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Matt Kleymeyer puts his MBA to work for the Super Bowl
Every world-class city has a world-class school of business. By all measures, over the last several years, Indianapolis has become a world-class city. Our vision in the College of Business is to be Indianapolis’ world-class school of business and real life, real business will get us there. We are uniquely positioned to achieve this vision within the next five years and we are well on our way.

Help us make real life, real business permanent. The next step toward reaching our vision is to build upon the recent growth in the college and expand real life, real business, making it permanent. The experiential foundation of real life, real business takes significant resources to develop and maintain. It requires extensive investment in new programs and courses (research and development costs) and ongoing investment in faculty and staff. It also requires investment in physical facilities and technology. The return on investment is significant and real life, real business increases the value of a Butler degree for all alumni, regardless of graduation date.

Become a Shareholder. Invest in the vision of the College of Business by becoming a shareholder. We’ve recently developed The Shareholder Fund, giving you the option to designate your gift to the College of Business in one of four ways.

You can support the Real Life, Real Business Fund which allows us to explore new ideas and new opportunities for students or you can designate your gift to directly support the Butler MBA, the Master of Professional Accounting or Butler Business Scholarships for incoming students. A gift to the signature Real Life, Real Business Fund, allows us to develop new ideas, explore new opportunities and recruit top student and faculty talent. The other funds directly support the designated programs.

To become a Real Shareholder, use the reply envelope in the center or visit www.butler.edu/gifts. As a shareholder, your support will go directly to real life, real business and will have an immediate impact on our students, faculty and alumni.

We have also developed a giving plan for businesses and organizations who wish to partner with the College of Business. The Corporate Partners Program offers organizations a customized program for recruitment and recognition, while at the same time allowing you to demonstrate your commitment to Butler and our students through an annual gift to the college. Giving levels range from $10,000 to $50,000 per year and are personalized to meet your company’s recruiting, marketing and giving goals. For more information, contact me directly at crwillia@butler.edu.

Thank you sincerely for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Chuck Williams
Dean
Features.

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COB Nationally Ranked by *U.S. News*

For the first time ever, the College of Business has been included in *U.S. News and World Report’s* 2010 list of Best Business Schools. The College placed 135 out of 386 schools. Schools were ranked using feedback from deans and senior faculty at undergraduate business schools accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). Participants were asked to rate the quality of all programs they were familiar with on a scale of one (marginal) to five (distinguished). The COB’s ranking in *U.S. News* is its third national ranking in two years. In 2009, *Business Week* ranked the undergraduate program 63rd in its list of best U.S. undergraduate programs. In fall of 2010, *Business Week* ranked the College No. 36 in the nation for part-time MBA programs, and No. 8 in the Midwest.

Butler MBA Named a Best Business School by Princeton Review

The Butler MBA is one of 300 programs featured in the 2011 edition of *The Princeton Review’s* “The Best 300 Business Schools” guidebook. This annual guide of the top AACSB-accredited graduate business programs is based on data provided by the school and surveys from 19,000 business school students.

When asked about the Butler MBA, students pointed at the program’s flexibility and faculty as strengths of the program. “It is not a lockstep program, meaning that if I missed a class, I would not have to wait an entire year to retake it,” one student explained. “I travel frequently for my job, and I have yet to encounter a professor who has not attempted to help ensure I would be caught up when I return,” adds another.

Students rated the College of Business’ 42 full-time faculty as excellent. “They make themselves available to their students and truly enjoy interaction in the classroom. They have demonstrated mastery of their subject as well as an ability to relate theory of a subject to real-world situations,” students say.

New Faculty Join the College

The COB welcomed new faculty members: Jill Kirby, assistant professor of risk management; Stephanie Fernhaber, instructor of management, and Jim McKneight, instructor of management. Kirby joins the COB from the University of Kentucky, where she received a doctorate in finance. She has significant actuarial experience with CNA in Chicago. Fernhaber earned a doctorate in business with a major in entrepreneurship from Indiana University and recently taught at Iowa State University. In her role, Fernhaber coordinates the Freshman Business Experience course. McKneight has a juris doctor from Indiana University School of Law-Indianapolis and teaches business law, as well as the Freshman Business Experience course. He has been an instructor in the Real Business Experience course since 2006.

Welcome New Board Members

The COB welcomed new members to the Board of Visitors (BOV) and the Strategic Marketing Board. New BOV members include Eric Payne, senior vice president, Merrill Lynch; Joan Scott, Nike; Ted Lowrie, Fidelity Investments (retired) and Phil Berry, president, Northwest Pharmaceuticals. New marketing board members include Darcy Bowe, associate media director, Starcom Worldwide; Donna Gray, creative director, Matchbook Creative, and instructor, Butler College of Communication; and Greg Perry, writer, producer and creative director.

New Board Chairs Named

Curt Miller, chairman of the board of Katz, Sapper & Miller, was named chair of the COB’s Board of Visitors. Susan Kilkenny, director of communication and PR, Centaur Gaming, was named the chair of the Strategic Marketing Board.
Spring MBA Information Sessions

Want to learn more about the Butler MBA? The COB is hosting information sessions for prospective MBA students this spring. If you or anyone you know is interested in learning more about the MBA program, RSVP to mba@butler.edu or call (317) 940-9842. Information sessions are held in the Johnson Room in Robertson Hall on campus from 6–7:30 p.m. on March 2, April 13 and May 25. Additional sessions are held at the Ritz Charles in Carmel from 6:30–8 p.m. on March 22 and May 3.

COB Alumna Appears on “Today”

COB alumna, Marlo Scott, appeared on “Today” with Kathie Lee Gifford and Hoda Kotb on Sept. 17. Scott is the owner of Sweet Revenge NYC, a cupcake and wine bar in New York. Scott was featured in the recent issue of REAL and appears in commercials for Chase Ink. In her blog, Scott says, “I had an absolute blast with Kathie Lee and Hoda, taking the ladies through my cupcake, beer and wine pairings. We did five pairings while chatting the entire time. Both Kathie Lee and Hoda were over-the-top nice, fabulous, enthusiastic and full of compliments for what I’m doing with Sweet Revenge®!” To watch the video and learn more about Sweet Revenge®, visit http://www.sweetrevengenyc.com/blog.

Accelerator Releases Status Report

The Butler Business Accelerator shares its first status report, highlighting work in the classroom, on client projects and in the Central Indiana business community. Through service offerings that include business strategy, operational discipline, organizational development, marketing services and CFO services, the Accelerator has helped clients to see real results. The 2010 report outlines a few of these results and also features client stories. View the report online at www.butler.edu/accelerator or email bba@butler.edu for a copy.

Opportunity for Students to Study in Greece and Germany

The COB received a $175,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Business and International Education Program that is being used to enhance its international curriculum and travel opportunities. In a new course offering this spring, Doing Business in the European Union, students have the option to travel to Germany during spring break. Another new course offering, International Economics, is a three-week course that will be taught in May in Thessaloniki, Greece.

Ben Lytle Speaks to MBA Students

Ben Lytle, chairman of Univita Health, spoke to Butler MBA students on campus in the fall. Lytle led a roundtable discussion about his entrepreneurial work and how he and his son, Hugh, build healthcare businesses. Lytle and the MBA students also discussed the economy, how the recession has affected his business decisions, and the impact of federal healthcare reform on his business and business in general. The event was sponsored by the MBA Association.

Career Development Expert Addresses COB Students

Maureen Crawford Hentz spoke with undergraduate students in the fall on the topic of “How to be Found.” In her presentation, Hentz advised students on how to use social networking in the job search process. Hentz is manager of talent acquisition, development and compliance for Osram Sylvania Inc. She is a nationally recognized expert on social networking and new media recruiting.

COB Mentioned in USA Today and Sports Illustrated

Basketball player and COB student Matt Howard, was featured in USA Today and Sports Illustrated in the fall and in both articles, he talks about his experience as a fund manager in the Student Managed Investment Fund course. Luke Winn of Sports Illustrated wrote, “It seemed peculiar, then, that the conversation we had after Butler
practice on Thursday led with the most academic, white-collar topic I expect to discuss with any college basketball player this season: diversifying investment portfolios.” To read the articles, visit www.ButlerRealBusiness.com, select News & Events and then COB in the News.

PwC is Newest COB Corporate Partner

PricewaterhouseCoopers is the latest organization to join the COB Corporate Partners Program. The Corporate Partners Program provides organizations with customized recruitment and recognition opportunities. For more information on the Corporate Partners Program, contact Lori Norris at lnorris@butler.edu or (317) 940-9883.

PwC Partners with MIS Classes

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) frequently partners with Priscilla Arling’s MIS classes. In the fall, Heather Eggers ’08 and Cory T. Deeter from PwC Risk Assurance Services Group worked with students in the systems analysis and design class. Eggers and Deeter helped the students work through a PwC case study that is used to train PwC associates in assessing risks associated with information systems projects. To help bring the case to life, students interviewed people in the case and Eggers and Deeter played the roles of chief financial officer, chief information officer and project managers.

Butler Hosts Event on Doing Business in Latin America

In November, the COB presented a special lecture for the Indianapolis business community “Now’s the Time to Do Business in Latin America,” featuring Juan M. Solana, Mexican Consul in Indianapolis, and David Cademartori, professor emeritus, Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Valparaiso, Chile. Solana, an economist by trade, started his diplomatic career in 1996 as consul of economic affairs at the Mexican Consulate in Houston. In 2001, he was appointed as the consul of Mexico in Albuquerque, N.M., until his nomination to the consulate in Indianapolis. This event was supported by the COB’s Department of Education’s Business and International Program grant.

MBA Class Travels to China

MBA students traveled to Asia in October, visiting Singapore, Hong Kong, and Guangzhou and Dongguan in mainland China. The study trip was part of the Applied International Business course, which serves as a capstone option for MBA students. This class was focused on helping an Indianapolis-based, life sciences company identify market opportunities for business in Asia. During the trip, students and faculty visited Welch Allyn Singapore, Eli Lilly Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. In addition, students visited the U.S. Consulate in Hong Kong and had the opportunity to interact with and learn from U.S. diplomats who facilitate the implementation of U.S. foreign policy and the expansion of our business relationships in Asia.

Back to Earth Compost Participates in FFA Convention

Back to Earth Compost began in the spring of 2009 when senior Conner Burt created the company with partners Chris Clark and David Dolins as a part of the Real Business Experience class. The company provides clients with a bucket, lid and biodegradable bags to separate their organic waste throughout the week. At the end of the week, Back to Earth employees collect the waste and take it to Butler where it is composted near Bulldog Park, the Butler baseball field. The resulting compost is returned to the customers in the spring as garden fertilizer.

The company recently turned things over to a new
group of owners, led by CEO Thorn Murphy. Murphy, a junior economics and finance major, bought the business from Burt and has been busy expanding the operation and adding new customers. Other students involved in the business include juniors Jordan Harris, Nick Horstman, Robert Koteff and Craig McBarnes. Burt still works for the company as a supervisor.

In October, Murphy gave a presentation on behalf of Back to Earth Compost to 400 middle and high school students at the National FFA (Future Farmers of America) Leadership Convention in downtown Indianapolis. The presentation focused on how small daily acts can make a difference and why composting is a good alternative to wasting food. He then put his words into action by collecting the leftovers from a peanut butter and jelly sandwich activity to add to Butler’s compost pile.

Marketing Course Features Special Guest Speakers

On the first day of class, instructor Lorraine Phillips Vavul MBA ’91, had students in MK280 (Introduction to Marketing Principles for non-business majors) vote on which speakers they would like to come to class to discuss the impact of marketing on their profession.

Throughout the semester, guest speakers included Max Siegel, counsel, Baker & Daniels; Billie J. Scott ’75, owner and president, Billie Scott PR; Julia Watson, vice president of marketing, Indianapolis Downtown Inc. and John Kridelbaugh, vice president, market development + digital, StarMedia.

Siegel heads Baker & Daniels Sports and Entertainment Industry Team and is a nationally known icon in the sports and entertainment law area with experience in the recording industry. Siegel is the former president of Dale Earnhart Global Operations, former senior vice president of Zomba Label former president of Zomba Gospel and a published author. He is also shooting a reality TV show. Siegel discussed the impact of marketing on the recording industry, professional sports, automobile racing and reality TV production.

Scott was formerly director of public relations for Simon Property Group and spoke about public relations, including crisis communication. Watson discussed the impact of marketing and communication at Indianapolis Downtown. Kridelbaugh explained how the Indianapolis Star, via StarMedia, is diversifying its marketing strategy to engage the new generation of online users.

COB Faculty and Staff Support Butler Football

COB faculty and staff attended the Oct. 2 football game against Campbell. During this annual special event, football players ask their favorite faculty and staff to wear their jerseys in support of the team. From left: Anne Kelly, Debbie Skinner, Sunran Jeon, Jill Kirby, Ed Friel, Bill Rieber, Tom Litkowski and Jill Novotny.
The Butler Business Accelerator participated in the ExecConnect event in the fall, along with partners Barnes & Thornburg, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and Walker Information. The event was designed to educate mid-market CEOs on topics related to profitable growth and supply networking opportunities.

Matt Howard and Alex Anglin Throw the First Pitch at Indians Game

Matt Howard and Alex Anglin, Accelerator interns and Butler basketball players, threw the opening pitches at an Indianapolis Indians game. The game was part of a client event for the Butler Business Accelerator.
Make Real life. Real business.™ permanent

Giving to The Real Shareholder Fund will help us become Indianapolis’ world-class college of business. This portfolio of funds provides flexible resources that enable us to invest in real life, real business courses, programs, faculty and students.

Designate your gift to one of the following funds: The Real Life, Real Business Fund; The Butler MBA Fund; The Master of Professional Accounting Fund or the Butler Business Scholarship Fund.

Invest in the future of the Butler College of Business and help make real life, real business permanent. A gift of any kind is appreciated.

To make a gift to The Real Shareholder Fund, visit www.butler.edu/gifts or call (317) 940-9172.
United Way

United Way of Central Indiana

MBA BOARD FELLOWS PROGRAM

by Steve Hall

Helps Nonprofits and Students
Matt Kleymeyer, 28, just finished his MBA at Butler University. And, as a partner with the 2012 Super Bowl Host Committee, he’s helping the city’s movers and shakers plan the biggest event in American sports coming to Indianapolis.

How cool is that?

Kleymeyer and nine other Butler MBA students are experiencing firsthand the management of local nonprofit boards through the new Board Fellows program. During a 12-month period, they receive class training on the role and best practices of nonprofit boards, participate on the boards in a non-voting capacity, and complete a project for their organization.

“At my first Super Bowl Host Committee meeting I was sitting in a room with 20 of the most influential minds in our city, discussing and planning an event that will have a lasting impression on our city both financially and from a marketing perspective,” said Kleymeyer. He helps companies introduce and implement health-savings accounts through the start-up Bernard Health L.L.C. “At first I was a little shell-shocked, but that soon subsides when you realize you can add real value.”

Carmen Dacosta, 38, had a similar experience with her first board meeting at United Way of Central Indiana.

“I was passionate about what they were discussing and felt the need to jump in,” said Dacosta, who works part-time in IT support for St. Vincent Hospital and has an 8-year-old son. “A lot of these people were in their 50s and 60s, pretty big business leaders. It seemed a little intimidating, but everybody was welcoming and encouraged me to contribute.”

Other Fellows have been partnered with the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana, the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Indiana Blood Center and the Indiana Health Industry Forum.

Students are paired with a board liaison to help them navigate the workings and personalities on the board and identify and complete a project, as well as a mentor with experience working with nonprofits. The mentors are not on the specific boards; instead, they are a source of advice on how to deal with board dynamics and issues.

The Board Fellows program, which officially launched in January 2010, came about because the College of Business leadership felt the MBA curriculum had a hole.

“One of our goals is to develop MBA students who give back to the community, who use their business skills beyond their day-to-day job,” said Kathy Paulson Gjerde, associate dean for research and graduate studies and associate professor of economics. “In this instance there was a disconnect between what we’re trying to develop in our students and what we actually offer. The Board Fellows program corrects that.”

Around the country, other universities and colleges have Board Fellows-type programs offered through campus centers, such as a Center of Social Responsibility, or sparked by student interest. Butler faculty didn’t find a school with a similar part-time MBA program that also has Board Fellows.

Butler instructor Tom King, retired president of the Lilly Foundation, used his contacts and connections to secure the participation of 10 nonprofits.

“The nonprofits gain access to a MBA student with problem-solving skills — more of a consultant, really,” Gjerde said. “They also gain a fresh perspective from someone typically younger than the usual board member. Long-term, these Board Fellows have the potential to be the next generation of board members. They’re ambitious, but have a sense of social responsibility. For the nonprofits, this is their future.”

Students apply through a written application asking about their background, interests and motivation for becoming involved with nonprofits. Bill O’Donnell, Butler’s director of graduate programs, then interviews the most promising candidates and makes the final selections.

Butler officials were pleasantly surprised by the caliber of students who applied to be Board Fellows. About 250 students are enrolled in the MBA program, so receiving applications from 18 of the “best of the best,” as Gjerde put it, was thrilling.

“Their idealism was certainly part of the appeal,” she said. “These students might also be at that stage in their careers where they’ve already achieved a lot in their own field or profession. They’re willing to look beyond their employer to give back. It’s also a way for the students to make connections, network in the community and bond with each other.

“The Board Fellowship is not an easy road to take. It has more work than a traditional course, more outside meetings with nonprofits, more uncertainty and ambiguity in terms of course load and what you’re going to be asked to do. Students who are middle-of-the-road or just getting by probably won’t apply for those reasons.”

For Dacosta, nonprofit experience would be a nice addition to her skill set. “I have a lot of exposure to for-profits, but not as much with nonprofits,” she said. “Learning how they work and raising funds could help me down the road.”

Likewise, Kleymeyer’s MBA is in finance and his undergraduate degree in communications. “I wanted to take this hands-on experience and gain real-life knowledge in things where I’m not as well-versed,” he said. “I’m learning nonprofit finance, governance, the best practices system that many community leaders have.”

The Board Fellows enroll in the team-taught Non-Profit Board Management course for both the spring and fall semesters. Instructors for the course include Tim Robinson, vice president-senior investment advisor, PNC...
Wealth Management; Mike Simmons, director of global neuroscience advocacy and professional relations, Eli Lilly and Company; Judith Cebula, director, Butler University Center for Faith and Vocation; Karen Kennelly, owner and president, k-squared Consulting; Charles Williams, executive-in-residence, Butler University College of Business; and King.

The spring semester of the class, with Robinson as lead instructor, focuses on nonprofit board management. The fall semester, more of a seminar-style class with Simmons as lead instructor, involves the Fellows discussing their board experiences, using each other as sounding boards, and completing their independent projects.

“Sometimes I learn the most by just listening to peers and discovering how their interactions with their boards compare to mine,” Kleymeyer said. “The small group discussions are very helpful as opposed to sitting in a classroom and taking notes.”

For her fellowship, Dacosta serves as a sort of business analyst for United Way’s human services committee, which monitors the member agencies and human services available and needed in the community. She is examining how the umbrella agency can best update its database and how member agencies can update their information, upload financial statements or post agency data. Her project will ultimately help the committee identify and select a vendor for the necessary software.

While most of his classmates meet monthly with their boards, Kleymeyer interacts with the 2012 Super Bowl Host Committee when it meets four times a year. Early on, he met with President and CEO Allison Melangton and Mel Raines, vice-president, event operations and government relations, and expressed his desire to gain more experience and insight into operations.

He worked with a committee headed by Raines that began developing a financial model for a Park & Ride scenario during the Super Bowl. He wrestled with such questions as: Would it be a revenue-generating venture or just break even? Where’s the best place to station the Park & Ride? “It was really enjoyable to get my hands dirty in an operational setting,” he said.

While that project continued in the fall, Kleymeyer also got involved with Indiana Sports Corporation President Susan Williams’ subcommittee working to ensure that the practice facility for the American Football Conference (AFC) team at the University of Indianapolis will mirror the National Football conference (NFC) practice facility at the Colts complex on West 56th St. in Indianapolis.

“This is a celebration of our city, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to market and promote Indianapolis. I’m excited to be a part of it.”

The feeling is mutual. “Matt has played a crucial role in researching prior Super Bowl host cities’ success with Park & Ride systems as well as looking at the Olympics and other large events,” said Raines. “His ability to do financial modeling has helped the Host Committee focus on whether this will be feasible on our limited budget and to what degree we can run a robust system. Matt is an important member of our small team and will be helping us through February 2012.”

How will those involved measure the success of the Board Fellows program?

For Dacosta, guiding the United Way human services committee through her process so they feel comfortable making a vendor decision would be benefit enough. “This experience will help make me a stronger leader and give me the courage to actively participate on boards.”

For Gjerde, it boils down to students continuing to apply to be Board Fellows, meaning they’ve heard good things about the fellowship, and more nonprofits wanting to partner with Butler on the program.

“Some people would probably measure the success by how many projects were implemented and how many nonprofits were helped,” she said. “That’s nice, but I’m more interested in this being a learning experience for our students. The implementation of Project X to help the community is a byproduct of the learning experience.”

Kleymeyer agrees. While wanting Indianapolis to be a great host for the 2012 Super Bowl, he will measure his success as a Board Fellow by how much he has learned and how he can compound that knowledge with other experiences that may lie ahead. “I want to see where it can lead me in the future,” he said.
Launched in 2006, the Butler Business Accelerator has grown more successful every year thanks in part to its professional staff of seasoned industry experts and its unique use of undergraduates and MBA candidates on client projects. The Accelerator expanded its resources by hiring two MBA students — Ginger Lippert and Dave Ritzler — who each bring unique industry experience to help lead projects.

Lippert attended the 2005 press conference at Butler announcing a $22 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. that would help create the Accelerator. “As an alumna, that announcement was exciting for Butler and the College of Business,” said Lippert. “However, I did not know then how the Accelerator would impact my life. Five years later, it turns out to be my job.”

Lippert started at the Accelerator when she began pursuing her MBA in January of 2010. She is responsible for the coordination of the Accelerator’s internal marketing efforts including development of the Accelerator’s website and print materials such as the Accelerator’s first status report. She also works directly with Accelerator clients on marketing and sales projects, most recently for Pet Supplies Plus, a locally owned and operated pet supply retailer.

With her strong, executive-level background in sales, she has also overseen the creation of a new offering, the Key Account Accelerator. This offering uses a four-step approach to help a client understand what it must do to win an opportunity with a strategic prospect.

Lippert works directly with Melissa Beckwith ‘00, marketing project manager for the Accelerator. “Since marketing and sales projects make up over one-third of the Accelerator’s business, hiring Ginger has helped to balance my workload,” said Beckwith. “Ginger’s experience makes her an excellent marketing resource.”

In her former position as vice president of sales for TF Publishing, a publisher of calendars, posters and stationery products, Lippert experienced three different projects as an Accelerator client.

“That was a great learning opportunity for our company, and I saw value in the work the Accelerator delivered,” Lippert said. “Now working for the Accelerator I have an even greater appreciation for the results the Accelerator brings to Indiana businesses.”

Lippert says she has also gained a broader perspective of the sales and marketing field, which helps with her learning in the classroom. “In my previous
position I saw the sales department of one company. Now I see different marketing and sales functions as well as organizational issues in a whole range of industries. That's a powerful experience," said Lippert.

Like Lippert, Dave Ritzler had a strong professional career prior to joining the Accelerator. Ritzler, a CPA, began his career as an auditor for KPMG, a Big 4 public accounting firm. He then moved to a corporate finance role at Brightpoint, an international wireless distributor based in Indianapolis. The Brightpoint role allowed Ritzler to travel to 12 countries throughout Europe and South America, gaining valuable management experience. He started his MBA studies in 2009 while continuing to travel internationally.

At the Accelerator, he works with Chris Stump ’89, CFO Services project manager, on cash flow projecting, budgeting analysis and other financial services for Accelerator clients.

“As the CFO Services offering continued to grow, we saw a need to add an MBA student with skills that would help deliver value to clients and also provide a learning experience for the Accelerator’s undergraduate interns and client personnel,” explained Stump. “Dave is outstanding at combining his knowledge of business processes and financial statement analysis along with his tremendous teaching skills to help accomplish both goals for the Accelerator. He consults to help clients grow profitably and creates an excellent learning opportunity for everyone involved.”

One of Ritzler’s clients is Earth Images, an erosion control specialty subcontractor that has experienced a tremendous turnaround since engaging the Accelerator, and is poised for further growth in 2011. Ritzler works closely with Kevin ’98 and Laura ’98 (Slusser) Yurs to analyze financials, manage working capital and create operating efficiencies.

“I have enjoyed the impact we bring to clients such as Earth Images,” Ritzler said. “Seeing how Kevin and Laura have embraced and acted upon the recommendations provided by the Accelerator is truly exciting. We have all become part of the Earth Images team and look forward to building on the positive momentum generated in 2010.”

“I have developed a passion for the type of work we do at the Accelerator,” he said. “Ginger and I are learning executive-level concepts each day: leadership, management, strategic thinking. Because of our role, I am confident in my ability to gather data, perform in-depth analysis and make high-level decisions. My time at the Accelerator has allowed me to develop skills and techniques that I will use for the rest of my career.”

Lippert is still weighing various career options that excite her, but she already knows her “takeaway” from the Accelerator: the importance of building relationships and always having in mind what’s best for the client long-term.

“Accelerator’s projects for clients become long-term partnerships,” she said. “The Accelerator way — with its focus on commitment, selflessness and seeking constant improvement for clients and the Accelerator itself — is really the Butler Way. I am sure Dave and I will incorporate this philosophy into our future careers.”

Since this article went to press, Dave Ritzler has left the Accelerator for a new opportunity as Vice President of Finance for Our Health.
Libby Bates pinched herself so much this summer her skin was pink — perhaps Cupcakes Pink. The Butler senior couldn’t believe she was working as a web/retail marketing intern at Vera Bradley’s Fort Wayne, Ind., offices.

“This internship was a dream come true,” said Bates, 21, a marketing major and big-time Vera Bradley fan still using her faithful Bermuda Blue Hipster. “I can’t really get over that I was at the heart of it all.”

The Lawrenceburg, Ind., native loves Vera Bradley quilted handbags, luggage and accessories for several reasons, including those eye-popping, colorfully named colors. Very Berry Paisley, Hello Dahlia and Call Me Coral are a few. “Everything seems so fresh,” Bates said.

She also finds the story of the company’s founding inspiring. Two friends, Patricia R. Miller and Barbara Bradley Baekgaard, were awaiting a flight in Atlanta in 1982 when they noticed a lack of feminine-looking luggage. Within weeks, they had started their company, named after Baekgaard’s mother.

According to documents filed with the federal Securities and Exchange Commission this summer in connection with Vera Bradley’s first offering of common stock, the company racked up $289 million in sales.

“You have two women in Fort Wayne starting this company and making it super-successful,” Bates said. “It’s really a good thing to be a fan of.”

In fact, she wound up with the internship because she noticed a friend modeling products in the Vera Bradley catalog. It turned out her friend’s friend worked at the company. Bates contacted the Vera Bradley worker, who mentioned that internship openings would be posted on the company’s website in February. As soon as they appeared, Bates applied, and because she was studying abroad in Spain at the time, she interviewed for the position over the phone.

During the summer, Bates worked at Vera Bradley’s Industrial Road office in Fort Wayne. Her intern duties included helping open new stores in Boston and Rhode Island; working as
part of a street team introducing the company’s colorful fall line at a Vera Bradley store and Fourth of July celebration in South Lake, Texas; and analyzing the company’s effectiveness in e-marketing (emails, website content, Facebook) compared to competitors such as J. Crew and Tory Burch.

“I love both sides of retail, the e-commerce and the brick-and-mortar stores,” she said. “It was so cool to see both of these behind the scenes.”

For one project, Bates was given a company credit card and spent a day ordering numerous items from her favorite stores’ websites. Although the items were eventually returned, the Vera Bradley team first gathered to evaluate the ordering, shipping and delivery process, down to such aesthetic questions as: Is the packaging pretty?

As Bates wrote about the project in her entertaining, enthusiastic blog (verabradleyintern.blogspot.com):

“Seeing so many different check-out processes really started making me fussy,” i.e., detail-oriented, one of the eight core values Vera Bradley looks for in its employees. “I became quite the demanding online shopper: I want to be able to see graphics or my item the whole time I am filling out the shipping and billing forms AND want an online confirmation email sent to me seconds after I place the order.”

That experience was a lot of fun: “I highly recommend a little online therapy as a treat.”

Bates’ blog also covered store openings, special event dinners and an intern trip to the ballpark for a Fort Wayne TinCaps game: “I have to admit … we were too into our conversation to focus on the action on the field!”

She still can’t believe her blog attracted more than 4,000 readers: “Ohmigosh, that’s crazy!”

When Bates graduates, she hopes to find a marketing job with a company she feels as passionately about as Vera Bradley. “This internship has shown me the importance of working for something you really believe in and love,” she said. “That passion and enthusiasm helps you wake up earlier in the morning and stay at the office later in the evening.”

Incidentally, she was surprised to discover that although the Vera Bradley offices, products and female empowerment messages are “undeniably girly,” as she put it, the company has quite a few male employees. Nine of the 16 interns, for example, were guys working in the business services and information technology departments.

As Bates blogged, “Seeing the guys here made me think of new criteria for my future husband: He must be able to name the colors of the latest Vera Bradley collection!”

Libby Bates and interns with Vera Bradley co-founders Patricia R. Miller and Barbara Bradley Baekgaard (lower left).
It all started with a phone call nine years ago. Steve Champlin, director of football administration for the Indianapolis Colts, needed someone to teach four 90-minute financial planning seminars to their rookie players — a requirement of the National Football League (NFL). Bill Templeton, associate dean and professor in the College of Business (COB) at Butler University, was there to answer that call.

Bill Brooks recommended that Champlin reach out to Butler’s COB. Brooks, a former Colts wide receiver and then director of community and player relations, was familiar with the COB since he graduated with an MBA from Butler in 1996.

Champlin took Brooks’ advice and was put in touch with Templeton. A member of Butler’s faculty for 23 years, Templeton currently teaches a corporate finance course and oversees internships. He also is a part of several University committees, including chairing the academic committee of Butler’s National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) recertification process and serving on two strategic plan initiative workgroups.

The financial planning seminars — along with seminars in subjects such as public relations, guns and safety, domestic violence and personal conduct and safety — are held in the summer as a part of rookie orientation. Templeton covers basic topics in the seminars, including budgeting, taxes, credit management, investments and estate planning, noting with a grin that the players are “always shocked about what the tax bite will be.”

Budgeting is one of the key areas he covers because players are paid their base salary over a 17-week period and it is crucial that the players know how to budget their money for the rest of the year. He also likes to explain how to invest wisely for both tax purposes and retirement. Estate planning is another popular topic as most players want to make sure their family is taken care of should something happen to them.

“The NFL has a great pension and 401K plan they can take advantage of,” he said. “I emphasize for them to put their money where it is important to them.” Templeton added that most players are “very honest and real” when asked what it is they want to do with their money, whether it is buying a new car or a house for their mom.

There is no doubt that the rookies appreciate Templeton’s advice. Players often come back with a few questions or send him an email to ask for his opinion on an investment or option. “He’s become such a resource for the players — very thorough and prepared,” stated Champlin. “As an educational resource, it’s great to know he isn’t trying to push one investment over another. He’s objective. The players respect and appreciate Dr. Templeton. We all do.”

For Templeton, it is simple, “My main goal is to make sure the players don’t get taken advantage of by educating them enough to not be a target. If they understand a little about everything, it will prevent them from being at the complete mercy of a financial advisor.”
Redesigned Operations Management Class Takes MBA Students into Real Processes

On the first day of Butler’s Operations Management and Systems course, MBA students were given a case study of a business whose sales had grown dramatically and then fallen off rapidly until it was on the verge of bankruptcy.

After three students made presentations highly critical of the company’s current management, a “prospective student” supposedly auditing the class introduced himself: He was the company CEO.

“He spent the next hour talking to the students about this amazing journey that none of them would want to experience firsthand,” said Brian P. Landis, one of the class instructors and managing director of the Butler Business Accelerator. “It was a dramatic example of how Butler is raising the bar in teaching operations management.”

Previously a theory-based course, MBA 540 (Manufacturing-Focused Version) was redesigned to feature more contemporary case studies and become more interactive, hands-on learning. The 16 students heard from five guest speakers, worked through seven case studies (all based on the Harvard case study method) and toured:

- Nachi Technologies in Greenwood, Ind., which makes about 60 percent of bearings used in automobile air conditioning units in the world. Students found more than 35 world-class precision manufacturing techniques there.
- FedEx, an example of world-class logistics, at the Indianapolis International Airport. About 3,500 employees empty and fill up 60 to 70 planes a night between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m. in an operation timed to the minute.
- The Citizens Gas steam facility, an example of world-class maintenance and risk assessment. The plant still runs equipment from the 1920s and 1930s and poses unique safety issues, given that a steam leak is invisible — and strong enough to saw an inch-thick plank of wood in two.

For the final project, students were divided into four teams to formulate a mid-Atlantic distribution plan for H.H. Gregg. Steve Nelson, the company’s chief information officer, waited until after the teams had presented their proposals to reveal that the Indianapolis-based appliance and electronics retailer had already put the new plan in place.

“We had plotted out almost exactly where the new distribution center is,” said M. Beth Broviak-Petrie, 28, Butler’s assistant director of admission and coordinator of multicultural recruitment. “The rollout of the plan was different. We failed to take into consideration efficiency issues, such as underestimating the number of the stores the center could serve and also not paying attention to the location of existing centers that could train the store employees.”

The LaPorte, Ind., native felt MBA 540 was challenging but also useful in her daily job. “A high volume of applications come in, and we have certain processes to deal with it,” she said. “If we can streamline things a little more and use our information technology and database more efficiently, we could free our people and resources for more projects.”

Co-instructor Scott Troyer, a Butler executive-in-residence, conceded that “the students were sweating pretty hard. But they all walked away with valuable exposure to the ways real companies use operations techniques.”
In November, executives from AIT Laboratories in Indianapolis helped MBA students examine the concept of culture in the People in Organizations class, taught by Jerry Toomer, executive-in-residence and adjunct professor.

The class was studying the Denison Model, developed by Dr. Daniel Denison while at the University of Michigan Business School. It shows a definite link between organizational culture and bottom-line performance measures such as return on investment, sales growth, quality, innovation and employee satisfaction.

After describing the culture of their own organizations as ranging from “people-centered” to “resistant to change,” the students explored how culture plays a key role in fostering, or inhibiting, performance. AIT Laboratories Vice President and Chief Information Officer Dr. Ron Thieme and Director of Human Capital Derek Doddridge explained how culture affects everything AIT does.

Founded in 1990 by Dr. Michael Evans, AIT started off as a forensic lab. It often does the sample analysis necessary to establish a cause of death or distinguish between a criminal act and an accident.

In one case, a farmer was found dead in his field, Thieme said. A few feet away lay a syringe with an unknown substance. AIT researchers determined both the syringe and the farmer’s blood contained an antibiotic used for cattle, sheep and goats, but which could stop a human heart. With that knowledge, local investigators were able to determine that when a rainstorm came up, the farmer began running back to the barn with the syringe in his pocket. When he slipped, he accidentally injected himself.

In the last five years, AIT has become one of the nation’s top five companies doing compliance monitoring of the misuse and abuse of prescription medicine. “Did you know that in 2008, more people in Ohio died from drug abuse than in car crashes?” Thieme asked. AIT recently launched a division for the testing of pharmaceutical and bioscience products.

Senior management looks at AIT’s culture as strategically as it does its business model, Doddridge said. Evans, president, CEO and “The Keeper of the Culture,” makes sure the company reflects his core values: integrity, dignity and respect.

When he lost a major client and 85 percent of AIT’s revenue early on, he asked his employees to take a 25 percent pay cut rather than let anyone go. They all did.

One of AIT’s first corporate ads talked about its people rather than its high-tech science. The extensive “360-degree” interview process begins with a coffee or lunch in which a recruiter gets a feel for the person and asks 10 behavioral/situational questions. The potential hire also participates in multiple interviews with his or her immediate manager, the next-level supervisor and other key personnel. “We’re really interviewing for values and culture fit as well as skill set,” Thieme said.

Once hired, employees keep up on the company’s progress through monthly Meet the President gatherings — often now a thoughtful examination of how the uncertainty of health-care reform and moderating rates of growth will affect AIT.

“Our culture has probably put us in a better situation than most companies to get through tough times,” Thieme said.

“This class emphasizes applied learning at the MBA level. Students address real human capital issues and opportunities that face leaders in nearly every organization. The topics range from compensation and benefits to staffing and succession planning to organization culture.”

Jerry Toomer
Mike Koehler, assistant professor of business law, testified before a U.S. senate committee in November. Koehler appeared before the Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The hearing, “Examining Enforcement of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act,” which was chaired by Senator Arlen Specter (D-PA), was the first hearing about the Act, also known as FCPA, since 1998. Passed in 1977, the FCPA makes it unlawful for certain classes of persons and entities to make payments or offer things of value to foreign officials to assist in obtaining or retaining business.

Enforcement of the law is more prevalent these days because of the increase in business being done overseas. Recent bribery cases involving corporate giants BAE Systems and Siemens have also brought FCPA to the forefront.

Koehler joined other witnesses — Greg Andres, deputy assistant attorney general, Criminal Division, Department of Justice; Andrew Weissman, partner, Jenner & Block; and Michael Volkov, partner, Mayer Brown — because of his vast knowledge of FCPA and the issues surrounding it.

Koehler’s experience with FCPA began more than 10 years ago while he was an attorney at a private law firm in Milwaukee, Wis. He traveled around the world conducting FCPA internal investigations and assisting clients in reducing FCPA risk exposure.

It was during this time that Koehler began to question FCPA enforcement by the Department of Justice and the Securities and Exchange Commission and whether or not it was fundamentally sound.

“You’re not paid to question certain laws as a private lawyer; rather, you are often constrained by the issues your clients bring to you,” he said. “As I learned more and more about FCPA, I realized the way our government is enforcing this law is open to question and controversy.”

Making the move to academia in 2009 allowed Koehler to begin to ask the “why” questions. He also filled a void by becoming the leading academic voice on FCPA.

Koehler runs the popular blog FCPA Professor (http://fcpaprofessor.blogspot.com), recently designated a Top 25 Business Law Blog by LexisNexis. He is also an active publisher of FCPA scholarship. His recent 103-page article “The Facade of FCPA Enforcement,” was published by the Georgetown Journal of International Law. As a regular FCPA commentator, he has been quoted in The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Fortune, Reuters, Time, BBC World Service, Corporate Counsel, Bloomberg, Dow Jones, and Corporate Board Member.

Last fall, Koehler chaired the World Bribery and Corruption Compliance Forum in London. He also co-chaired a conference on bribery for the American Branch of the International Law Association in New York. Koehler gave presentations about FCPA at the Legal Aspects of Doing Business in India Conference, held at the University of Wisconsin Law School in Madison, and at the Georgetown Journal of International Law 2010 Symposium in Washington, D.C.

Although Koehler stated that testifying before the Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs may be the “pinnacle of his career,” he hopes his involvement with Congress doesn’t end. “I would like to be involved in any reforms of the FCPA and be viewed as a credible and reliable source by those making the decision.”
Sakthi Mahenthiran  
Sabbatical in Malaysia

I spent my sabbatical with Monash (an Australian) University in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. During the sabbatical, I taught a course in Performance Measurement and Control contrasting the practices in Asia versus those in the United States. The major research stream that I began was to study the Malaysian listed firms’ corporate sustainability practices. Currently I am working with a research team at Monash and the Minority Shareholder Watchdog Group, a public institution, conducting a survey of how the CEOs view their corporate citizenship responsibilities.

I am also supervising a doctoral student who is conducting research on the sustainability reporting practices of the Malaysian listed companies. This is an important topic for companies and the government of Malaysia because it is looking to the private sector to grow their economy. Malaysia is endowed with rich natural resources including natural gas, petroleum, and palm oil and has a population of 23 million people, most of who are Malay moderate Muslims. I served as a U.S. Fulbright Scholar in Malaysia from December 2002 through July 2003, and have established deep connections with institutions in Malaysia.

So, How’s Business?

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• Business Strategy  
• Operational Discipline  
• Organizational Development  
• Marketing and Sales  
• Finance

If you are interested in learning more about the Butler Business Accelerator, call (317) 940-6500 or visit www.butler.edu/accelerator.
Research Briefs.

Kate King, instructor of marketing, serves on the Pearson Prentice Hall Advisory Board, a group of 12 faculty from across the country who review interactive marketing curriculum developed for online delivery (My Marketing Lab). King was invited based on her experience with Pearson during the Project (RED) Challenge.

King also spoke at the Society of Marketing Advances Conference in Atlanta regarding “Innovative Uses of Social Media in the Classroom: The (RED) Challenge.” Social media (Facebook) was a vital part of the (RED) contest. By providing a virtual location for students to showcase their marketing plans, videos and vote for their favorites, students from across the country were able to share in a common experience.


Arling also has a paper accepted, forthcoming, on the characteristics of information systems that help individuals in organizations create new knowledge. The research studied the knowledge management initiatives of Pratt Whitney Rocketdyne, a maker of solid rocket boosters based in Los Angeles. (Arling, P.A. and Chun, M. Forthcoming. “Facilitating New Knowledge Generation and Obtain KM Maturity,” Journal of Knowledge Management.)

Peter Z. Grossman, Efroymson professor of economics, is writing a book on the history of U.S. energy policy. The book is scheduled to be published in 2012 by the Cambridge University Press. In recent years, Grossman has written extensively on energy policy. In his view, U.S. energy policy is typically made in the midst of a crisis and produces programs that promise a great deal but deliver very little. For example, he published a scholarly paper in 2008 entitled “If Ethanol is the Answer, What is the Question?” His articles on energy have appeared not only in scholarly journals but also in such publications as the Christian Science Monitor and the Indianapolis Star.


The study finds that supervisor’s trust mediates the relationship between supervisor’s leadership style and the subordinate’s autonomy, which have to be aligned to affect the subunit’s performance. The findings are important to understand the role that trust plays in institutionalizing participative budgeting processes during privatization of large public institutions in emerging markets like Malaysia.

Mahenthiran also authored “The Interaction of Communication Medium and Management Control Systems in the Processes and Outcomes of Transfer Price Negotiations” (Book Chapter Publication: Evolutionary Psychology and Information Systems Research, as a chapter in Part II – Empirical Research Exemplars, Chapter 11, Texas A&M International University 2010).

Today’s organizations rely heavily on computer-mediated communication (CMC), hence, it is important to understand the interaction between CMC and the management control systems on decision-making and on organizational performance. The study shows that negotiating behavior using CMC leads to lower profits in a transfer pricing scenario because of the interaction between the styles of negotiation and the incentive systems used.

The work demonstrates that organizations should be aware of these consequences and design control systems using the fundamental concepts from evolutionary psychology, so they can mitigate the negative consequences of using CMC.
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Teaching + Business Helps Ron Thomas Succeed in Executive Education

by Courtney Tuell ’99

Ron Thomas has always been interested in understanding how people learn, so it was appropriate that he began his professional career as a teacher. He was a high school English teacher and baseball coach at Fountain Central High School in Veedersburg, Ind., from 1979–1981. After receiving a master's degree in education from DePauw University (his undergraduate alma mater) in 1983, he taught English at Edgewood High School (Ellettsville, Ind.) and spent summers working at Indiana University’s (IU) alumni camp and conference center, Shawnee Bluffs, located on Lake Monroe.

It was while working at the camp that Thomas developed his second passion: business. “I worked with IU to build, and then run, a leadership course at the camp. I became certified to facilitate teams,” he said.

With a teaching and business background, Thomas was well-poised for his next venture — executive education.

“It was not just about how people learned anymore; I wanted to know how people within organizations learned and how you could use learning as the leverage to drive change within an organization.”

After enjoying a 14-year tenure with IU’s Kelley Executive Partners (KEP), Thomas joined Butler University this past September to head its new Executive Education Center, an executive education program that is housed in the College of Business but also serves Butler’s other colleges: Communication, Education, Fine Arts, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

Creating a program from scratch is familiar territory for Thomas. “A lot of things at Kelley had my thumbprint on it,” he said.

During his time with KEP, Thomas helped to introduce customized executive development programs to the market, making the Kelley School of Business one of the first business schools in the country to offer such programs. He designed these programs for Fortune 500 firms: 3M, Alcoa, AT&T, Brown-Forman, Coca Cola, ConAgra; Diebold, Dow Chemical, Dow AgroSciences, FedEx, P&G, Sara Lee, WellPoint, Whirlpool and Xerox.

Thomas also helped launch a number of consortia programs, including the Kelley Business Education Network, the Asia-Pacific Management Development Partnership and the Indiana Forum for Management Development. He also assisted in the development of the Indiana Service Partnership, Kelley Partnership for Leadership Development, a partnership with eight mid-sized firms located in southern Indiana, and the highly regarded Leadership Development Institute to pursue the development of high-potential mid-managers.

“I get a real sense of excitement when creating something that didn’t exist before. It’s one of the things that attracted me to Butler.”

While Thomas is still in the assessment phase, learning the needs of the business community and capabilities of Butler faculty and staff, he already sees opportunities for Butler to make its mark by creating customized leadership development programs for mid-size Central Indiana companies.

“I’m looking forward to the day when Butler becomes top-of-mind for executive education and to the day when other programs view us as a benchmark due to our unique approach to management and leadership development. The culture and values here at Butler are key foundations for this vision becoming a reality.”

To contact Ron Thomas about executive education opportunities for your organization, call (317) 940-8894 or email rgthomas@butler.edu

Butler University
Corporate and Executive Education
Scholarship Helps Pay for Internships at Local Museum

by Marc D. Allan

Twelve years ago, when he reached 50 years in the practice of business law, the members of Philip “Skip” Kappes’ firm, Lewis & Kappes, threw him a party. Since no one goes to a celebration like that empty-handed, Kappes found himself with a sizable amount of gift money and no clear idea how to spend it. He talked it over with his wife, Dodie. Both love Butler University — they met at a pledge dance at the Phi Delta Theta house (she was a Kappa Alpha Theta); he graduated in 1945 and she earned her diploma two years later. And both have been active with The Children’s Museum in Indianapolis, she in the Museum Guild, he on its board of trustees.

They decided to create a scholarship to pay College of Business students who intern at the museum. “We thought this might be a nice way to kill two birds with one stone,” Kappes said.

The Kappes scholarship goes to a junior or senior who must complete the internship for class credit. The internship is competitive, so the students go through the normal internship process at The Children’s Museum (which recruits from a wide array of schools across the country).

Since many business internships are paid, the Kappes’ scholarship helps make the Children’s Museum internship more competitive with other student internship options. This is particularly true during the summer for students who remain in the Indianapolis area to obtain a business experience and are interested in the nonprofit arena.

“Those who have reported tell us they get a pretty decent overview of the museum,” Kappes said. “In other words, they get to do meaningful things. They’re included in some of the management aspects of the museum. And I think the internship has some significant value.”

Mike Diefenbach ’10 thinks so too. He received the Kappes Scholarship in fall 2009. At The Children’s Museum he worked in IIT — Interactive Information Technology — which entailed maintaining computers and interactive technologies in the exhibits, including touch screens. He helped set up exhibits by installing and programming TVs and touch screens, and every few hours he would check to make sure everything worked.

“I enjoyed it,” said Diefenbach, who will return to Butler to get his MBA. “All the people were really nice and I enjoyed the department I was in.”

Karla McLaughlin, The Children’s Museum’s intern program manager, said Butler interns typically work in either marketing, special events or finance. Internships are project-driven or project-based, so a student might get as many as five projects to work on over a semester. Some do media and advertising plans, others do event planning and a few work in technology, as Diefenbach did.

And because The Children’s Museum internships are unpaid, the Kappes Scholarship enables Butler students to earn some money while they learn.

“We’re thankful to Mr. Kappes for the joint relationship we have with Butler,” she said, “and for help funding students to work at the museum.”

If you are interested in developing a similar program for a nonprofit organization, please contact Mary Ellen Wolfsie at mwolfsie@butler.edu.
After Working on a Class Project for Finish Line Grads Land Jobs There
A few months after working on a Finish Line project in instructor Kate King’s MK 473 class, Tyler Holmes ’10 and Jimmy Montague ’10 both landed jobs with the giant Indianapolis-based athletic retailer.

Holmes, 23, a Web content editor, oversees social media such as blogging — both coordinating the company’s blogs and working with independent athletic shoe bloggers when new products are released. The Goshen area native also stars in and produces Finish Line videos for YouTube.

Montague, 22, an e-commerce business analyst, facilitates e-marketing through emails and websites and works with the chain of e-commerce (how shoes get from Web orders to distribution centers to customers). The Cincinnati native is also taking the lead on developing an iPhone app for Finish Line.

Holmes attributes his job to the Butler MK 473 class. The teams of students studied Finish Line’s operations and then made formal presentations to executives on how to improve the company’s marketing and retailing efforts.

His team’s presentation detailed ways Finish Line could use social media to better market itself — basically everything Holmes has put into place since then. For example, any time someone makes a comment or asks a question on Finish Line’s Facebook page, Holmes or his team of three interns respond. “That’s rare for a local company to make that commitment and almost unheard of for a national company with 600 stores,” he said.

The team also recommended that a company this large should have a full-time social media coordinator.

“When I was done, (Finish Line CEO) Glenn Lyon shook my hand and asked, ‘What do you think about taking that position for us?’ I was shocked,” Holmes said. “Kate had warned me they might want me, but I thought Finish Line would ignore everything these crazy college kids suggested.”

Montague worked on a different team in King’s class. But he attributed getting his Finish Line job to initiative, follow-through and a bit of luck.

Roger Underwood, vice president of e-commerce, emailed King seeking student volunteers to come to Finish Line on a Friday morning to give their feedback on a new website. Fifteen MK 473 students volunteered; only Montague and Holmes showed up. They spent three hours talking with management about the website and ecommerce ideas.

Afterward, Montague contacted Underwood to thank him for the opportunity. He followed up a few months later, and ended up having lunch with Underwood and the head of the e-commerce department. The job offer followed.

“I absolutely love it here,” he said. “Finish Line has a great corporate culture, and the position matches up exactly with my skill sets developed at Butler and through internships. It’s exciting to be here as the e-commerce field keeps growing and becomes a real force in business.”
Butler Rises in the Rankings

#58 in the nation
up five spots from last year

#19 in the nation
for academic quality

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