work ethic that resulted in long careers with the same companies. Rick is a Senior Vice President and Relationship Consultant with Regions Bank. Our son Daniel is the center of our universe and is currently a sophomore at UMS-Wright Preparatory School. We also have a daughter Morgan who passed away in 2002. We are members of Grace Lutheran Church, and faith is the underpinning of our family life.

### **What is your current position?**

I currently work at the Chevron Pascagoula Refinery as a Continuous Improvement Manager under the Strategy and Business Planning umbrella. The Pascagoula refinery is Chevron's largest U.S. refinery and one of the top petroleum refineries in the U.S., producing over 5 million gallons of gasoline per day plus other energy products for this region and beyond.

### **What does a CI manager do?**

Continuous improvement is part of the fabric of the Chevron refining system. In my role, I am responsible for managing and sustaining a successful continuous improvement program including benchmarking, employing Lean Sigma as a methodology for improvement, and facilitating the identification and execution of process improvement projects in alignment with business strategies to enable strong financial results.

### **What brought you to South?**

I was born and raised in Mobile. I always knew that the University of South Alabama was the cornerstone of education in this community. I graduated as Salutatorian from Murphy High School. I went through the advance placement curriculum where I worked through my



“The landscape is an ever-challenging global energy market with shifting demands and geo-political forces that companies must adapt to.”



last two years to establish a foundation of experience and performed well on the ACT. This resulted in South giving me a full year of credits, bypassing the introductory courses. Given family and home ties, I chose South. I actually started as a computer science major, but quickly learned that it wasn't for me. I redirected to the College of Business.

### **What are your fondest memories of South?**

Although I wasn't a traditional student, I found that South had a great atmosphere, and I loved the proximity to be able to walk the campus class to class. It was small enough that professors knew you and you knew them and felt they were approachable. It also offered flexibility to students who were establishing a foundation of work early in their careers. As a working student, I didn't personally forge a lot of strong relationships or participate in things like sorority or SGA, however it was a great experience nonetheless. I graduated Summa cum laude with a B.S. in Finance.

### **How did you connect with Chevron?**

After graduating from South, I was employed in financial forecasting for a computer company. There was a great deal of restructuring and competition in that field at the time, which resulted in the closing of the Mobile office and a job offer for Atlanta. Not desiring to relocate, I quickly looked for other job opportunities in the region and discovered the Chevron Pascagoula

refinery, which has been somewhat of a hidden gem for this area. Not knowing if there were any positions open or not, I simply drove to the refinery and asked to speak to the Finance Manager. They gave me an interview on the spot. With the strength of my education and my accomplishments at South, and more importantly through the grace of God, I had a job offer in hand within the week and started with Chevron one week after that. That was amazing to me and totally God's leading. Chevron has offered me an amazing 30+ year career and a wealth of professional and personal development.

### **How have you seen Chevron affect your community?**

Chevron is a Fortune 500 energy company. The connections we have here on the Gulf Coast to the rest of the world are amazing. This refinery was at the center of supplying much-needed gasoline production after Hurricane Katrina. Through the creativity and networking of Chevron we were able to bring in energy supplies that kept the region going. It was an amazing effort by this refinery and the can-do people who work here.

### **As a business professional, what sorts of trends do you see? How do you see the industry changing over the next five years?**

The biggest trends may be related to digital innovation – how we can do things smarter and more efficiently by employing technology. The landscape is an ever-challenging global energy market

with shifting demands and geo-political forces that companies must adapt to. Chevron will remain at the forefront of bringing affordable energy to the global market.

### **Tell me about some of the people you've met or who have influenced you on your journey.**

The Strategy and Business Planning Manager has been a great mentor to me over the years. Finance and planning are closely related, and it was always rewarding during my years in finance to be able to connect our activities with the larger picture. It's personally motivating to see clear alignment between individual contributions and business goals, which should always be the case. It's a win-win and made possible through career development and mentoring.

### **What do you do when you aren't working?**

Our son Daniel is very busy in his academics and playing the trumpet in the UMS-Wright band. That offers us a lot of opportunities to be involved, particularly during football season. We are at the UMS-Wright football game every Friday night watching him play in the band and cheering on the team, whether that be local or away. We are also Daniel's "Uber drivers" until he gets his driver's license this winter. We also play active rolls in the growth of the ministry of Grace Lutheran Church. For me, I like to carve out time to strive to stay physically and mentally fit.



# HOW TO INTERVIEW

**Don Keeler** Vice President of Human Resources | AUSTAL USA | Mobile, AL



As a college student preparing to launch your career, a classic fear is how best to prepare for the infamous “job interview.” Depending on the sophistication of the hiring manager, oftentimes interviewers are not well prepared and the better prepared you come to the interview (with a well-thought-out plan as to how to present yourself) the greater the likelihood you will get an offer. In addition, interviewing college students can be difficult for the hiring manager as they usually have limited evidence of your ability to deliver through demonstrated experience.

## Know Your Stuff:

Despite the fact that most institutions today use an electronic application process, it is still a good practice to bring a well-crafted résumé and cover letter. The cover letter should be specific to the job for which you are interviewing, and the résumé should be error-free. Both are tests of your ability to do quality work.

You should try to think of all the questions an interviewer might ask and practice delivering your answer. You can find sample interview questions on the Web. Work to deliver concise answers that help present your best skills and attributes. Remember, you are selling yourself, and this is a time when you have to do a little bragging.

In preparation for the interview, you should research the company and, as much as possible, the job itself. This will help you form your answers to interview questions aligned to the business, the job duties or the job expectations. At the conclusion of the interview, you will likely have an opportunity to ask questions. The best questions an applicant can ask are those that demonstrate knowledge of the company and that demonstrate you took the time to understand the business. You want the hiring manager to remember you for being so well informed that you were able to ask intelligent questions. Of course, keep the questions positive and avoid

placing the hiring manager in a difficult position regarding something negative you may have read on the Web.

## Be the Solution:

Always remember the hiring manager is there to solve a problem, and you want to be the solution. Offering examples of your achievements will set you apart from the competition by providing the hiring manager with specific examples of how you can quickly contribute. As stated earlier, experience is often the best evidence. Look at your experiences at school, at home, with friends, on the job or in the community. What are you proud of doing? What would you consider an achievement? Many hiring managers will select the candidate who can demonstrate, through their stories of achievement, their ability to be successful and the “solution” the hiring manager wants. Remember to keep your stories short and to the point. Do not waste the hiring manager’s time with a long dissertation to a question. A classic interview includes questions about your greatest achievement, what you are most proud of, and examples of how you have contributed or improved a process, product or operation.

## Present Your Best Self:

How you present yourself during an interview is also judged. How well you are dressed and how well you are groomed are a demonstration of your personal character and discipline. Even if the work environment is casual, unless you are told otherwise, you should come to an interview in business dress. This means, for men, a tie and jacket; for women, a conservative dress or slacks/skirt with a coordinated blouse. Proper dress will not gain points, but it will keep you from being disqualified.

The next critical aspect of presentation is your demonstrated enthusiasm. The worst thing a candidate can do is come to an interview demonstrating a lack of interest. Show the hiring manager you are enthusiastic

about the opportunity by sitting up straight or leaning forward. Make sure you are conveying (in your voice) confidence in yourself and your ability to “solve” his/her problem. Listen to the questions and ask for clarification if you do not understand. Then, answer with confidence. It is okay to ask the interviewer if you adequately answered his/her question and, if not, try again.

Interviewing for a job is much like a first date. You are getting to know each other, and you are testing whether you want to continue growing the relationship. You will want to be able to speak to your likes and dislikes, plans for the future or career interests. Similarly, it is very appropriate to ask a hiring manager about business plans for the future or your career opportunities. Just like on a first date, there are questions that you do not ask. Can you imagine during a first date asking questions about income, savings or net worth? That would cause your date to become suspicious about your intent. Similarly, you do not ask an interviewer how much the job pays, how long you have to wait for your first promotion, whether you have to come to work every day or how many times you can be absent before being fired. These kinds of questions raise suspicions about your priorities.

## Close the Deal:

Finally, assuming you have an interest in the job, always close the interview with a request for an offer. It is amazing how many sales are lost because the sales representative did not close the deal. You should close with a polite thank you for the time the interviewer has taken. Express your excitement about the opportunity, and tell the interviewer you want a job offer. You could say, “I look forward to receiving a job offer, and I am ready to come to work for you.”

Good luck in your career pursuits. Have fun in the interview and enjoy the experience.



## STUDY ABROAD / SUMMER IN

## LONDON



Each summer Dr. J. Reid Cummings, Mitchell College of Business Associate Professor of Finance and Real Estate, and Director of the Center for Real Estate and Economic Development, teaches a fully AACSB-accredited, 6-credit hour International Business class, in London. The month-long study abroad program is based at Queen Mary University of London. The course examines international issues in business with modules focusing on aspects of marketing, management, accounting, economics, finance, and real estate. The class is structured around site visits to major international companies and organizations. For example, students take an overnight trip to Oxford to tour the BMW-MiniCooper manufacturing facility and also visit the International Maritime Organization, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, Institute of Chartered Accountants, All-England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, hosts of the Championships at Wimbledon, International Accounting Standards Board, Shepard Neame Brewery, and the offices of the developers of Canary Wharf. The course's research paper component affords students chances for research collaboration with faculty on topics tailored to the student's specific area of concentration and offers potential for students to publish in academic journals. The London summer study abroad program is truly a unique opportunity for students to live and study in, and of course explore one of the world's most international cities.



A young woman with long dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and tan trousers, is sitting on a stone ledge. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. Behind her is a traditional Chinese building with a green tiled roof and red wooden walls. The background is filled with lush green foliage.

# DREAMS REALIZED

How one  
Mitchell College  
of Business student  
made her study  
abroad dreams  
come true.

**A**t six years old, Sun Irene Souvannasy (Sunny) and her family immigrated to the United States from Vientiane, Laos, in search of a better education system and a brighter future. She recalls riding in an airplane and feeling sick to her stomach knowing that her home and everything she knew was being left behind. “I remember the first time ever eating “American” food. I can’t remember exactly what was on the plate but I do remember eating something that looked like what I know now as mashed potatoes and gravy.” Her family eventually settled in Mobile by the time Souvannasy was in middle school.

In high school, Souvannasy made the decision to go to college. “I decided to enter the field of marketing and public relations after reading *Elle*, *Teen*, *Vogue*, and *Seventeen Magazine* through high school. I was very into fashion and dreamt of living in New York City while working in public relations. I knew that majoring in business, communications, or journalism would help me to realize my dream.” Over time, Souvannasy’s interests shifted. She remained interested in public relations but became more interested in learning about all aspects of a business. “Business is in every aspect of life and I want to understand the fundamentals of it.” The fascination for business as a whole lead Souvannasy to change her major to Economics and Finance, concentrating in Economics and minoring in International Studies.



Being the first in her family to attend college, Souvannasy carefully considered all her options. “South made the most sense considering the cost of attending and its location. I learned about study abroad opportunities in high school and I knew I was going to take that chance once I got to college.” When Souvannasy toured South for the first time, she clearly remembers the details of the Mitchell College of Business’ first-floor lobby catching her eye. “At first, I was just simply drawn to the architecture, exterior, and the benefits of the library as a business major. After two years, I now realize that the Mitchell College of Business provides incredible student support and has many network and scholarship opportunities.”

Souvannasy is a two-time MCOB scholarship recipient receiving the Sue and Sidney Magnes Scholarship and the Peggy and John Seibert Family Scholarship. Souvannasy recalls the wide range of other resources available to students on campus including professional development events, career advising and other opportunities. However, Souvannasy’s favorite thing about the Mitchell College of Business is, “The class size. I’m able to know my professors and cultivate a relationship with them. Had I chosen to attend a much larger university in an unfamiliar city, I doubt I would have the aspirations or opportunities I have today.”

As a freshman, Souvannasy read a blog about the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship. “The

scholarship was created to make study abroad possible for all students. I read more about the program and made a note to apply for it later.” She already had expansive language experience, being fluent in Lao, Thai and English and knowing enough Korean and French to “get by.” She targeted her junior year for study abroad and decided to spend a year studying at the Hanyang University School of Business in Seoul, South Korea; even then, I was not sure if I could afford to do so. Nevertheless, I decided to apply for the program and have faith that it would work out. To tell the complete truth, I never expected to receive the scholarship.”

Souvannasy’s dream became reality. She received the Gilman Scholarship and is currently attending Hanyang University. Her classes include intermediate macroeconomics, international relations, comparative politics, and marketing management. She plans on enrolling in Korean Language 1 and 2 in an effort to improve her Korean writing and comprehension.

Knowing this is a trip of a lifetime, Souvannasy couldn’t select the one thing that she looks forward to most. “There are so many things...but, I know that at the top of the list is being able to immerse in the culture and acquire a new language. I am hopeful that, once I return, I will be able to hold a full, intermediate conversation in Korean and feel confident to speak it!”

After graduation, she plans to study foreign affairs and policy and pursue a

master’s degree in international political economy. Souvannasy said, “I have a strong interest in how relationships form between nations and the interconnection of a country’s political decisions and its economic outcomes. Following graduation, I want to start a career with the U.S. State Department as a Foreign Service Officer or with the United Nations and work my way to a senior position. I want to promote cultural awareness, education, and relations across borders.” Souvannasy hopes that her career will ultimately lead her to a point where she has the financial means and the network to start a foundation or nonprofit that makes education more accessible to her home country of Laos. She also hopes to be able to provide scholarships to help first-generation college students realize their aspirations to study abroad. “I have come to realize the significance of the help that I have been fortunate to receive and I want to be on the other end of that by giving that back.”

Souvannasy also wants to take the time to thank her family. “Without the risks taken in immigrating to the United States, I would not be where I am today, attending South and being able to learn at the Mitchell College of Business. It humbles me that I was able to make it through America’s immigration system and receive an education. I know that, if I’d never had the chance to come here, my life would be vastly different and I would not be a recipient of the Gilman Scholarship today.”





# Experiencing Business

**The Mitchell College of Business** emphasizes experiential learning activities across the curriculum. The opportunity to study abroad in both semester-based and short-term immersion international programs is open to all Mitchell College students. In addition, all students are required to complete an internship as part of their graduation requirement. Internships provide an opportunity for students to better understand the connection between theory and practice.



## **JACK STOVER**

CLASS OF 2020

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

My experience in Indonesia as part of the United States – Indonesia Society's (USINDO) Summer Studies Program was nothing short of extraordinary. My cultural horizons and international understanding, as well as my Bahasa Indonesian language skills, have been broadened tremendously through spending such a considerable amount of time in a nation as unique and diverse as Indonesia. The USINDO program afforded me an incredible opportunity to learn and grow as a scholar, professional, and individual.

My weekly activities consisted of language and culture courses at Universitas Sanata Dharma in

Yogyakarta, Indonesia and also included time each week working with Cokelat nDalem as a marketing intern. Cokelat nDalem is a chocolate store and factory in Yogyakarta. I worked alongside two other students and the company's marketing director to help create a marketing portfolio, primarily utilizing social media to increase a strong local reputation and to grow the company's brand.

The program was supplemented by field trips to cultural sights and included time for independent travel and excursions as well! I had the opportunity to visit Bali twice as well as a weekend trip to Surabaya, Indonesia's second largest city. My program concluded with a trip to Jakarta, where I met many governmental and civic leaders.

These included Ambassador Joseph R. Donovan, Jr., the US Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia and Dr. Douglas E. Ramage, the founding managing director of Bower Group Asia (BGA). In addition, we met with Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (also known as BTP), the former governor of Jakarta and several other prominent officials and organization representatives.

My experience in Indonesia was overwhelmingly positive and really opened my eyes and mind to a whole new world while greatly enhancing my cross-cultural understanding. I am captivated by the Indonesian people, their culture, and their language. I look forward to returning soon to pursue educational and employment opportunities.



**EMILY DAUGHENBAUGH**

CLASS OF 2020  
MANAGEMENT

This past summer I interned with Austal USA. After my review, they offered to extend it through this fall. I am currently working in the purchasing department. It has been an amazing experience and I am getting the opportunity to perfect both soft and technical work place skills.

As one of the employees in the supply chain department, I have helped with completing purchase orders for materials bought to build

is determined to be non-conforming, I coordinate with the supplier to get the material evaluated and then have it, fixed or credited and returned.

I am also tasked to resolve any issues at hand by working with others in all parts of the company. This position enhances organizational skills and teaches you to clearly articulate your needs. It also enhances your oral and written communication and technical writing skills. Most importantly, Austal has allowed me to grow not only professionally but personally. This internship has taught me that I am ready to graduate and start my career.

**JORDAN CEASAR**

CLASS OF 2021  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

In the Summer of 2019 I interned for Senator Doug Jones. The selection process was very competitive with over 1,000 people from Alabama alone submitting applications; several thousand more applications were submitted from across the United States. While interning I lived in George Washington University intern housing. The college is located in the middle of the city which gave me the ability to walk anywhere I needed.

During my internship I had the opportunity to work directly with Senator Jones and his staff. I was able to assist in creating a memorandum on Nuclear Weapons Modernization and drafting a list of over 100 veterans to call for Town Hall Meetings regarding Widows Tax and Military Benefits. I attend Foreign Affairs, Immigration, Banking & Education Committee hearings and meetings concerning the nomination for the Joint Chief of Staff, Secretary of Defense, and FAA Director. I wrote the follow-up memos for these hearings and meetings. I also

reviewed over 200 Senate votes. In addition, I drafted a co-sponsorship memorandum on the S.151 Traced Act that will eliminate robocalls, I also spoke with other members of Congress including Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Representative Ayanna Pressley, Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, Senator Susan Collins, Senator Tim Scott, and Senator Dianne Feinstein on topics including voting rights, gun reform, election protection, and other issues.

My internship taught me that although public policy drives everything in society it does so at a very slow pace. There is a need for more people that understand public sector economics in Washington. Another thing that influenced me was attitude of the interns; the group desires to change the world through the democratic process but also understands that they need to learn as much as possible before assuming that role. My personal goal is to become an elected official and become a member of Congress so that I can become a part of that change.



the ships. These are not simple documents; US Government regulations require extensive documentation and justification. I have become much more detail-oriented knowing that any error will require the completion of an entirely new purchase order. I also am charged with maintaining my group's invoice discrepancies and non-conforming material records. If there is a shortage or an overage when materials are received, I receive the call. I work with the supplier to get any shortages/overages made good/returned. Another cause of non-conforming materials is damage. After the material

If your business would like to know more about how to hire an intern, please contact:  
Megan Bennett | Coordinator of Experiential Learning  
251-460-7194 | mebenett@southalabama.edu



# MITCHELL SCHOLARS

CLASS OF 2019



**FUN FACT:**  
Albin's greatest  
guilty pleasures are  
eating cookie dough  
and watching  
"Friends."

## Josie Albin

Josie Albin is a graduate of Kingman High School in Kingman, Kansas. Throughout high school, Albin was deeply engaged in school and community while also maintaining academic excellence. Albin maintained a 4.0 GPA, scored a 31 on the ACT, and earned 45 dual-enrollment credits from four different colleges. She participated in a number of activities including Future Business Leaders of America, Student Council, National Honor Society, Youth Core Mentoring, and Class Leadership while representing her school on the cross country, track, golf, and basketball teams. She graduated as valedictorian of her class, competed nationally and served as the Kansas State Executive Editor for FBLA, represented her state as the Distinguished Young Woman of Kansas at the National Distinguished Young Woman of 2019 program, and accepted the awards of Kansas Future Business Leader and Lion's Club Student-Athlete of the Year. Albin says, "I am thrilled to be attending the University of South Alabama as both a Distinguished Young Woman and Mitchell Scholar."





**UNIQUE FACT:**  
Barnes has  
been learning and  
speaking French for  
seven years.

## Sarah Barnes

Sarah Barnes' years at Montgomery Academy in Montgomery, Alabama, were busy with academic and extracurricular activities. She represented the school as a member of the Upper School Chorus and Chamber Ensemble (a nationally recognized organization), was a member of Cum Laude Society, French Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, and the Robin Goodfellow English Honor Society, where she served as president. Barnes excelled academically earning a 4.0 GPA and scoring a 33 on the ACT. She was elected by her fellow students as the Social Chair of her senior class. In addition, Barnes attended and served as a counselor at Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama and Chrysalis (an international Christian ministry) camps. She was also elected to serve as a youth representative on the Central Alabama Chrysalis Board. "When I found out that I would be a Mitchell Scholar, I was reminded of Esther 4:14, "Perhaps you were made for such a time as this." This verse reminds me of the plans God has for me and His providence. I am so excited for the opportunities I will have through this program and the many ways God will use the Mitchell Scholar program to better my life."



**FUN FACT:**  
Henley can make  
dolphin noises and  
is the biggest  
Marvel fan.

## Anna Henley

In addition to her accomplishments as a student at Faith Academy (Mobile, Alabama), Anna Henley had opportunities to deepen her faith. She was an active member in the National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Robotics Team, Math Team, and Hearts for Life Club. Beginning in seventh grade, Henley played varsity basketball and softball. Involved, but still dedicated to her studies, Henley served as Senior Class President and graduated first in her class. She said, "This was a challenge, yet these great experiences taught me key leadership skills. I am so excited to continue my academic journey as a Mitchell Scholar and a Leadership Scholar. I can't wait to use my resources and opportunities to be successful in the future. South Alabama has forever changed my life."



**FUN FACT:**  
She's lived in Alabama  
her entire life, but she  
was raised a die-hard  
Tennessee fan and goes  
to at least one game  
a year. Go Vols!

## Hailey Kerstiens

During her time at St. John Paul II Catholic High School in Huntsville, Alabama, Hailey Kerstiens was very involved within the academic and faith lives of her school. Throughout high school, Kerstiens strived to challenge herself academically, taking all honors or AP classes. She was a member of National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society and graduated with a 4.1 GPA. Outside the classroom, Kerstiens was a three-year letterman in volleyball, served as captain of the varsity volleyball team, and was a two-time All-Area Volleyball Team member. Kerstiens also served her community and classmates on the United Way Youth Leaders Council and as a Student Government Representative, where she served as head of event planning. At her high school, she was a member of both Campus Ministry and Retreat Team, allowing her to minister and help her fellow classmates grow in faith. While at South Alabama, Kerstiens plans to earn a degree in Marketing. Upon graduating, she hopes to pursue her MBA at the University of Notre Dame with an end goal of a career in corporate marketing. Kerstiens shares, "I am extremely grateful and blessed to be a part of the Mitchell Scholar Program. Not only has this program financially provided for my college but it also offers many opportunities and connections both within and outside the Mitchell College of Business."





**FUN FACT:**  
Kraklow  
has been to Disney  
15 times.

## Helen Kraklow

Helen graduated from Waukesha West high school with honors. While in high school, she was actively involved in Interact volunteer club, National Honor Society, and Spanish club. She has been an avid dancer since she was three years old. She danced in all styles including ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, contemporary, lyrical, musical theater, and poms. When she wasn't dancing, she spent her time volunteering. As a survivor of three open heart surgeries, the Children's Miracle Network has been a large part of her life. She organized a ballroom dance function to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network called "Ballroom for Babies," raising over \$6,000. She plans to continue raising money for this organization and others through her active involvement in Dance Marathon and Circle K International while at the University of South Alabama. Kraklow said, "I toured many schools, but once I found USA I knew it would be the perfect fit for me! I am so honored to be a Mitchell Scholar and I am looking forward to see what the next four years have in store for me!"



**FUN FACT:**  
While volunteering  
at Mobile's Greek Fest,  
she learned to make  
loukoumades (Greek  
donuts). Her favorite  
book is *Pride &  
Prejudice*.

## Alyssa LaCoste

Alyssa LaCoste was involved in many student organizations while attending UMS-Wright Preparatory School in Mobile, Alabama, including the National Honor Society, the English Honor Society, Spanish Club, Key Club, and Art Guild. She also ran cross country and track. Through Key Club, she volunteered at Relay for Life and read with the students at Old Shell Magnet School. She was involved in several plays and musicals, where she helped build and move sets for the shows. In addition to service and activities, LaCoste excelled academically. She was recognized as an AP Scholar with Honors, graduated with a 4.23 GPA, and achieved a 31 on her ACT. LaCoste is an active member at her church, where she volunteers as a small group leader. She plans to major in accounting and go on to graduate school. LaCoste says, "I'm so thankful for this scholarship and all of the opportunities that it provides."



**FUN FACT:**  
Martorana  
loves to cross  
stitch and make  
jewelry.

## Millie Martorana

Throughout Millie Martorana's four years at McGill-Toolen Catholic High School in Mobile, Alabama, she was extremely involved in academics, community service, and leadership. While maintaining a high grade point average taking honors and AP courses, she served as a leader to both on and off campus organizations. She represented her class as a Student Ambassador, was active in Key Club, and volunteered tutoring special-needs students at her school. She served as Key Club vice president her junior year and president her senior year. She received the first Youth Opportunities Grant awarded to her Key Club and used it to serve throughout the community. She was an active member of Mu Alpha Theta, National Honor Society, and Ronald McDonald Red Shoe Krewe, and she earned the Roll of Excellence and President's List for several semesters. Millie was involved in Campus Ministry during her high school career and is continuing to be involved in it here at South Alabama. She is also a member of the Chi Omega fraternity.





**FUN FACT:**  
Overstreet is a triplet. She and her two sisters all live in the same dorm here at South.

## Maggie Overstreet

Maggie Overstreet attended Jackson Academy in Jackson, Alabama. She earned a number of honors while there. She was a representative on the Student Government Association in the seventh grade, became SGA parliamentarian in the eighth grade, and eventually served as SGA secretary. Overstreet served for three years on the yearbook staff — two years as co-editor and as editor-in-chief her senior year. She also served as editor of the school newspaper. Maggie was elected class president during her freshman and sophomore years. She attended two leadership conferences as an ambassador for Jackson Academy: the Alabama Lions High School Leadership Forum and the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Conference. She was also actively involved in student organizations including Spanish Club, Student Government Association, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Interact Club, Pine City Ambassador, National Honor Society, Senior Beta Club, and the Math Team. Overstreet graduated with a 3.9 GPA and received an AISA Advanced Honors Diploma.



**FUN FACT:**  
Megan is a certified lifeguard. She loves being in the sun and around the pool and loves the sense of responsibility and accomplishment that comes with guarding.

## Megan Smith

From Millbrook, Alabama, Megan Smith is a proud graduate of Stanhope Elmore High School. While in high school, she played flute, piccolo, and mallet percussion in the marching and concert bands. Smith was the flute section leader for the 2019 marching season. She sang in the advanced choir and attended the 2019 Alabama All-State Choir Festival as a member of the SSAA (women's) choir. She created a mentoring program for the middle school band students, she and other high school band members met with the middle school students to improve playing abilities and help them integrate into high school. She attends The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, where she is part of the young adult program and helps teach children the gospel of Christ every Sunday. Smith said, "I am overjoyed to be granted the opportunity to be part of the Mitchell Scholar Program and part of such a wonderful group of people."



**FUN FACT:**  
Surcouf served as Howler the Husky, the athletic team's mascot all four years of high school.

## Alaynna Surcouf

During her years at Helena High School (Alabama), Alaynna Surcouf balanced academics, extracurricular activities, a job, and a social life. She worked hard to make her family proud of the person she has become. She looked at many colleges but decided that the University of South Alabama was the place for her growth and education, "I had been searching for the right school for me. When I came to the University to interview for this scholarship, I just felt completely at home. I knew this was where I belonged, and God made that clear to me when I was awarded the Mitchell Scholarship. A door was opened for me and I will always be grateful for that."

While in high school, she was a part of National Honor Society, English Honor Society, Science Honor Society, and History Honor Society. She was also Vice President of the school's Art Honor Society chapter. She held the Vice President position for both FBLA and DECA. She was also a Girl Scout, receiving the Silver award. She plans on pursuing a major in marketing and working for an advertising agency. Surcouf stated, "I am so thankful for this scholarship and the opportunities that come with it."



# TESTING REALITY

BY MATHEW HOWARD  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT,  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA MITCHELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

I have always been interested in the latest tech trends – computers, phones, watches, and anything else with a circuit board. For this reason, one of my earliest research interests was the use of virtual reality for employee training and development.

My first study was quite simple. Participants came to my lab. Half watched a video on a computer monitor. The other half used a head-mounted display, which is a device worn over the user's eyes to present a digital environment. Afterwards, both groups took a post-test to determine which group learned more effectively.

The results were quite interesting. The head-mounted display group performed better and I identified some initial mechanisms to justify this improvement. I submitted a manuscript on the results to a leading business journal and I was completely confident that it would be accepted. When the response came back, I was dumbfounded – Reject.

The comment from the reviewer may have been the most important feedback that I have ever received. To slightly paraphrase, it read, “When I open a journal, I want to read about modern-day management practices – not science fiction.” Science fiction!? I could barely believe it. Since then, I have made it a primary research goal to understand and spread the use of virtual reality for business purposes – particularly training and development.

I have published several articles demonstrating that virtual reality can be more effective than alternative training approaches but its effectiveness is dependent on the technology, task, context, and user. In a recent publication, I demonstrated that a virtual reality training program can be improved by simply providing pre-training instructions to remind participants about the educational purpose of the program; otherwise, participants often get distracted by the novel technology and they may try to explore their digital environment rather than learn the material.

I am happy to say that some of these investigations have now been published in business journals including *Human Resource Development Quarterly* but many others have been published in technology-oriented journals, such as *Human-Computer Interaction*, *Computers & Education*, and *Computers in Human Behavior*. To me, it is very important to share my findings across many domains of study.

Additionally, I have several other core research interests. In my time at South Alabama, I have taught courses on statistics and research methodologies. I take great pride whenever a student says, “I never knew that statistics could be interesting or... fun!”

I credit my statistics teaching abilities to three things: ample time prepping my courses, genuinely caring for students, and researching statistics

and methodologies. My statistics research interests are wide ranging, but I have always been interested in the measurement of personality. It seems like such an odd concept to me. How can we measure something entirely unobservable with a definition that may differ from person to person? Continuously seeking an answer to this question has led me to create measures for training self-efficacy, persistence, and even courage.

Courage, in short, is a prosocial behavior with personal risk, and people that repeatedly perform courageous behaviors are believed to possess the trait of courage. Many modern workplaces rely on employees to perform a specific type of courageous behavior, social courage, which is a courageous action with risks to the actor's interpersonal relationships and/or social image. Utilizing my interest in measurement, I was the first person to develop a measure for social courage, which has been used in many studies of the workplace.

Like my research on virtual reality, my research on statistics and research methodologies has also appeared in many varied outlets. These include many premier business journals, such as *Organizational Research Methods*, *Information & Management*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Business Research*, and *Journal of Business and Psychology*; however, these also include many premier journals





outside of business.

Furthermore, researchers and practitioners alike stress the importance of corporate social responsibility, which generally refers to efforts by organizations to create positive social impacts. I, however, believe that researchers should think more about academic social responsibility. Professors should continuously consider their own social impacts.

For this reason, I have also performed many studies on well-being—both within and outside the scope of the workplace. Within the workplace, I recently published an article on workplace ostracism in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. While some

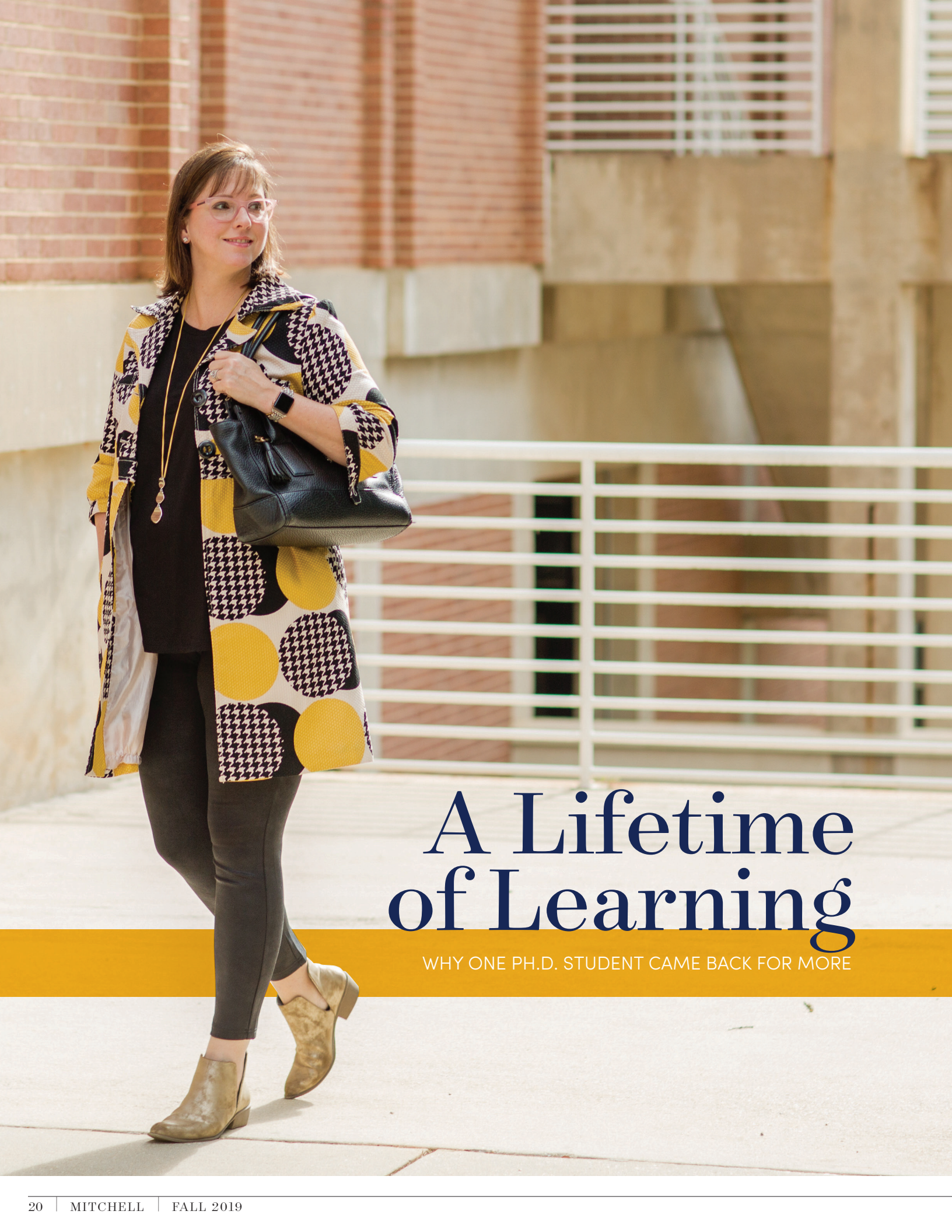
managers believe that they can effectively use ostracizing behaviors to motivate their employees, we showed that ostracism typically results in worse employee well-being and performance. Managers and even coworkers should not use ostracism as a motivational tool. Outside of the workplace, I have studied how virtual reality can improve physical rehabilitation programs. I showed that virtual reality can improve patient motivation, and rehabilitation outcomes are better when virtual reality is utilized.

Moving forward, I will strive to continue making novel discoveries in these research domains, but I also hope to apply these findings in the local Mobile community. I often work with

organizations and businesses to address their personnel needs, and any resultant data is used for subsequent research publications. To access articles arising from these collaborations – as well as all my other articles – please visit [www.MattCHoward.com](http://www.MattCHoward.com).

Lastly, I should recognize the importance of my wife, Dr. Laura Vrana, to my professional and personal success. She is an assistant professor in the English Department at South Alabama who conducts very interesting and impactful research on poetry, African American literature, and more. We consider ourselves very fortunate to both be Jags, and we do our best to serve the university as it has served us.





# A Lifetime of Learning

WHY ONE PH.D. STUDENT CAME BACK FOR MORE



From Texas to North Carolina, with lots of stops in between, Stacy Wellborn has gained a lifetime of experiences. Over the last 20 years, Wellborn has spent most of her time operating as an independent marketing consultant and small agency owner. Wellborn's educational journey started in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where she graduated with a bachelor's in hospitality management; she then attended graduate school in Greensboro, North Carolina, where she received her master's in counseling in higher education; and she is currently working towards her Ph.D. in business administration in marketing.

Wellborn is fashioned with many different hats... She is currently a visiting instructor and internship coordinator for the Communication Arts Department at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama. She owns a communications firm which specializes in public relations, online marketing and event management and is the founder and yard boss at the Container Yard, a co-working space in downtown Mobile.

The Container Yard is a work space for entrepreneurs, small businesses, corporate nomads and non-profit organizations. They recently moved into their second location, tripling in size and membership capacity. They provide a flexible, creative work environment that serves to provide a collaborative, supportive community. Container Yard came into being when one of Wellborn's partners, a developer, had an interesting space that he wanted to fill with a lively, energetic business. After researching several co-working spaces in Atlanta, they decided to open the Container Yard at the Marine Street Lofts in 2016. In 2019, they moved to the renovated former Red Cross Building, another project of their partner. Since moving in May 2019, they have already exceeded expectations and are looking to expand to a second location in Baldwin County in 2020.

With so much experience, one might ask, why a Ph.D. in business? Wellborn said, "My goal is to teach full time at the college level. I am interested in marketing communications, but as an entrepreneur myself, I am also interested in studying how businesses get started and how they use marketing strategies to grow their organizations."

Wellborn has always loved the pursuit of education. "I have wanted to pursue a doctorate and teaching since my days living in Austin and working in Student Affairs at the University of Texas. I had the opportunity to teach an undergraduate leadership class and fell

**"I have wanted to pursue a doctorate and teaching since my days living in Austin and working in Student Affairs at the University of Texas. I had the opportunity to teach an undergraduate leadership class and fell in love with teaching."**

in love with teaching. As life happens, I am just now able to pursue this dream and believe everything happens at the right time."

The decision on where to go to obtain her Ph.D. was easy for Wellborn. She wanted to experience face-to-face interactions with her classmates and professors. "When I found the USA program, I was so excited. When I first discovered the program, there was only a management concentration. When Dr. Joe Hair came to USA and added the marketing concentration, I knew the time was right."

Even more important than the face-to-face with professors like Dr. Joe Hair,

Wellborn needed a program that fit her busy schedule. "I love the classroom experience and the focused weekend schedule. With my full schedule, I needed a structure that would allow me to continue to work in my businesses, teach and attend school."

Wellborn describes her experience: "It's been hard, stressful, exciting and fun! The program is challenging enough to be scared at first, but it has also given me the confidence that I can rise above the fear and succeed. The best part has been getting to know my classmates. We have an awesome cohort and I have made some great friends! I look forward to seeing them each seminar weekend. All of our professors are amazing! I am grateful to our MCOB-based faculty, who are brilliant and here for us. I also appreciate our Global Scholars, who make the journey to be here with us and share their knowledge."

Wellborn says the Ph.D. program has given her a new perspective. "Since starting this program, I have started to look at everything differently. I have always believed in using data to make business decisions, but now with the knowledge gained about the research process, I want to test and research everything. I find myself changing my ways of thinking and talking with clients. Research has truly become a passion and focus in my life."

As an entrepreneur, Wellborn has learned many lessons, including how to bounce back from failure. "I have spent the last 20 years working, building businesses, closing businesses and learning lessons. Going back to school to pursue my doctorate gives me the opportunity to learn more deeply about why things work (or don't work) and will give me the credentials to teach at the college level. I want to be able to teach the foundations of business and marketing, as well as, share my real-world experience as an entrepreneur and professional communicator."



# AN OVERNIGHT SENSATION

SUCCESS AS AN INTERN LED TO A FULL-TIME POSITION WITH FEDEX  
FOR MCOB STUDENT CARSON DAVIDENKO





**B**orn and raised in the South, Carson Davidenko spent his life surrounded by various medical professionals. Aspiring to be an oral surgeon, Davidenko started college at South majoring in Biomedical Science. Despite his overwhelming success in the program, he was approximately half-way through the program when he realized medicine was not the path for him, “I had a gut feeling that I would not be as happy in the medical field as I previously had thought.” He made the surprising call to his parents informing them he was making the switch from medicine to business.

The coastal community of Panama City had few opportunities to see industry in action. Davidenko noted, “of the limited opportunities that existed, I was able to shadow in a logistics firm; my interest in supply chain and logistics management was born.”



Following his experience, he declared a major in Supply Chain Management and was given the opportunity to intern for FedEx Freight. Headquartered in Memphis, FedEx Freight is the largest less-than-truckload (LTL) carriers. Davidenko interned with John A. Smith as he made his transition from Senior Vice President (Operations) to Chief Executive Officer. Additionally, he was able to work with Senior Advisor for Executive Operations Michael Lyons.

At FedEx, every intern is tasked with a project that becomes their primary focus for the summer. Davidenko’s project was to help create Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for a major company initiative, FedEx Freight Direct. The FedEx Freight Direct

“Of the limited opportunities that existed [in Panama City], I was able to shadow in a logistics firm; my interest in supply chain and logistics management was born.”

service moves large, bulky items into consumers’ homes and businesses and is estimated to be a \$10 billion market. Davidenko was on the inside of the project’s development, “I was able to be a part of numerous meetings that involved various departments including communications, finance, human resources and legal. The internship program also allowed me to really get into the field and see first-hand the differing day-to-day roles of frontline operations such as drivers and freight handlers.”

The experience Davidenko gained was incredible, “My experience within the FedEx Freight team is very significant for a number of reasons. An internship with a large company like FedEx allowed me to learn the importance of working with teams of individuals with different talents and abilities to achieve a common goal. This opportunity allowed me to further develop my leadership and teamwork abilities. I also gained significant insight into the LTL industry as well as the broader transportation industry. Along with learning about this industry, the internship opened many future opportunities.”

At the end of his internship, Davidenko was given the opportunity to personally present the results of the SOP’s to executive leadership. The presentation was a success. After his internship, he was offered the opportunity to join FedEx Freight’s

Management Training Program in Mobile. Davidenko shares how his experience as an intern works together with his experience in the Management Training Program, “The management training program has allowed me to get a much more in-depth experience regarding day-to-day operations. My internship allowed me to gain experience from a very high-level, and my current role allows me to learn more from the frontline. In turn, this gives me an overall understanding of how all the pieces fit together in a large company to effectively operate across the network.”

Davidenko continued, “This internship allowed me to learn so much more than I had anticipated. Beyond the high-level knowledge of the LTL industry, I was able to learn how a corporation the size of FedEx operates and effectively apply the concepts that I was learning in my courses to real experiences within FedEx. After my internship, I was able to see immediate value in the experience by being able to apply the knowledge that I had received from FedEx Freight team back into my courses at the Mitchell College of Business.”

Davidenko is currently working full-time for FedEx in Mobile while juggling a full course load at MCOB. He will graduate this fall after which he will move to Memphis to resume his career with FedEx.







CUSTOM  
JEWELRY COLLECTION  
LEADS TO INSTAGRAM  
FAME FOR THIS  
MCOB GRADUATE

Original, sincere, hardworking, openhearted, inspiring, creative and visionary are just a few of the many wonderful words used by Harika Ozkaya’s Instagram power group to describe her. With over 60,000 followers on Instagram and her own jewelry collection (the Naz Collection), Ozkaya has quickly risen to become an Instagram influencer and a self-made entrepreneur. Like all good alumni stories, Ozkaya’s story starts at South. Her journey, like most, includes trials and successes. It includes life as a wife, a mother, and an entrepreneur.

Ozkaya was born and raised in Istanbul, Turkey. At the age of 19, she followed the love of her life (and now husband) Harry to South Alabama. Knowing very little English, Ozkaya

quickly enrolled in ESL classes at South. “Since my parents couldn’t support me financially, I worked three jobs while attending school full-time. I was constantly saving money for my tuition, rent, and daily necessities. Money was so tight that I couldn’t go back to Istanbul during my first two years in the States! I learned the meaning of the word homesick.” Ozkaya recalls the support she received from South’s Brenda Hinson. “And there was iconic Brenda Hinson. I still can’t forget her massive support when I lost my father. She is still always in my prayers!”

Despite living in a new country and learning a new language, Ozkaya says her college years were busy but also much fun. When asked how she made time for fun while working and attending

school full-time Ozkaya said, “When you have to, you must. That’s it. You don’t have any options. I had to do it and I did it and I am still doing it!”

Being a visual person, Ozkaya was naturally drawn to marketing and advertising, “I am all about feelings and this is what I try to do with my Instagram. Visually, I try to give people a good message. I want them to feel something when they buy my line, when they wear it I want them to know me better.” Ozkaya discusses the importance of feelings leading to a personal connection and a repeat consumer, “If you choose a big company, you don’t see any feeling, which is why I think people have more appreciation for handmade things. I make a personal connection with each one of my



customers and put meaning in my design, which is why they come back. Because of Instagram, I gain more loyal customers. I try to make a difference and inspire others.”

Given her draw to digital marketing, her favorite professor comes as no surprise, “My favorite, hands down, was Marianne Loes. I still remember her examples about advertising and eCommerce. She was always sharing mind blowing information about marketing.”

Ozkaya’s dreams of a career in marketing and advertising often took a backseat to her number one passion, family. She shared, “I have to be on top of my family for my kids.” When discussing struggles faced when launching her business, she shared, “I struggled, I struggled but prioritized my kids. They are the best thing that I have ever done in my life. They are my teachers. I am the happiest I have ever been because of them.”

While finishing her last college semester and pregnant with their first child, Naz, Ozkaya was in an unfortunate car accident. Luckily, she and the baby survived, but the accident left Ozkaya on strict bed rest postponing her graduation. Nonetheless, she persisted and graduated with her degree in 2005.

Following her graduation, Harry accepted a job at EY in Times Square and they moved to New Jersey. “It was the beginning of eight tough years but the time was full of great learning and expanding. During those eight years my husband changed his job a couple of times so we had to reapply for the green card three times and on top of that, the Great Recession of 2008 hit. As you can guess because of this reason I couldn’t work.” Ozkaya, hardworking and determined, began brainstorming her own business ideas.

Ozkaya and Harry’s adventures didn’t stop there, “We moved to Boston where my husband received his master’s degree from Harvard. Our short-term plan included going back to New Jersey, but

we decided to call Boston home sweet home!” Now settled in Boston with their two daughters, it was finally Ozkaya’s time to focus on what she loved.

The idea for the Naz Collection came after a summer trip to Turkey. “Every summer I think what I can take back to my friends or my “power group” and one summer my mom was taking jewelry classes.” Ozkaya’s mom taught her the basics and she researched the rest. “I practiced and practiced and got feedback from my friends.” Ozkaya said, “I designed this for the strong women who can handle anything life throws at them; in the office, around the house, and at a party.” Ozkaya wanted a quality fit for the working women, something that was simple enough to be worn every day, but would last.

Starting in 2010, Ozkaya sold her jewelry in local shops and street art fair shows in New York and New Jersey, and opened her first Etsy shop shortly followed by Amazon. In 2013, she created her first Instagram account, ‘NazCollection’. “I occasionally started to upload pictures, asked bloggers to wear my designs. Reaction was getting better and better every day but not enough.” She started to spend more on quality finish materials, packaging, logo etc.

In 2015 Ozkaya was up to 20,000 Instagram followers, when life, as it often does, kept pulling her in multiple directions. Tending to the needs of her family, she struggled to find the needed time to dedicate to her business. After two-years Ozkaya lost most of her followers. But she didn’t let that stop her, “All my followers, I can say, I just lost them. But its family, that’s what is important to me.” She knew she made the right choice in putting her family first. She was confident she built her brand once, so she could do it again.

After a lot of research on ways to improve, her results were surprising, “My conclusion—be yourself! Effortlessly, be you!” Ozkaya embraces this new strategy in her own brand, “Now I personally wear all my collection

on Instagram, mixing with other brands the way I want. Basically, I curate and share the Naz Collection...It’s about connecting feelings and the visual... I don’t stress myself or rush to come to the certain point on a certain time. I just keep swimming and will continue swimming.”

Ozkaya continued, “Not only is it important to be yourself; but, constantly sharing new posts and connecting with your niche group gives you more visibility and after a while the outcome will hit you like a snowball effect... If you use Instagram in a creative way, I think, it is visually the most mind-blowing source ever! You can easily reach out to your niche people, your tribe, and it makes a “sky is the limit” kind of place in social media right now! Your store should be open with posts and stories for you to have as much traffic as possible to be able to receive a higher engagement because this is what Instagram wants! Genuine likes, comments and saves!

Ozkaya’s next step is to create a “click-to-buy” environment for all my target audience (women and men between 20-55 years of age). She is also creating a Shopify account and plans to bring Naz Collection to Europe, Asia and Australia. “I set my goals and will make them happened one by one with the support of amazing souls around me.”

Ozkaya wants current and future students to know, “you don’t need anyone to do anything in life. You are yourself and it is more than enough.” She continued, “Surround yourself with good people. When you have good people around you nothing can stop you. This is what I have, I have amazing people around me. Keep good people. Be good. Do good. I’m so excited and am truly enjoying this process. Just believe in yourself, be you, attract your own tribe and keep swimming darling, just keep swimming!”

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*You can find the Naz Collection on Instagram at @Nazcollection*



**Carlota Garcia**  
*Salamanca, Spain*

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

"I love MCOB teachers, they make student athletes' lives so much easier. Also, one of them came to support us in our home tournament!"

# Better Than Par

MCOB STUDENT ATHLETES EXCEL  
ON AND OFF THE LINKS

**Yanick Schüetz**  
*Friolzheim, Germany*  
**Srixon/Cleveland**  
**Golf All-America Scholar**

SENIOR | MARKETING/  
SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

"I absolutely love my experience in the MCOB! I haven't had a single teacher who did not support me and my golf career."



**Julie Hovland**  
*Bergen, Norway*

JUNIOR  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

"I like the good relationship you get with some of the professors. They really want you to succeed not only in their classes but also in our sports."





### **Siti Shaari**

*Subang Jaya, Selangor,  
Malaysia*

JUNIOR | INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

"I love being around the business building. Staff and Lectures are very friendly and they always welcome and help you when you need it. The tutor program really helped with my classes."

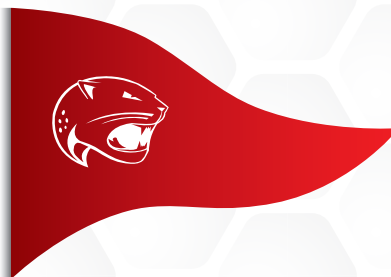


### **Rassmussen Karlson**

*Fiskars, Finland  
Srixon/Cleveland  
Golf All-America Scholar*

SENIOR | BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

"MCOB has really made it possible to combine academics and sports for the best way possible. I have learned a lot from the great professors, not only business but also essential skills for life after college."



### **Caroline Berge**

*Stavanger, Norway*

JUNIOR | FINANCE

"I have had a great experience at the Mitchell College of Business with very helpful teachers and good resources to help me along the way."





# 3+3 THREE PEOPLE THREE QUESTIONS



**ELLEN MADDEN**  
Senior Instructor,  
Accounting, Mitchell  
College of Business

## 1 What are you reading?

Currently reading “Lost Roses” by Martha Hall Kelly. It is a novel based on historical characters and is set in New York and Russia leading up to and including WWI.

## Who is inspiring you?

My children inspire me every day. I observe their discipline and their passion for what they are doing every day and it inspires me to do the same.

## What is the best part of your day?

The best part of my day is seeing former students who have stopped by my classroom or office to bring me up-to-date on their careers. I love to hear about my “babies” who have gone on to such bigger and better things. It is truly humbling when they visit.



**LEAH BATEMAN**  
Management Student,  
Class of 2020

## 2 What are you reading?

“The Go-Giver” by Bob Burg & John David Mann. It reassures you that when giving you are achieving the greatest success possible. It has motivated me to help others in their best interests whenever possible.

## Who is inspiring you?

Elon Musk & Greta Thunberg. Elon Musk is a dreamer of extraordinary things and throughout his life turns his dreams into reality. He believes limits do not exist and people must work harder to get better. Greta is a persistent activist in climate change. Her messages and movements are so powerful. The two inspire me to go above and beyond the ordinary. Truly anything is possible and giving up isn’t an option. My interest in entrepreneurial endeavors are guided by the two who give me hope for the environment and a brighter future.

## What is the best part of your day?

The best part of my day is taking my dog Royal out for a run or playtime because her smile is so contagious it lights up my day!



**JIMMY SHUMOCK**  
Chair, USA Board of  
Trustees and Former  
CEO, Thompson  
Holdings, Inc

## 3 What are you reading?

I just finished reading the USA common read for this school year, “When the Emperor was Divine”, by Julie Otsuka, which was written about the WWII era in the US, but has lots of connection to things going on today. I also like to have an audiobook, usually some exciting fiction in the car, and currently I’m listening to “No Man’s Land”, by David Baldacci.

## Who is inspiring you?

My dad has always inspired me with his work ethic and his calm and giving personality. He and others have inspired me to give back, which is probably why I spend so much time and energy helping to advance USA. I’m also inspired by the student leaders at USA. I know they will make a big impact on our future world.

## What is the best part of your day?

No doubt, the Morning! As was cultivated as an only child, I still need my alone time. I work out, read, catch up on current events and news and plan my day.



# CLASS NOTES

## Class of 2011

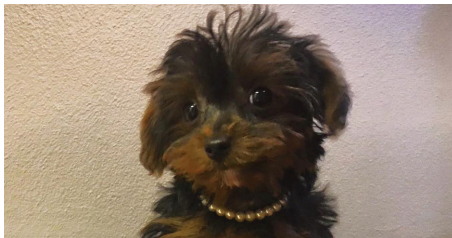
**Morgan N. Powell** (Accounting) is a senior accounting associate with Southeast Toyota Finance. Since graduating, she has traveled to Paris, New York City and Antigua and Barbuda.

## Class of 2013

**Jacob Crane** (Accounting) worked at Evonik Industries as a staff accountant for one and a half years before being hired by the University of South Alabama in 2015. He has worked in accounting for the Business Office and Facilities Management, and is now Supervisor of the development business office. Jacob is married and has a three-year-old son.

## Class of 2017

**Misty Bussie** (Exercise Science) is a telecommunication specialist at the Computer Services Center at the University of South Alabama. She recently started the MBA program. Her college graduation present was a puppy, a five-pound yorkiepoop named Nala.



## Class of 2018

**Mellisa Low** (BBA) graduated with a degree in Marketing and worked in the Office of Research and Economic Development at the University of South Alabama as a Program Specialist. She recently was accepted into the MBA program at Chapman University in Orange County, California.

**Samantha Borden** (Business Administration with a concentration in Human Resources) works at Infirmiry Health's Human Resources Department and started the MBA program at South.



**Devin Epps** (BBA) currently works in the Food Network Digital department as a culinary intern. He is primarily responsible for conceptualizing and writing how videos for social media platforms should be recorded. He also assists in the development of ideas to engage Millennials and Gen Z in the Food Network brand.

In July he was appointed to participate in the annual Summer intern project. His team was responsible for creating a show to be presented to the rest of the Food Network company.

His most recent adventure is learning to be a food stylist in the Food Network Test Kitchens. He anticipates food styling and video hosting will be the bulk of his job for the next few years.





# Notables



## MBA Team Takes First in Case Competition

The MCOB MBA team took first place and \$4,000 in a recent business case competition at the University of West Florida.

Mitchell College MBA students David Hinson, Jaikishan Maru and Rachel Smith beat out students from Illinois, Kansas, North Carolina and Florida.

The competition, open to all graduate students from AACSB-accredited schools, used a live case from a Fortune 300 company with over \$50 billion in annual sales and traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange. Teams of up to five students presented their recommendations to the company's executives.

Judges praised the USA team's recommendations as detailed, strategic and in line with the company's overall direction.

The students had approximately six weeks to review the case and prepare recommendations. Presentations could be no more than 20 minutes long, and each team's university was disguised with a code name in order to prevent bias during the judging process.

## The University of South Alabama chapter of the Financial Management Association

won Superior Chapter Award for the 2018–2019 academic year. This is the thirteenth year in a row the club has earned this highly coveted designation, which is awarded to less than 10% of FMA chapters nationwide. In order to receive this award the chapter had

to meet a number of specific criteria and excel in providing members with program activities such as guest speakers, field trips to local businesses, and the opportunity to attend the FMA Leaders' Conference in New York City. The officers and advisers of the club would like to thank last years' volunteer guest speakers and field trip hosts for their efforts, which made this award possible.

## Center for Real Estate and Economic Development: South Wins Real Estate Competition

A team of six real estate students in the University of South Alabama's Mitchell College of Business beat out teams from 47 competing universities to win the grand prize in the 2018 University Portfolio Challenge. All of the team's members were in Finance 446, which was taught by Dr. Reid Cummings, director of USA's Center for Real Estate and Economic Development, and the team's mentor. They began their project in late November 2017.

Their \$40,000 prize money will be matched by Mobile philanthropist Abraham "Abe" Mitchell through the Mitchell-Moulton Scholarship Initiative for a total of \$80,000 in scholarships for students pursuing the real estate concentration in the business school.



Jacob Corbett, left, and Taylor Shepherd, center, were two of six Mitchell College of Business students on a team that won the 2018 University Portfolio Challenge. Dr. Reid Cummings, director of USA's Center for Real Estate and Economic Development, and the team's mentor, right, taught the Finance 446 class.



## 2019 Financial Management Association Leaders' Conference

Sixteen student members of the South Alabama chapter of the Financial Management Association (FMA) attended the 2019 FMA Leaders' Conference on March 7th and 8th in New York City. Out of 30 teams from schools such as Auburn, James Madison, Temple, Butler, and Western Kentucky, four of our five teams made it through the exam portion to reach the second round. In the second round, two of our teams were knocked out by

one of the other South teams—not once, but twice! When the dust settled, teams from South Alabama placed first and second in the competition! Congratulations to our first-place winners, Hong Nguyen, Baxley Stokes, and Jesus Gonzalez Lopez, and our second-place finishers, Tyler Spidle and Lacey Dugger. A great day for the MCOB and the Economics and Finance department. Overall, the trip was a great experience, especially for those students who were visiting New York City for the first time.



## SOBIE Award

The Society of Business, Industry, and Economics presented Lauren Carrubba with the Student Presentation Award for "The Impact of Beta Dispersion on Stock Dispersion".



## Highest Honors Chapter: Honor Roll Scholarship Notification for the 2019 GLS

The Beta Gamma Sigma chapter at the Mitchell College of Business was awarded an Honor Roll Scholarship in recognition of their Highest Honors Chapter status. The chapter is dedicated to its students and to the society.

# Around The College

## Learning from Amazon

American Marketing Association, Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization, and the Society for Human Resource Management got together and hosted an event for their members to learn from a representative from Amazon. John Terzo gave these students an inside look into his life with this company.



## Fall 2018

The MAcc program introduced a new course, ACC 572, Fraud Examination. In this required course students learn about fraud examination from the perspective of CFEs (certified fraud examiners) and encounter a wide range of fraud situations.

## Build A Bridge

The Build a Bridge program provides high school students the opportunity to learn about entrepreneurship through teaching, mentoring, and participation in venture related contests. This past year, we had participants from 5 different schools with 24 students participating. This upcoming year, we hope to expand to more schools and host more workshops to help the students with professional development and to advance their pitching skills.

## Minority Business Accelerator

The Minority Business Accelerator is a 9-week entrepreneurial training series and competition for minority entrepreneurs. Our partners include the Mobile Chamber of Commerce, City of Mobile, Small Business Development Center, and Innovation PortAL. PNC Bank is the sponsor for the third year, donating \$25,000.



# Executive Leadership Series

Each semester, the Mitchell College of Business hosts the Executive Leadership Series (ELS). This event provides our students with the opportunity to learn first-hand from leading executives as they discuss their careers and leadership experiences. Their experiences bridge the gap between the classroom and the corporate world. Students are able to gain insight on how to actually put this knowledge into practice.



## CHUCK SCHMITT

On February 21, 2019, the college of business hosted the spring ELS featuring Chuck Schmitt, President, SSAB Americas. SSAB has been producing steel since 1878 and produces approximately 8.8 tons of steel annually. The company is the number one producer of steel plate and coil in North America. With locations from Mobile, AL, to Sweden, they have over 15,000 professionals in over 50 countries, totaling over 500 processing facilities. They produce steel for customers such as John Deere, Caterpillar, Komat'su, and TrinityRail.



## PETE HAYES

Pete Hayes is founder & CEO of Middleburg Venture Partners (a boutique advisory firm specializing in the technology, media, and telecom industries). He is also a principal with Blu Venture investors, a venture capital company that supports early state entrepreneurs. He previously served as Executive Vice President, Commercial Sales and Support, at Frontier Communications and worked at Microsoft in various leadership positions. Prior to Microsoft, Mr. Hayes worked at IBM.



## OLIVA HOST

Olivia Host is a partner with BKD, LLP. With more than 27 years of public tax accounting experience, she worked with KPMG as a senior manager until 2006. She established a private firm, Johnson, Bruce & Host, before joining BKD, a national CPA and advisory firm. An alumna of the Mitchell College, she is a committed philanthropist, having served on the board of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra, Metro Jackson Habitat for Humanity, Junior League of Jackson and Madison Ridgeland Academy.





## Experiential Learning

- On February 12, 2019 The Professional Readiness Engagement Program (PREP) hosted a Resume Workshop educating students on how to create documents that sell their skills through strategic summary statements that set them apart from other candidates.
- In April the PREP program selected 29 professionals from a variety of industries and disciplines to conduct 111 mock interviews for MCOB students. This allowed recruiters and community business professionals to get an exclusive preview of the talented students enrolled in the Mitchell College of Business and allowed students to hone their interview skills, receiving feedback on dress, body language, resume critiques, skill sets and getting advice on choosing a career.
- On April 2, 2019 PREP hosted an etiquette dinner which featured an employer panel discussion on topics related to networking and professionalism. Students had the opportunity to practice their networking and dining skills during a buffet reception following the panel discussion.

## Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO)

In the past school year, membership has increased by 360%. The organization's outreach also expanded into other departments on campus including Communications, Physical Therapy, Biology, and Computer Sciences. CEO was able to attend their first National Conference in Kansas City, MO where the students learned about professional development and chapter recruitment. CEO was also awarded Special Recognition for Student Organization of the Year by South Alabama.



## Coastal Venture Pitch Competition

The University of South Alabama Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (MCEI) hosted the Coastal Venture and High School Pitch Competition on Friday, April 12, 2019. This was especially unique as it was the first-year high schools students were eligible to compete. Twenty-four students comprising eight teams from Baker, Bryant, Davidson, Murphy, and Williamson high schools competed in the inaugural Coastal Venture High School Competition. Twenty college teams submitted videos during the weeks leading up to the event, resulting in six finalists. The top four contestants competed live, Shark Tank style, in front of judges and an audience comprised of students, professors, business professionals, and MCEI Board Members. Over \$20,000 in prizes and in-kind services were awarded to competitors.



# Community Involvement



## Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

The University of South Alabama Department of Accounting partners each year with the United Way of Southwest Alabama. Accounting students in the Mitchell College of Business are gaining valuable experience working for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, where they get hands-on experience in preparing income tax returns. This service is free of charge for those with an annual income of \$55,000 or less.

Student participation in the program counts as an internship, a highly valued accomplishment for their resumes. There are eight Mitchell College of Business Accounting students participating in this year's VITA program. These students go through extensive training and are prepared at the Advanced Level of Taxation. Over the last nine years, students have saved the community over \$1,030,500 in fees and obtained over \$5,000,000 of refunds.





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## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SPOTLIGHT

**PEYTON REGO** , ACCOUNTING, CLASS OF 2021

"The Mitchell Scholarship has enabled me to create the foundation needed for my future career. Not only has it taken the financial burden of a college education away, but it has allowed me to develop relationships with so many great people within the Mitchell College of Business. If not for Mr. Mitchell's generosity, my college experience would not be near as fruitful. The scholarship has truly allowed me to chase my dreams. With a lot of hard work and having the faculty here at MCOB with me every step of the way, I believe anything is possible. I cannot wait to see what the future has in store."

## THREE AREAS OF PRIORITY FOR THE COLLEGE INCLUDE:

### STUDENTS

The enrollment, education and graduation of outstanding students is of paramount importance to the Mitchell College of Business. Employers and other external constituents benefit from inspired graduates entering the workforce. In order to attract these students, the Mitchell College must offer competitive scholarships. The Mitchell-Moulton Scholarship Initiative matches any endowed undergraduate scholarship gift dollar-for-dollar.

### ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT

Advances in technology, changes in classroom design and active-learning teaching methods have drastically changed the educational environment. In order to maximize learning outcomes, the Mitchell College must incorporate these advances into the classroom. Join us as we embark on a campaign to update (classrooms and other) Mitchell College of Business learning environments.

### THE INTERNATIONAL EMPHASIS PROJECT

Our students will enter an increasingly complex and competitive global economy. Research and experience show that students who participate in global immersion opportunities are better prepared for competition in the global economy. The goal of our international emphasis project is to ensure the affordability of study abroad opportunities for all interested students.



