

# The Bottom Line

News from the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business

Fall 2020

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## Message From Dean Theodore Richardson



On our 40th anniversary, we celebrate the College of Business' evolution from our 1980 roots to Brevard County's premier business school. Now known as the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business, we offer degrees at the undergraduate level through doctorate, on campus, off campus and online.

Students can major in accounting, finance, business administration, marketing and more, which can lead to promising careers in all industries and at private companies. As part of "Florida's STEM university," the business college also offers many STEM degrees, such as the master's in accounting and financial forensics.

The college is accredited through the International Accreditation Council for Business Education (IACBE) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and is a member of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

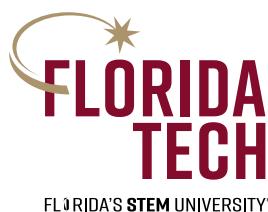
Our Women's Business Center, weVENTURE, continues to encourage and support future female and male entrepreneurs in discovering the possibilities of a future in the world of business.

The Center for Innovation Management and Business Analytics, Center for Ethics and Leadership and Center for Entrepreneurship and New Business Development not only contribute to research, but also enhance student learning outcomes.

Finally, the College of Business Advisory Board is key to informing our strategy, curriculum and direction with expert thought leaders in business today.

I hope you enjoy this edition of our college newsletter, *Bottom Line*, and continue to imagine the possibilities for pathways to success in business.

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



## Panthers on the Rise

UP B

Southern Maryland Education Center DBA student Tommy Luginbill is the director of TechPort, an unmanned aircraft system (UAS) business



incubator that, in response to the coronavirus pandemic, started using its 3D-printing capabilities to manufacture face masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE). Most notably, the team has developed a unique PPE sanitization device that is under review by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA).

He and his team's efforts received such an overwhelming community response that they started an official nonprofit, Southern Maryland (SoMd) Loves You.

"We've donated to homes, hospitals, nursing homes. People are very grateful to say the least," Luginbill says.

U

Kyle Younkin, a U.S. Airforce veteran, senior logistics analyst at AAR Corp. and student in Florida Tech's logistics management master's degree program,



was recently tasked with leading the Department of State Worldwide Aviation Support Services logistical response to COVID-19. Upon receiving this assignment, Younkin immediately applied principles from his coursework to planning, procuring and providing personal protective equipment for counternarcotic operations, diplomatic transportation and humanitarian relief missions around the world.

"The information from the coursework quickly jumped from the classroom and pages of the textbook to the shipping floor in our warehouse," Younkin says. "The team and I faced many daily challenges in this endeavor. However, utilizing the tools from academia I garnered from Florida Tech and my time as a munitions airman in the Air Force, we had the ability to overcome the challenges to operate in a near 'stock out' environment."

PA A '15 BA

Kyle Graham '15 MBA, a longtime weVENTURE mentor and former board of advisors member, has been selected to serve as one of Brevard County's business coaches for the Small Business Administration-funded COVID Emergency Business Support Program, which is sponsoring up to 31 local businesses impacted by COVID-19 to participate in weVENTURE's IGNITE 360 program free of charge.



In this new role, Graham coaches local entrepreneurs impacted by the pandemic to determine the best strategy for moving forward during this challenging time.

SA AB

With over 25 years in the semiconductor industry, demonstrating effectiveness in product and business development, sales and strategic marketing, Srila LaRochelle '92 MBA was appointed vice president of strategic business development at SkyWater Technology.



"I'm very pleased to join SkyWater at this time when the company is growing and evolving so quickly," LaRochelle says. "I look forward to being an integral part of identifying key areas of strategic growth and target markets, as well as collaborating within SkyWater to further develop, and establish new, business relationships."

PA '98

Adrienne Somerville '98 M.S. is one of 40 women selected to receive a 2020 Women of Color STEM Award at Career Communications Group Inc.'s



annual Women of Color STEM Conference. Somerville, who serves at the Naval Air Systems Command's Commander Fleet Readiness Center, was selected to receive the President's Award, one of the organization's most notable.

"As an African American, female Naval Aviation leader, to be recognized with this humbling, distinguished award is symbolic of a culmination of my years of service to my community and contributions to Naval Air Systems Command, the Naval Aviation enterprise and our great nation."

'93

After serving more than two decades and becoming a highly decorated officer in the U.S. Army, Anthony "Tony" Jimenez '93 M.S. went on to become founder, chairman and CEO of MicroTech, one of the most successful Hispanic-owned technology companies in the country.

Since MicroTech's founding in 2004, Jimenez has been named "Executive of the Year," "Most Influential Hispanic in IT," "Entrepreneur of the Year," "Small Business Person of the Year" and "CEO of the Year"

## Doctor of Business Administration Program Update

In these challenging times, Florida Tech Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) students continue to persist and do amazing things in their professional and academic worlds.

With 26 graduates to date, we continue to build our program with an incoming fall 2020 cohort of 19 students. Across all three current DBA cohorts, there are students enrolled from nine states, reaching as far north as Michigan and New York.

“Florida Tech’s DBA program structure allows working professionals the opportunity to explore key business topics in depth that can be applied in real time to our own professional work,” says DBA student Mathew Maxwell.

“It is a challenging program with all the rigor of a Ph.D. but organized in a way that it can be completed by working professionals.”

It is through our continued efforts to mentor and support our students that we encourage and motivate them to pursue their academic goals while balancing all other facets of life.

Most recent dissertations written by our DBA graduates include “Navigating the Glass Ladder: A Qualitative Exploration of the Challenges Women Leaders Experience throughout the Process of Promotion in the Manufacturing Industry” by Jamie Birdwell; “Situational Judgement Selection Test Utility: Implications for Police Turnover” by Marshall Jones; “Exploring Configuration Management in Department of Defense (DoD) Projects” by Manessa Threatt; “The Effects of Firm Age and Firm Size on Strategic Agility and Performance” by Jonathan Reed; and “Strategic Organizational Sustainability (SOS) Climate: Scale Development and Validation” by Petra Brnova.

Having grown up in a small Rhode Island town, Kelle Wendling '93, '97 MBA, first moved to the Space Coast to pursue

## weVENTURE Steps Up During Pandemic

While the coronavirus pandemic has affected business-as-usual in virtually all industries, arguably, no group has felt the impact more than small-business owners. Since the beginning, the small-business community has turned to Florida Tech's women's business center, weVENTURE, for resources and advice to navigate the uncharted territory, and it has not gone unnoticed.

In June, weVENTURE was awarded \$420,000 from the U.S. Small Business Administration under the federal CARES Act to expand its services, increasing capacities for its IGNITE 360® Mentoring Program and its personalized business coaching sessions, as well as providing educational training and information sessions focused on responding to the pandemic.

"During normal circumstances, weVENTURE helps women launch and grow their businesses," says Kathryn Rudloff, weVENTURE executive director.

and resources throughout the pandemic. While the pandemic has impacted many small businesses, weVENTURE has stepped up to provide support and resources to help women navigate these challenges. We have increased our capacity for mentoring and coaching, and we have provided educational training and information sessions focused on responding to the pandemic. Like many other small businesses, weVENTURE has had to adapt to the new normal. We have shifted our focus to providing support and resources to help women navigate these challenges. We have increased our capacity for mentoring and coaching, and we have provided educational training and information sessions focused on responding to the pandemic.

In 1980, gas cost \$1.19.

Post-It notes, the Rubik's Cube and Pac-Man hit the market.

Hair was big; shoulders were padded; the tech boom was just beginning.

And in Melbourne, Florida, a visionary physicist's fledgling university was ready to broaden its academic offerings outside of the science and engineering realms.

Yes, 40 years ago, Florida Tech established the School of Management and Humanities, today, the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business.

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Like the rest of the university, Florida Tech's business program was established to meet the needs created in and around Cape Canaveral by the burgeoning space program.

While science and mathematics courses were important, the business college's immediately impressive enrollment numbers were proof that professionals found development of their leadership, management and critical thinking skills equally valuable.

"I was there at the very beginning, and let me tell you, it was crazy," says Roger Manley, who worked for 33 years in the business college—starting before it was a college—and served as its second dean from 1988 to 1990.

The College of Business was built on core values of innovation, ethics, leadership and diversity.

And unlike trendy toys and hairstyles in... 40 years later, these values have never changed.

**BU-~~S~~ -~~SS~~A A -~~S~~ -~~S~~**

Jim Stoms, the first College of Business dean, was an engineer.

Manley, the second dean, was, too.

In fact, in the first several years, the business college's faculty, like much of the university's, consisted of almost entirely adjunct professors who also worked full time at the cape and other local technology companies.

While some accreditation boards at the time thought this reflected negatively on the institution, Manley says, Florida Tech found that the structure provided students with the breadth of real-world experience to make the learning practical, relatable and applicable outside of the course's primary subject matter.

"Adjunct professors who had good academic credentials and actual life experience brought so much more into the classroom than somebody who went straight into teaching without any real-world experience to draw from," Manley says.

While full-time, academically qualified professors comprise the College of Business faculty today, it continues to reflect the college's appreciation for professors with prior professional experience.

Abram Walton, business college professor and director of the Center for Innovation Management

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“The university was built to support engineers who were helping NASA put people into space.”





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