


The Business of Difference Making® Quarterly

*May 2024 Commencement Speaker Jack Glover
Founder and Managing Partner of Incline Equity Partners*

 **DUQUESNE
UNIVERSITY**
Palumbo-Donahue
School of Business

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Palumbo-Donahue 2030:

ENHANCING
DISTINCTIVE
EXCELLENCE
(PD 2030) Strategic Plan



The School’s five-year strategic plan, “Palumbo-Donahue 2030: Enhancing Distinctive Excellence (PD 2030),” was approved in July 2024.

As was the case with previous iterations of the plan, PD 2030 emphasized engagement, innovation, and impact, aligning with both the University’s larger strategic plan and with expected benchmarks for Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business’s (AACSB) accreditation standards. These themes are interwoven throughout the narrative and goals of PD 2030 and will be reflected in all aspects of the School’s work, from planning to student education and faculty development. Strategic planning is adaptive and ongoing, with progress on PD 2030 to be assessed annually and reviewed biannually.

ROAD MAP TO PD 2030

In 2022–2023, the School began reviewing the prior strategic plan, “Palumbo-Donahue 2025: Achieving Distinctive Excellence.” During the Summer of 2023, the School’s Leadership Team (LDRT) conducted two day-long retreats, completed a new SWOT analysis, and drafted revised mission, vision, and values statements. Subsequently, the LDRT also drafted stratgic goals and means to achieve.

Along the way, the School solicited feedback at every step for draft elements of the PD 2030 plan from faculty, staff, students and members of School advisory councils. Specifically, revised vision, mission, and values statements were shared for feedback during the Fall of 2023. In Spring 2024, the revised strategic goals and high level means-to-achieve statements were shared for feedback. The LDRT then reviewed and incorporated this input into final drafts. We thank our constituencies for their support during the process of developing PD 2030.

In particular, members of the School’s advisory councils provided wonderful feedback and a variety of excellent suggestions for all aspects of the draft plan. Council members (typically alums) are high ranking business professionals and leaders representing various disciplines and industries—as a group they are highly engaged, offering critical advice and council on a regular basis while also supporting the School financially.

Indeed, we owe a special note of thanks to members of the Strategic Review Working Group (SRWG) for their help in developing PD 2030. Comprised of six members from various advisory councils, the SRWG was formed in 2023 and met monthly during 2023–2024 to review draft elements of the PD 2030 plan, make suggestions, and provide direction for the process. In doing so, they provided invaluable guidance and feedback that we are most grateful for.

SRWG MEMBERS INCLUDED

- Jared Hoff (B’00), Investment Strategy Institute Advisory Council
- Justin Mallgrave, Information Systems and Technology Advisory Council
- Heidi Murdy-Michael (A’96), Business Advisory Council
- Enzo Santilli (B’93), Accounting Advisory Council
- R. Dale Stephenson (B’87), Sales and Marketing Advisory Council
- David Warco (B’79), Business Advisory Council

Now that PD 2030 is approved, next comes the development of a high-level, comprehensive brochure version. This will be shared in due course and we are eager to showcase how our new strategic plan will help the School achieve even greater success between now and 2030.

BUAD 111: Business Math
A NEW APPROACH TO INNOVATIVE LEARNING

A successful business education requires a strong foundation in math that effectively connects math concepts to business problems and applications.

In the Spring 2024 term, the School of Business launched **BUAD 111: Business Math** as an initial pilot with two sections. Beginning with the Fall 2024 term, Business Math will be part of the School’s undergraduate core curriculum, with enough sections offered every semester to serve all business students.

This initiative to bring math instruction into the School instead of continuing to offer courses taught by the Math Department, was the result of a careful assessment. We concluded that School faculty could offer a more applications-oriented course specific to business needs, one that would cover those math concepts most appropriate to today’s business environment. The master syllabus for BUAD 111 reflects this intent, one overwhelmingly supported by business faculty.

Led by two of our best faculty, Drs. Ryan Luchs and Kathryn Marley deserve enormous credit for spearheading the business math initiative. The pilot sections in Spring 2024 were very successful and resulted in extremely high success rates for students that helped us improve retention in an important “gateway” area. Indeed, Ryan and Kathryn have brought a winning combination of deep applied math expertise and outstanding teaching skills to BUAD 111. Our students are benefiting as a result.

RANKINGS

School of Business Rises in 2024 Rankings

The School jumped nine spots to 68th in the **Poets & Quants 2024 Best Undergraduate Business Schools** list.

- The rankings measure three criteria:
- Student experiences while in the School
 - Career outcomes after graduation
 - Admissions standards



Only around 1,000 of the roughly 15,000 business schools and programs in the world have earned Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation, including Duquesne.

Of these 1,000 AACSB-accredited business schools, less than 10% appear each year in the **Poets & Quants** best undergraduate program ranking. This puts our School in elite company.

Moreover, for the 6th year in a row, our School’s best performance was in the student experience category. This aligns with our mission of preparing difference-making business professionals who lead with integrity and serve others in the Spiritan tradition.



Dr. Kathryn Marley



Dr. Ryan Luchs

Moreover, Business Math is structured to accommodate varying levels of student high school math preparation while addressing the unique needs and skills of business students.

The goals of Business Math include:

- Setting students up for success in subsequent courses.
- Improving confidence.
- Ensuring students have the necessary quantitative skills to succeed in the business world.
- Supporting a strategic approach to enhancing student outcomes and retention.

Aligning mathematical instruction more closely with the needs of business students underscores the School’s commitment to creating a supportive and effective educational environment that prepares students for the challenges they will face in the business world.

On the graduate side, our One-Year MBA program was again No. 1 in the U.S. and rose to No. 2 in the world by **Corporate Knights Better World MBA** Ranking.

Corporate Knights evaluated 209 business schools against two performance indicators:

- Proportion of courses that integrate relevant, sustainable development themes.
- Percent of recent alums working for organizations making an environmental or social impact.



These rankings are a testament to the Palumbo-Donahue School of Business’ unwavering commitment to fostering a difference-making education for our students.

Master of Science in Entrepreneurial Leadership
LAUNCHES FALL 2024

The School is proud to announce the Fall 2024 launch of its Master of Science in Entrepreneurial Leadership (MS-EL) program. This 30-credit graduate degree aims to equip students with the essential skills to launch new ventures and lead organizations through strategic change.

Emphasizing innovation, vision, and strategic leadership, the MS-EL program is ideal for aspiring entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs alike.

FLEXIBLE AND PERSONALIZED LEARNING EXPERIENCE

A standout feature of the MS-EL program is its flexibility. Students can complete the degree at their own pace, typically within 3 to 6 semesters, with entry points available in the spring, summer, and fall terms. While most of the program can be completed online, several courses feature high-impact in-person evening or weekend sessions. These sessions enhance the learning experience by providing hands-on opportunities for collaboration and practical application of entrepreneurial concepts. The MS-EL comprehensive curriculum equips students with essential entrepreneurial and leadership skills.

STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Students will create and innovate in the School’s Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship, which includes the Louis D. Mallet Entrepreneurship Zone and Bob’s Launch Pad—an innovative makerspace designed for idea generation, problem-solving, and business planning. Bob’s Launch Pad features areas equipped for designing digital applications and physical products with rapid prototyping tools.

THRIVING ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

Combined with the School’s thriving Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship offers students a strong connection to the regional entrepreneurship ecosystem. This connectivity will provide students with invaluable networking opportunities and access to resources that can help turn innovative ideas into successful ventures. For example, MS-EL students can develop their skills and gain superb experience by acting as supporting consultants for the SBDC, which offers a variety of consulting services for entrepreneurs and small business owners across the region.

HANDS-ON LEARNING AND COMPETITIONS

MS-EL students can also participate in the Duquesne New Venture Challenge (DNVC), where entrants pitch their business ideas and compete for funding. This three-stage competition is open to entrepreneurs nationwide, offering mentorship and prizes collectively worth over \$100,000 as well as free business planning software, connections to industry experts and access to regional funding sources.

PREPARING FUTURE LEADERS

The MS-EL program blends theory and practical experience to prepare students for success. By combining flexible learning options, personalized support, access to cutting-edge resources, and a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem, the MS-EL program prepares students to lead with innovation and vision in the ever-evolving business landscape.



Entrepreneurship students prototyping products in Bob’s Launch Pad.

Business Students Excel in Community Service

MAKING A DIFFERENCE-MAKING CONTRIBUTION TO PITTSBURGH’S VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA) COALITION

In an outstanding display of community engagement, experiential learning, and academic excellence, Duquesne University’s School of Business accounting undergraduate students volunteered more than 800 hours and prepared over 400 tax returns for Pittsburgh’s VITA Coalition, operating under the United Way.

Under the supervision of Dr. Amy Yurko, 18 accounting majors underwent rigorous training as VITA volunteers, gaining in-depth knowledge of federal, state, and local income taxation. To participate, students must pass IRS certification exams and commit to weekly volunteer work throughout the tax season. Duquesne students provided in-person assistance, ensuring more personal and direct client service, at five locations across the area that included JustHarvest Southside, JustHarvest Bedford, Veterans Leadership Program on Smallman Street, North Hills Community Outreach in Millvale, and the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh Hazelwood.

These sites offered free tax preparation services, a crucial resource for low-to-middle-income individuals and families. Tax preparation can be confusing for individuals, and hiring outside help is often cost-prohibitive.



Pictured from left to right are nine of the 18 student volunteers: Thomas de San Martin, Christin Hoang, Joseph Isabella, Brannon Alexander, Justice Giordano, Daniel Ventoura, Jonathan Rambo, Maddi Fronius, and Grace Malloy. Not Pictured: Michael Appgar (two-year volunteer), Jason Garland, Emilia Koleva, Bilal Malik, Judge Murray, Samuel Orecchio, Jacob Rebel, Wiliam Scott, and Blake Willett.

The VITA program offers a free alternative, expertly guiding individuals through the intricacies of tax filing—alleviating financial stress and empowering financial literacy. The VITA program stands out for its ability to e-file federal and state returns, providing a comprehensive service to those in need.

Our students’ commitment and hard work highlight the intersection of academic learning and community service. Volunteering with the VITA program allowed them to apply their classroom knowledge to real-world situations, demonstrating their impressive practical skills and making a tangible difference in their community.

This initiative reflects the Spiritan values of Duquesne, fostering not only academic excellence but also a profound sense of social responsibility. The combined efforts of the students and their faculty advisor, Dr. Amy Yurko, resulted in over \$700,000 in refunds for our clients—a staggering figure that underscores the difference-making impact of this initiative. Their work is a source of pride for the School of Business and the entire Duquesne community.

ROCKWELL HALL

Summer 2024 Rockwell Hall Renovations

8th FLOOR OF ROCKWELL HALL: PHASE I

The 8th floor of Rockwell Hall underwent significant renovations this summer as part of a multi-phase project to modernize the floor. This Phase I project cost nearly \$2 million and encompassed several critical improvements, including newly redesigned, enlarged, and updated ADA-compliant restrooms, a new single use restroom, new carpeting in faculty offices, new heating and cooling systems (including new HVAC equipment in faculty offices), fire suppression sprinklers, and a redesigned elevator lobby featuring open ceilings, flooring, and lighting similar to the other recently renovated floors.

Phase II of the 8th floor renovation will include redesigned “inner ring” spaces (e.g., new kitchenette, student collaboration spaces, and other enhancements). The timing of Phase II will depend on how quickly the necessary funds can be raised as well as the scheduling of other facilities-related projects on campus. Regardless, whenever Phase II construction occurs, we expect that faculty will not need to move off the floor for the summer as they did with Phase I.

NEW ROOF FOR ROCKWELL HALL

Another project this summer was the replacement of the roof on Rockwell Hall. This essential upgrade ensures the building’s infrastructure remains in top condition, providing a safe and comfortable environment for students, faculty, and staff. The project reflects Duquesne’s commitment to investing in and maintaining its facilities.

UPGRADED COMPUTER LAB 103

The computer lab on the 1st floor of Rockwell Hall (103) was also upgraded this summer with new computers, printers, furniture, and carpet. According to Computing and Technology Services, the renovated lab will be used for testing and training events. Otherwise, the lab will be open for students’ use when no testing or training events are scheduled. Students will have card swipe access from 8 AM to 9 PM, Monday through Friday, and 12 to 4 PM, Saturday and Sunday.

Stay tuned for the Fall 2024 BDMQ, where we will share before and after photos of 8th floor Phase I renovations.

Welcome to New Department Chairs, Faculty, and Staff

NEW DEPARTMENT CHAIRS (Each chair’s term began on 7/1/24)

DR. AKWASI OPOKU-DAKWA

Management and Marketing Department Chair
Associate Professor of Management

Dr. Opoku-Dakwa teaches Principles of Management, Human Resources, Organizational Behavior, and Business Ethics at the undergraduate and graduate levels. His research examines how society’s expectations of corporate environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance affect employees’ work experience and, conversely, how employees contribute to corporate ESG performance.



Ph.D. in Organizational Management, Rutgers University; M.B.A., International Institute for Management Development, Switzerland; B.S. in Civil Engineering, Brown University

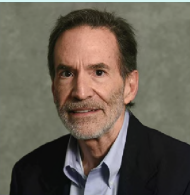
DR. GOKHAN SONAER

Economics and Finance Department Chair
Associate Professor of Finance

Dr. Sonaer teaches Financial Markets and Institutions, International Financial Management, and Business Finance courses at the undergraduate level. His research interests lie mainly in investments and corporate finance, with emphasis on topics such as institutional investors and market efficiency.



Ph.D. in Finance, Virginia Tech University; M.B.A., University of North Carolina, Charlotte; M.S. and B.S. in Civil Engineering, Middle East Technical University



DR. WILLIAM E. SPANGLER

Accounting, Information Systems, and Supply Chain Management Department Chair
Professor of Information Systems and Technology

Dr. Spangler has taught various technical and managerial courses in information systems, focusing in the past few years on information systems auditing, control, and security. His research interests have focused on computational modeling for decision support in complex systems, machine learning, and data mining.

Ph.D., in Artificial Intelligence and Information Systems, University of Pittsburgh; M.B.A., University of Hawaii, B.A., University of South Florida

TRICIA BRANCOLINI-FOLEY

Program Director of Marketing and Communication

Prior to joining Duquesne, Tricia spent over 20 years working in Pittsburgh’s arts and nonprofit sectors. A founding member of the nonprofit Handmade Arcade, she served as its Executive Director for over eight years. Tricia is excited to bring her strategic vision and understanding of communication and design to the School of Business.



M.S. in Multimedia Technology and Digital Communication, Duquesne University; B.A. in English Literature and Media Art, Chatham University

KATY OWENS

Director of Business and Administration

Before joining Duquesne, Katy worked at Montana State University for seven years, overseeing a team of accountants and managing finances for multiple departments. She has a diverse accounting background in a variety of industries, including financial services, tax and accounting offices, HVAC, solar, construction/restoration/mitigation, and farming.



B.A. in Liberal Studies, California State University, Chico; Certificate of Applied Science in Bookkeeping, Montana State University

SLOAN SPINKS

Administrative Assistant, Eugene P. Beard Center for Student Success

Her previous roles include Admissions Coordinator and Student Success Manager at Pittsburgh Technical College and member of the enrollment team at Mercyhurst University. Sloan enjoys supporting students, staff, and the University as they work together to reach their bigger goals.



B.A. in Integrative Arts, Penn State University

NEW FACULTY MEMBER, FALL 2024

DR. YEONJEONG (YJ) KIM

Assistant Professor of Management

Dr. Kim brings a wealth of academic experience from her previous roles. Before joining Duquesne, Dr. Kim worked at the Center for Collective Intelligence at MIT’s Sloan School of Management as a Postdoctoral Associate. Additionally, Dr. Kim was an affiliated researcher at the Collaboration and Conflict Research Lab at Carnegie Mellon’s Tepper School of Business, where she also held the role of adjunct professor. Dr. Kim’s research focuses on three broad topics: moral character and business ethics, conflict management and team performance, and employee selection.

Ph.D. and M.A. in Organizational Behavior and Theory, Carnegie Mellon University; M.S. in Statistics and M.A. in Quantitative Methods, Measurement, and Evaluation, Yonsei University; B.A. in Education and English Language and Literature (dual degree), Yonsei University



Difference-Making Capstone Courses, Spring 2024

The School’s project-based approach pushes our students to learn while doing by working with industry professionals. Our students are immersed in carefully designed experiential learning from their first semester to their last. From cornerstone-to-capstone curricular experiences to co-curricular competitions, in any given academic year there are dozens of class-embedded and external opportunities for students to be difference makers with real impact.

MGMT 499W: Strategic Management Capstone
INTEGRATIVE LEARNING AND STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING

The Strategic Management Capstone is a signature core course required for all business undergraduates. Typically taken senior year and offered every term, it requires students to draw on knowledge from all previous business courses as well as theories, concepts, and tools from strategic management.

The key experiential part of the course is an embedded corporate project and competition in which students are tasked with solving a strategic management challenge. In Spring 2024, students in all sections of the course worked in teams to develop a growth strategy for **Pittsburgh Dental Sleep Medicine, Inc.** In doing so, students explored ideas ranging from geographic expansion, to offering services for temporomandibular disorders (TMDs), to merging with or acquiring another practice.

The finalist teams earned the right to present their ideas to company management, splitting several thousand dollars in prize money in the process. The winning team recommended a network-wide expansion of TMD treatment and a new pricing model for the service. The team’s solution was easy to implement, required little capital investment, and could be rolled out quickly. Moreover, their financial model and implementation plan showed students’ ability to think critically and explore creative possibilities while recommending original and difference-making solutions.



Winning team pictured left to right: Gabriel Kanyongo, Reuben Nepo, Catherine Gloekler, Iryna Luchynyn, and Milan Bajich. Each student received \$300 for their achievement.

BUBA 490W: Business Analytics Capstone
REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES AND STUDENT SUCCESS

The Business Analytics Capstone course is required for students in the Business Analytics co-major. Students in the course must draw on technical analytics and communication skills to bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world application while incorporating significant data analysis. In the Spring 2024 semester, students utilized Evoqua’s chemical dosing data to develop a method for using fewer chemicals and being more accurate with dosing while keeping water within certain specifications—driving down the costs of the chemicals and service while improving profitability.

A multi-billion-dollar firm, Xylem creates innovative solutions to dramatically improve how water and wastewater are used, managed, conserved, re-used, and returned to nature. **The winning team included Seniors Alec Asti, Declan Hill, and Luke Smith.** Their outstanding performance exemplified the culmination of practical knowledge and analytical expertise in the School’s business analytics curriculum. *Congratulations to all participants for their dedication and to the winning team for their exceptional achievement.*



ECON 484W: Advanced Econometrics Capstone
SHOWCASING STUDENT EXCELLENCE IN ECONOMIC RESEARCH

The Econometrics Capstone course is required for all economics majors and highlights the analytical skills of students through individual semester-long research projects. Each spring term, the capstone project begins with students proposing their original research topics to Dr. Risa Kumazawa. The topics must meet specific criteria, including data availability, application of economic theory, accessibility of relevant literature, and the ability for a student to complete their proposed research in one semester. The Econometrics Capstone provides a platform for students to use various statistical tools and demonstrate their research skills while fostering a deeper understanding of economic analysis and its applications to real-world challenges. Members of The Economic Club of Pittsburgh’s Board of Directors attend and judge students’ final research presentations, using a rubric including various content and delivery criteria.

The **winner for the Spring 2024 term was Mia Lubrani** for her research entitled, “Demographic Impacts on Homeownership in the United States.” Mia effectively explained the motivation behind her topic, shared the relevant literature, and clearly detailed her theoretical framework and empirical model. Her ability to present complex information in an understandable and engaging manner was impressive. **For her hard work, Mia was awarded the 1st place \$500 cash prize.** *(Kaipo Marshall won 2nd place, receiving \$250. Marin Laffey won 3rd place, receiving \$100.)*



Congratulations to Mia Lubrani (back row, third from the left) for her outstanding achievement and to all participants for their dedication and hard work.

Partnerships that Transform Students

Both undergraduate and graduate courses are embedded with projects assigned by corporate, university, and nonprofit partners.

The following courses are examples of real-world, hands-on learning offered by the School.

ACCT 215: MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTING

Students completed a business segmentation for a small business, Red Roses Floral. *(Faculty: Val Williams)*

ACCT 411: AUDITING

Students performed an audit of a fictional company, **Alchemy**. The project hosts volunteers from a variety of partner companies who act as the Audit Committee chair and Committee members. *(Faculty: Val Williams and Bob Kollar)*

ACCT 802: INTERNAL AUDITING

Students competed in the IIA/ACFE presentation contest. Article on page 20. *(Faculty: Val Williams)*

ACCT 802: ASSOCIATION FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Students did an audit of the **ATD Organization** and presented their adjustments, audited financials, and suggestions to enhance controls. *(Faculty: Val Williams)*

MKTG 373: SALES FUNDAMENTALS

Ally Financial presented a written sales scenario and acted as buyers for the students to role-play a sales meeting. Ally visited the classroom three times to help prepare students for the role-play and sent four representatives to act as buyers during the students’ final role-play scenarios. *(Faculty: Andrea Dreher)*



MKTG 373-03: SALES FUNDAMENTALS

Sherwin-Williams presented a written sales scenario and acted as buyers for the students to role-play a sales meeting. Sherwin-Williams visited the classroom three times to help prepare students for the role-play and sent four representatives to act as buyers during the students’ final role-play scenarios. *(Faculty: Andrea Dreher)*



MKTG 374W: MARKETING RESEARCH

The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra tasked students with helping them better understand Gen Z’s music preferences and consumption. The goal was to improve marketing communication and incorporate initiatives that attract a younger audience to music events. *(Faculty: Georgiana Craciun)*

MKTG 472: DIGITAL MARKETING

Students were tasked with creating a digital marketing plan for **Pope Financial Solutions**, a company owned by NaTosha Pope, a client of the SBDC. *(Faculty: Christina Kuchmaner)*

SCMG 375: SUPPLY CHAIN PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Duquesne University’s Vice Provost for Strategic Initiatives, Dr. Daria LaTorre, tasked students with analyzing and suggesting improvements to the University’s process of navigating University information, discovering course modality options, and selecting textbooks. *(Faculty: Kathryn Marley)*

Interested in becoming a School of Business Corporate Partner?
Contact

Adam Viers
Assistant Dean for Advancement
viersa@duq.edu

Martin Black
Director, Corporate Relations
blackm1@duq.edu

SCMG 635: SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS

Allegheny Health Network (AHN) tasked students with enhancing sustainability efforts in its operating rooms by evaluating its current program’s environmental impact and effectiveness. The students analyzed device collection and reuse practices, identified opportunities for program expansion, and proposed improvements to the redistribution process. *(Faculty: Wendy Serapiglia and Ryan Atkins)*



SCMG 616: SUPPLY CHAIN PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Multiple projects were offered this spring.
KOBOLD Instruments tasked students with optimizing their inventory management system. The challenge was to improve the design of raw material inventory, ensure that inventory locations are accurately documented and designed for workflow efficiency, and develop ordering policies that reflect demand.

The **Duquesne Men’s Basketball Team** faced challenges in accurately forecasting their weekly water supply, often falling short by three days. Students were tasked with optimizing the water supply process to ensure players and staff stayed hydrated while maintaining a weekly budget of \$87.

Duquesne’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC) challenged students to improve the efficiency of its client call routing system. Students worked on implementing a phone menu system to direct clients to the appropriate consultant, minimizing wait times, enhancing productivity, and increasing client satisfaction without needing additional staff or significant IT changes.

The School of Business sought to streamline its application process for internal and external transfer students to improve accuracy and efficiency. Students worked on enhancing communication and clarifying responsibilities within the process to increase enrollment and retention and provide an overall better experience. *(Faculty: Mike Sherwin)*

SCMG 620: SUPPLY CHAIN PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Multiple projects were offered this spring.
The School of Business tasked students with optimizing and standardizing course schedules for the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA). Students predicted course demands for undergraduate students and identified the most suitable days and times for a common hour for meetings and events.

Mine Saftey Appliance (MSA) Cranberry Plant

tasked students with addressing recurring carton shortages in the shipping department, causing operational delays. The project analyzed demand patterns, lead times, and storage constraints to develop a more proactive and efficient ordering system. *(Faculty: Mike Sherwin)*



How Duquesne Shaped My Future FROM FIRST YEAR TO FULL TIME JOB AND BEYOND!
BY NOLAN SULPIZIO (B'24)

As a freshman at Duquesne in 2020, I was already passionate about business. I even likened myself to a young Warren Buffet but quickly realized I had much to learn. To broaden my horizons and shape my perspective, I took advantage of every opportunity to avoid regrets. Despite my ambition and sometimes misguided confidence, I never imagined I would be where I am today—working for Wesco as a Supply Chain Analyst and accepted to Innovation Works Scalable Residency Program to support my start-up, Clean Plate Innovations.

Being business-minded runs in my family. My father owns Sulpizio Mechanical, an HVAC company in Philadelphia. During my sophomore year, I had weekly calls with him and applied the concepts I learned in class to his company. I designed grand restructuring and expansion plans but knew I needed experience outside the family business. I began searching for an internship, and with Duquesne’s network of caring and connected faculty, I was offered five internships.

In my junior year, after deciding to double-major in Supply Chain Management and Entrepreneurship, I used my supply chain knowledge to optimize Sulpizio Mechanical’s business operations and used the experience as a case study. My courses used the experiential learning model, so I worked with real-world clients, adding a priceless, hands-on element to my education. I learned to quickly problem-solve and use critical thinking skills across disciplines. With my developing knowledge and experience, my goals began to feel achievable.

I met representatives from WESCO at Duquesne’s Career Fair and was offered a summer internship. With an exciting opportunity locked in place, I had the freedom to develop my passion for entrepreneurship during the remainder of the academic year.

Staci Offutt joined the School of Business as Director of the Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship, empowering us to reach new heights. On the first day of class, my peers and I were allowed to create a new

student organization, The Duquesne Entrepreneurship Council. Staci advised and encouraged us to take ownership and build the club in our collective vision. Serving as co-president, I became immersed in the region’s entrepreneurial ecosystem. I wasn’t just attending events; I was leading them. I wasn’t just competing in competitions; I was facilitating them. This built my reputation in the School and the greater entrepreneurial community.

I took a giant leap of faith and competed in several School competitions, including Innopitch, PDMA’s pitch competition. I developed my current entrepreneurial venture, Clean Plate Innovations, over a 54-hour hackathon during Techstars Startup Weekend. And I was a semi-finalist in the Duquesne New Venture Challenge.

I graduated in May and joined Wesco’s Sales and Operations Early Career program. I am working remotely on the Global Accounts Implementation Team and will travel extensively this year to assist with supply chain implementations at various US sites. The job is going well, and I’m excited to share that I took my first business trip to Mobile, Alabama in August! I’m also continuing my work as the Founder of Clean Plate Innovations. Clean Plate uses AI-enabled food waste tracking to help large-scale dining operators optimize inventory and reduce costs. With our residency at Innovation Work’s Robotics Factory, we improved our legitimacy and internal collaboration to test and finalize our prototype. I am still proudly consulting for Sulpizio Mechanical and implementing new ideas.

At Duquesne, each first day of class felt like a new door opening for me. I gained extensive experience and was well-prepared to launch my career. With the club that turned into family and the teachers that turned into mentors, I developed a new mindset that will be with me for the rest of my life. I can tell you how I got to where I am today, but I can’t tell you where I’ll be tomorrow. Sometimes, the fun of life is not knowing what’s next. That’s the beauty of growth.



First Year
First Day of Classes
Fall 2020



Sophomore Year
First Day of Classes
Fall 2021



Junior Year
First Day of Classes
Fall 2022



Senior Year
First Day of Classes
Fall 2023

One-Year MBA Global Business Study Abroad SPRING 2024

BY SYDNEY MORAN (MBA'24)

During the Spring 2024 semester, the One-Year MBA cohort embarked on a 10-day international study trip, visiting Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia. The trip combined client visits with cultural experiences focused on sustainability. Each of the four One-Year MBA project teams met with their clients, presented our research and work on the assigned business challenge, and received client feedback, which we used to complete our recommended solutions to the challenge when we returned to campus.

Our trip began in **Venice, Italy**, with a tour of the historic city center, including St. Mark’s Square, the Rialto Bridge, and Doge’s Palace, followed by a memorable dinner featuring local cuisine. We visited the Orsoni Mosaic factory, where we observed traditional mosaic-making techniques. The president of Orsoni shared insights on balancing tradition with sustainable business practices.

Project Team Four was the first group to have their client meeting with **NeroSuBianco**, a technology-focused consulting firm. The students were tasked with analyzing training needs in Green Electronics, including a report on what training is currently offered in Europe and what is needed to increase a focus on sustainability.

Next, we traveled to Slovenia, where the cohort visited a small, family-owned winery and explored Ljubljana, known for its green spaces and sustainability efforts. Some students took a side trip to Predjama Castle, adding to their appreciation of Slovenia’s rich history.

The cohort spent the most time in Zagreb, Croatia’s capital. We stayed at the historic Hotel Dubrovnik and explored the city’s landmarks, including St. Mark’s Church. Three project teams presented to their clients while in Croatia, tackling various sustainability challenges.

For example, the team I was on, Project Team One, met with our client **Henkel**, an international chemical company. Henkel’s consumer products line includes familiar brands like Dial, All Detergent and Snuggly. Henkel is recognized as one of the most sustainable companies worldwide. My team was tasked with analyzing current sustainability practices and presenting ways to raise awareness of company practices and expand their efforts.



Left to Right: Sydney Moran and Emma Bean, Venice; Predjama Castle, Zagreb; Orsoni Mosaic Factory, Venice

Project Team Two met with their client, **Naše Klasje**, a green food manufacturer specializing in fresh pasta and baking products. The team was tasked with studying a potential sustainability project for implementation in relevant market segments, while assessing the competition. The project also included a proposal for sustainable packaging solutions.

Project Team Three met with their client, **Orioly**. This travel tech company uses IT solutions for tourist destinations to manage their resources and promote local experiences simply yet efficiently. The team was tasked with finding strategies to attract others in the hotel industry to invest in their model, focusing on the return on investment and exploring how Orioly’s model helps the local economy grow.

The trip concluded with a hike in Plitvice Lakes National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After returning to the U.S., we integrated the feedback received from our international clients into the final presentation with our recommendations. Upon the project’s completion, all four clients shared that they intended to implement our suggestions. Team Two provided contact information and facilitated introductions for Naše Klasje with companies that offer sustainable packaging solutions.

Overall, this study trip was a highlight of the One-Year MBA program, offering students valuable insights into global business practices and sustainability efforts while simultaneously allowing us to apply what we learned in the program to solve real-world problems.



2023–2024 One-Year MBA cohort during their visit at Henkel in Zagreb, Croatia



Left to Right: Claudio Simione, Dr. Dean McFarlin, Jack Glover, Aaron Reed, President Ken Gormley

Jack Glover (B'88) and Aaron Reed (B'16) MAKE AN IMPRESSION AT MAY 2024 COMMENCEMENT

On Friday, May 10, 2024, 269 students graduated from the Palumbo-Donahue School of Business. The ceremony was presided over by President Ken Gormley, Provost David Dausey, and Dr. Dean McFarlin.

Jack Glover (B'88), Founder and Managing Partner of Incline Equity Partners, received the 2024 Distinguished Alumnus Award and also delivered the commencement address. His impassioned speech about the value of taking risks and being persistent left a lasting impression. Incline Equity Partners is our region's largest private equity firm and Jack has directly benefited the School of Business with his support of the student-run Duquesne Micro-Cap Fund.

During commencement, **Aaron Reed (B'16)** also received the 2024 Young Alumnus of the Year Award. During his junior year at Duquesne, Aaron founded Reed Building Supply, which has grown to \$27 million in annual revenue. His company has played a pivotal role in major regional construction projects, including Duquesne's UPMC Cooper Field House.

Student Government Association (SGA) President and graduating business student **Claudio Simione** addressed his classmates in a speech, noting, "The future is ours to shape." Claudio will be pursuing his law degree at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law here at Duquesne this fall. *Congratulations to the members of the Class of '24!*



CONGRATULATIONS FIORELLA VALLE



Peruvian international student Fiorella Valle obtained a MercuryGate collegiate certification as part of Professor Wendy Serapiglia’s **Global Transportation Logistics** course. MercuryGate is a Transportation Management System (TMS) that streamlines and centralizes freight transportation management.

Fiorella is a triple major in Finance, Supply Chain Management, and International Business, with a minor in Digital Marketing and Analytics.

MAcc STUDENTS EARN CYBERSECURITY CERTIFICATE

Six MAcc students electively earned the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Cybersecurity Practical Applications Certificate. The certificate program teaches how to implement a cybersecurity risk management program to mitigate attacks. With the increasing risk of cyber threats, these skills are critical for accounting professionals. **Congratulations to Austin Fritch, Katie Geraghty, Obdul Mansulu Owusu, Dan O’Toole, Allie Ptak, and Lauren Serafini!**



BETA GAMMA SIGMA INDUCTS 17 NEW MEMBERS

Beta Gamma Sigma (BGS), the International Business Honor Society, inducted 17 new graduate and undergraduate members this spring.

Pete Mrvos (MBA’23), Brand Manager at Bayer, was selected as the 2024 Chapter Honoree and distinguished speaker. Pete served in the US Army for nine years, notably earning a Bronze Star Medal. *Thank you, Pete for your thoughtful and inspriational speech!*

Since 1913, Beta Gamma Sigma International has recognized and honored top-performing students at AACSB-accredited universities worldwide. The top 20% of graduate and 10% of undergraduate students are eligible for membership. BGS routinely awards Honors and High Honors status to Duquesne’s chapter of BGS, reflecting the commitment of our students, alumni, faculty, and staff.



Thank you, Pete (left), for your insight, and congratulations to Beta Gamma Sigma’s 2024 inductees.

Heartfelt Thanks to Four Recent Retirees

Congratulations to Dr. Jim Weber on his retirement from teaching after 30 years of dedicated service as a Professor of Business Ethics and Management. Jim has made invaluable contributions to the School through his teaching, research, and role in helping to elevate ethics as a center of excellence. While stepping away from full-time faculty life, Jim will be pursuing a variety of academic projects as he continues to hold The Rev. Martin Hehir, C.S.Sp. Endowed Chair in Scholarly Excellence over the next few years. We extend our thanks for his enduring commitment and impact.

Congratulations to Dr. Jeff Roberts on his retirement from teaching after 18 years as a Professor of Information Systems and Technology. His commitment to teaching and research had a tremendous impact on the lives and careers of our students. We extend our heartfelt thanks and wish Jeff all the best as he enjoys his retirement.

Congratulations to Dean Nichols, the School of Business Tech Support Analyst and Lab Manager, on his retirement after 25 years at Duquesne. Dean has played an important role in the School’s ongoing commitment to technology and innovation. His dedication has helped the School stay at the forefront of technological advancements key to maintaining an innovative learning environment for students and faculty alike.

Congratulations to Sharon Evans on her retirement as the Director of Business Administration and Facilities at the School of Business for more than 17 years. Sharon prided herself on relational interactions across campus to effectively complete all the facets of her role. She provided excellent support for two separate Deans. She sincerely appreciated her staff and enjoyed working closely with them.

Congratulations to the School’s *Difference-Making* Students, Faculty, and Staff!

Dr. Matt Drake Appointed Co-Editor OF ASCM SUPPLY CHAIN DICTIONARY

Matt Drake, Associate Professor of Supply Chain Management and PwC Alumni Faculty Fellow in Supply Chain Management, has been named one of two co-editors for the esteemed Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM) Supply Chain Dictionary. The ASCM Supply Chain Dictionary is the authoritative reference for supply chain professionals. With more than 350,000 copies and downloads in circulation, it is an essential tool for industry professionals.



This appointment recognizes Matt’s significant contributions to the field of supply chain management and his expertise in the industry. His selection as a co-editor is a testament to his role as a valuable asset to the School and the supply chain management profession.

Celebrating Dr. Aimée Kane’s EXCELLENCE IN GROUP DYNAMICS RESEARCH

Congratulations to Aimée Kane, Associate Professor of Management and William and Helen Lyons Faculty Fellow in Management, and her co-author Lyn van Swol for being named co-winners of the prestigious 2023 Group Dynamics Most Valuable Paper (MVP) Award for their article titled *Using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count Software to Analyze Group Interaction Language Data*.



This honor highlights the outstanding contributions that Aimée has made in the field of group dynamics. Her 2023 article was published in **Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, Volume 27(3)**, pp. 188-201.

FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDS

The Palumbo-Donahue School of Business honors faculty and staff with annual awards, recognizing outstanding accomplishments and dedication to education and service. These awards celebrate the passion and commitment of our school members, highlighting their significant contributions to our community.

2022–2023 Outstanding Research Award

- Christina Kuchmaner, Assistant Professor of Marketing

2022–2023 Dean’s Award for Excellence in Research

- Min Geiger, Assistant Professor of Management
- Aimée Kane, Associate Professor of Management
- Congcong Li, Assistant Professor of Accounting

2022–2023 Outstanding Teaching Award

- Ryan Atkins, Associate Professor of Supply Chain Management

2022–2023 Dean’s Award for Excellence in Teaching

- Aimée Kane, Associate Professor of Management
- Wendy Serapiglia, Instructor of Supply Chain Management
- William Spangler, Professor of Information Systems and Technology

2022–2023 Eugene P. Beard Outstanding Service Award

- Gokhan Sonaer, Associate Professor of Finance
- Christopher Hilf, Student Success Coach
- Zhongmei Tao, Budget Manager

2023–2024 Rethwisch Award Winners

Graduating seniors voted for the professor who had the most significant impact on their academic career, choosing one from their business core courses and one from their major courses.

MOST IMPACTFUL BUSINESS CORE PROFESSOR

- Dr. Pinar Ozturk, Associate Professor of Information Systems and Technology

MOST IMPACTFUL MAJOR COURSE PROFESSOR (TIED)

- PJ Dillon, Assistant Professor of Management
- Bob Kollar, Associate Professor of Practice in Accounting



Staci Offutt Wins 2023–2024 Creative Teaching Award

Staci Offutt, Director of the Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship won a Creative Teaching Award for 2023–2024 for her efforts in developing Innopitch. Working in collaboration with her colleagues, Staci’s creation is an interdisciplinary problem-solving competition that involves Entrepreneurship majors as well as students from Biomedical Engineering and Nursing.

Left to Right: President Ken Gormley, Staci Offutt, and Provost David Dausey

Alumnus Jared Hoff (B’00)
CHEERS ON THE DUKES

Earlier this year, Jared Hoff (B’00), his wife Holly, and their daughters watched the Duquesne Dukes men’s basketball game as guests of Dean McFarlin in the President’s box during their game against the Fordham Rams. President Gormley also joined in the festivities and led efforts to cheer on the Dukes, who were victorious, beating the Rams 68–59. **Go Dukes!**

Jared is VP and Senior Portfolio Manager at Federated Hermes and is a highly engaged alum. He is a member of the Investment Strategy Institute Advisory Council (ISIAC) and the Strategic Review Working Group.

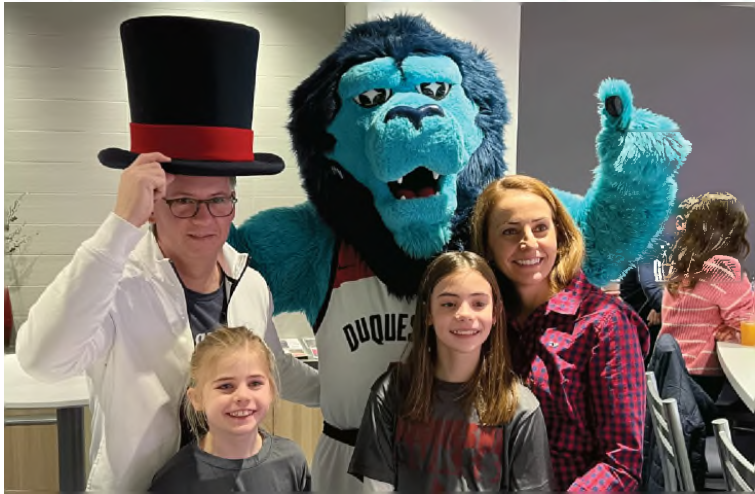
We are thankful for Jared and his many contributions to the School.

Alumnus Andy Rebholz (B’87) and Family
HONORED WITH CLASSROOM DEDICATION



Left to Right: Kris and Ryder Graff, Andy Rebholz Sr., Karen Rebholz, and Andy Rebholz

The Rebholz Family Classroom Plaque outside of Classroom 501 in Rockwell Hall



Jared, his daughters, and wife, Holly, celebrate a win with THE DUKE!

During the Spring 2024 term, the School hosted a special classroom naming dedication in honor of the Rebholz Family. Andy Rebholz has been a dedicated supporter of the School, serving on the Business Advisory Council (BAC) for six years and contributing significantly to various initiatives, including faculty research and student scholarships.

The event, held in the presence of Rebholz’s family, including his wife Karen, his father Andy Sr. (B’63; MBA’76), his sister Kris Graff (B’93), and her son Ryder, celebrated Rebholz’s accomplishments and contributions to the University. The dedication ceremony included a blessing by Fr. Bill Christy.

Retired in 2020, Rebholz’s illustrious career culminated in his role as CEO of TravelCenters of America. His legacy of leadership and philanthropy continues to inspire the Duquesne community. The Rebholz family’s longstanding connection to Duquesne and their difference-making support make this dedication a fitting tribute to their impact on the School of Business.

Alumna Daniela Osio (B’15) and her firm, Kloopify,
RECOGNIZED WITH SUPPLY CHAIN TRAILBLAZER AWARD

Congratulations to Daniela Osio (B’15) and her incredible team at Kloopify for their win at the Institute of Supply Management World Conference. They were awarded the prestigious 2023 Supply Chain Trailblazer Awards in the Procurement Solution Provider Impact category.

This recognition celebrates their dedication to pioneering sustainable procurement solutions, empowering organizations to optimize their supply chains and generate revenue as they embrace sustainability.

Kloopify participated in Duquesne’s New Venture Challenge in 2021–2022 and advanced to Stage II of the competition. We are thrilled to share Kloopify’s and Daniela’s success with the School of Business community.



Daniela Osio receiving 2023 Supply Chain Trailblazer Award.

Coury Family Gift Fuels Innovation
IN THE SCHOOL’S INVESTMENT STRATEGY INSTITUTE

The School of Business extends its heartfelt gratitude to the Jeff & Christine Coury Family Foundation and The Coury Firm for their recent generous donation to our Investment Strategy Institute (ISI), located on the 6th floor of Rockwell Hall. In recognition of their generosity, the research area in the Institute has been named the Jeff & Christine Coury Family Foundation and The Coury Firm Investment Strategy Institute Research Room.

The Coury family’s connection to Duquesne runs deep. Jeff Coury, Executive Chairman of The Coury Firm and CEO of Mortgage Connect, LP, earned his Bachelor’s in Finance in 1992. Christine Coury received her Bachelor’s in Accounting the same year. Their son is currently a junior at the School of Business. Joining them in this initiative is Gregg Coury, CEO and Chief Compliance Officer of The Coury Firm, who graduated with a Bachelor’s in Finance in 1995. His wife Maria Coury graduated with a Bachelor’s in Health Sciences in 1999 along with earning her Master’s Degree in Speech-Language Pathology in 2000.

This gift will fund significant enhancements to the Investment Strategy Institute, including improving student opportunities and introducing cutting-edge technology. The School deeply appreciates the Coury family’s support, which will provide Business students with difference-making resources for their education and research in the Investment Strategy Institute.



Jeff and Christine Coury in the ISI in front of The Jeff & Christine Coury Family Foundation and The Coury Firm dedicated wall on the 6th Floor of Rockwell Hall

“The Courys are an amazing family with incredible accomplishments. Their generous support underscores their role as impactful difference-makers in the best tradition of Duquesne business graduates.”
—Dean McFarlin

12th Annual Accounting CPE Conference *A RESOUNDING SUCCESS*

Hosted by the School of Business on November 16, 2023, the Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Conference provided a series of dynamic presentations and discussions exploring current trends and future projections in the accounting field. The event welcomed over 230 industry professionals to the Power Center for a full day of learning, networking, and insightful discussions.

The morning showcased topics such as *Auditing Standards and Trends Update* led by Staci Brogan (Schneider Downs); *Everyone is Scrambling to Use AI Until...* led by Justin Daniels (Baker Donelson Bearman) and Larry Slusser (Security Scorecard); *Accounting Standards and Projects Update* led by Sue Cosper (FASB Board); and *Leadership and Influence: Building Trust and Credibility* led by Christie Cawley (tHRive).


The afternoon session started with an insightful keynote address from Kurt Rankin, Senior Economist at PNC Bank. With his extensive economic analysis and econometric model design, Rankin’s *Annual Economic Outlook* provided an insightful overview of the current economic climate and its implications for the accounting profession.

The afternoon session included an *Accounting HotTopics Roundtable* moderated by Bob Kollar with panelist Brian Williams (PPG Industries), Dan Janiak (PNC), and Tim Kurnocik (UPMC). The day concluded with final sessions—*Transforming the Accounting and Finance Function* led by Andy Jones (RGP) and *Individual and Corporate Tax Update* led by Matt Werner (Schneider Downs).

SAVE THE DATE!

13th Annual Accounting CPE Conference
Thursday, November 21, 2024
Duquesne University, Power Center
8 AM - 4:30 PM

Registration Opens 9/23/24
Fee: \$155, includes continental breakfast and lunch

 Visit duq.edu/cpe for details.



2023 CPE Conference Attendees

THANK YOU TO THE 2023 SPONSORS



Women Who Lead Conference

The School of Business was thrilled to partner with the Institute for Supply Chain Management (ISM) Pittsburgh to host the 5th Annual Women Who Lead Conference on November 10, 2023.

Supply Chain professor Wendy Serapiglia, alumna Kylie Wagstaff (B’23), and TV reporter Hannah Goetz shared their experience and insight during the mentorship panel discussion.



Left to Right: Wendy Serapiglia, Kylie Wagstaff and Hannah Goetz

5th Annual Negotiating Jobs Offers Event

BOASTS A STANDING ROOM ONLY CROWD

On March 20, 2024, the Palumbo-Donahue Student Advisory Council (PDSAC) hosted its 5th Annual Job Negotiation Panel. Moderated by 2023–24 PDSAC President Olivia Green, the panel featured Amy Broadhurst (B’06), President of Lee and Associates Commercial Real Estate Services; Gina Govojean (B’12), Vice President of Procurement at Howmet Aerospace; and Casey Ryan Quinn (B’10), Founder and CEO of CityLife Residential.

Speaking to a standing-room-only crowd of interested students and faculty, the distinguished panelists shared practical and effective communication strategies for job offer negotiation. They also discussed building a foundation for future growth in new roles. Afterward, the PDSAC hosted a networking reception for students, panelists, faculty, and staff.

The highly successful event underscores the School’s commitment to the importance of professional development and presenting its students with opportunities to meet and learn from industry leaders.



Left to Right: Amy Broadhurst, Gina Govojean, and Casey Ryan Quinn



Olivia Green (B’24), 2023–24 PDSAC President School of Business Students at the Job Negotiation Event

Pro Bono Legal Services Program Breakfast
HOSTED BY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

On April 3, 2024, Duquesne’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC) hosted a breakfast to thank and recognize those who generously donate their time and services to the SBDC’s Pro Bono Legal Services Program. Launched two years ago in collaboration with Duquesne’s Thomas R. Kline School of Law, the Pro Bono Law program addresses a critical need for affordable legal services among small businesses. Since its inception, the program has served over 25 small businesses in the Western PA region. Second and third-year law students coordinate the program with the SBDC by liaising between the business and the law firm. The program has been praised for its impact, with one client stating, “If it were not for this pro bono legal services program, I would not be successfully getting my business off the ground.”



Left to Right: Payton Sinkbell, Thomas R. Kline School of Law; Grace Orsatti, Thomas R. Kline School of Law; Eric Davis, Elliot and Davis, PC; Rich Longo, Duquesne University SBDC; Calum Mackay, Atencio Hall; Paul Atencio, Atencio Hall; Karen Donovan, Palumbo-Donahue School of Business; Joshua Vaughn, Littler and Associates; Gregory Weingart, Eckert Seamans; Cody Madison, Dentons (Not Pictured: Larry Lebowitz, Dentons and Robert Sovesk, K&L Gates)

Meet The Firm Night
HOSTED BY THE CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP
IN PROFESSIONAL SELLING

On January 25, 2024, the Center for Leadership in Professional Selling (CLPS) hosted a “Meet the Firm” night that brought together nine leading companies to engage with students eager to explore job and internship opportunities. The participating firms included ADP, Airgas, Ally Financial, Erie Insurance, Fastenal, Luttner Financial, Polymershapes, Sherwin Williams, and Wesco.

Nearly 70 students attended this successful event. Moreover, all participants agreed that the more relaxed networking event format worked well to facilitate meaningful interactions between business students and representatives from each company. Several students reported that the event led to internships and even full-time job offers.

Due to the event’s popularity with students and participating firms, the CLPS plans to host another Meet the Firm Night in 2025.

SBDC Hosts DECA Career Development Conference

Duquesne’s Small Business Development Center hosted the DECA District III Career Development Conference at the Power Center on November 29, 2023. This event offered high school students the chance to explore entrepreneurial concepts, from idea generation to business planning, and to present their ideas to experienced judges for feedback.

A total of 230 students from seven high schools participated, competing in 28 different events across various categories, including Accounting, Business Financial Services, Business Law and Ethics, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Management, and more.



The top individuals and teams (76 students) qualified for the PA DECA State Career Development Conference in Hershey, PA, with the chance to advance to the International DECA Conference in Anaheim, CA.

Images from the 2023 DECA Conference



Experiencing the thrill of techstars_ Startup Weekend
BY JASON GARLAND

In February of 2024, the School of Business partnered with InnovatePGH to host the region’s first-ever Techstars Startup Weekend. My team, along with seven other startups, had the opportunity to immerse ourselves into the life of startup founders. During this three-day, 54-hour intensive event, we went from creating an idea and designing the product to pitching directly to accredited venture capitalists and serial entrepreneurs.

This was the first time I experienced a competition of this caliber. As a freshman at Duquesne, triple majoring in finance, accounting, and entrepreneurship, my schedule was already jam-packed when I was asked by Staci Offutt, Director of the Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship, to participate in a weekend-long business workshop. I admit, I wasn’t exactly sure what I was getting into.

Upon arriving, I was shocked to see over 100 people, including students from Pitt, CMU, Grove City, Cornell, and local entrepreneurs and innovators. To my surprise, Techstars Startup Weekend wasn’t just another event held at Duquesne. It is an internationally recognized competition with many success stories resulting from years of Techstars programs—with 20 participating companies growing to \$1B+ evaluations.

The objective of Techstars Startup Weekend was simple—individuals give a one-minute presentation on a new business idea. The ideas must be newly developed without any work prior to the presentation. Then, the audience voted for the best ideas. The top eight were chosen, and teams were formed around these concepts.

I worked on the startup Reading YARN!, an app that allows users to discover new stories from web fiction writers through a TikTok/reels-like format. The current landscape of web fiction makes it difficult for emerging and established authors to self-monetize and grow their audience. Problems



include brutal percentage cuts and loss of content rights by web providers. As one of the only business students on my team, my skills were useful. I leveraged my understanding of the market to help refine our pitch, used equipment in Bob’s Launch Pad (the School’s makerspace) to create shirts for our team, and briefed our mentors on our startup, mission, goals, and marketing strategy in a clear and concise manner. I also mapped out our two-page business model, which gave our points of revenue along with a five-year sales projection.

Over the weekend, I had the opportunity to pitch and improve my creative thinking skills through the help of mentors, including serial entrepreneurs, lawyers, startup founders, app developers, and high-performing professionals across a multitude of industries. These mentors gave vital, real-world feedback on the strength of our business model, the difficulties of performing in our industry, and how we could present a compelling company idea to a room of high-net worth investors. With the guidance and support of the mentors and facilitators, my team and I navigated the challenges and opportunities presented throughout the weekend, and we came away feeling prepared, connected, and motivated to pursue YARN! as a startup venture.

To aspiring entrepreneurs and innovators, I urge you to seize opportunities like the Techstars Startup Weekend. The journey may be challenging; however, through my first-hand experience, I can tell you this—it’s worth it.

Accounting Student Successes Underscore
SCHOOL’S LEADERSHIP IN ACCOUNTING EDUCATION

School of Business accounting students excelled in the Annual IIA/PICPA Case Competition, securing 1st, 3rd, and 4th place among 15 teams from five universities. The event, held on November 9, 2023 at BNY Mellon Pittsburgh, challenged participants to address issues of internal controls and potential fraud in a private car rental company. The first-place team, including undergraduate students Sami Dragar, Jonathon Rambo, Madison Milone, Caroline Padgett, Carli Stone, and Isabella Niccolai, won a \$2,000 prize.



Left to Right: Val Williams, Professor, Sami Dragar, Jonathon Rambo, Madison Milone, Caroline Padgett, Carli Stone and Isabella Niccolai

In another nod to the School’s accounting program, student teams from Professor Valerie William’s Internal Auditing course competed in a case competition sponsored by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) and the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE). Josh Obrin, Daulton Roth, and Roman Lisicky won first place for their presentation on environmental, sustainable, and governance (ESG) reporting and received \$1,500. They earned their BSBA’s in May 2024 and will begin the MAcc program this fall. Matt Leininger, Evan Babcock, and Austin Fritch presented on data analytics, winning third place and a \$500 prize.

Three universities from western Pennsylvania competed, evaluated by judges from IIA, ACFE, Schneider Downs, Crown Castle, Highmark Health, and Gleeson.



Left to Right: Josh Obrin, Daulton Roth, and Roman Lisicky



Left to right: Ryan Garvey, Matthew Fediaczko, Cary VanNewkirk, Ashley Kennedy, Marin Laffey, Bennett Thrash, and Nicholas Kopy

FMA International Student
Leaders’ Conference
MARKS A BIG WIN FOR DUQUESNE’S
FINANCE STUDENTS

School of Business finance students attended the Financial Management Association (FMA) International Student Leaders’ Conference in New York City on February 29 and March 1, 2024. Duquesne’s student team competed against approximately 300 students in a case competition analyzing Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.

The team, comprised of undergraduate students Matthew Fediaczko, Cary VanNewkirk, Ashley Kennedy, Marin Laffey, Bennett Thrash, and Nicholas Kopy, delivered an exceptional written report, presentation, and Q&A session. Their efforts impressed the expert panel of judges, earning them first place—an achievement that marked the first win for a team from the Palumbo-Donahue School of Business. Congratulations to our exceptional finance students and their professor, Dr. Ryan Garvey.



The winning team and Dr. Ryan Garvey pose in front of the Nasdaq MarketSight in Times Square, NYC.

Duquesne Students Take 2nd and 3rd Place at the
SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT POSTER COMPETITION

In March 2024, three teams of Duquesne Supply Chain Management students competed in the final round of the annual Supply Chain Management Symposium poster competition. Sponsored by the Traffic Club of Pittsburgh and hosted by the University of Pittsburgh’s Center for Supply Chain Management, students presented their posters in person to event attendees and competition judges.

We are excited to share that Duquesne supply chain students Jackie Burich, Emma Pfeiffer, Jeremy Rawicz, and Ellen Shanahan won the second prize, \$200, with their poster titled “The Last Flexible Mile (Utilizing gig economy workers as a resource to ship freight).”

Third place ended in a tie between two teams of Duquesne supply chain students: Stew Adams, Ray Alzahrani, Josh Gerber, and Maria Walletz with their poster titled “The Future of Autonomous Vehicles in Supply Chain Management, and Kevin Carr, Dominic Esposito, Jack Forsythe, and Brianna Pierce with their poster titled “Learnings from COVID-19 Production and Distribution.”



Left to Right: Front Row: Maria Walletz, Brianna Pierce, Jackie, Burich, Emma Pfeiffer Back Row: Jeremy Rawicz, Dr. Ryan Atkins, Jack Forsythe

2nd Annual Supply Chain Management
Case Competition HELD AT ROCKWELL HALL

The Center for Supply Chain Management, in partnership with Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM) Pittsburgh Forum, hosted its second annual Supply Chain Management Case Competition on November 11, 2023. Eleven teams of 42 students from seven colleges and universities competed for \$5,000 in case awards. The student teams had three hours to prepare for their six-minute presentations. The case challenge was to investigate an expansion quest for TESLA. The third annual SCM Case Competition is scheduled for November 16, 2024.

Our faculty is dedicated to providing experiential learning opportunities that encompass classroom instruction and participation in local, regional, and national external competitions—giving our students real-world opportunities to compete with their peers and showcase their difference-making education.

MS-AIM Student James Cole Lands in First-Place
AT THIS YEAR’S SUPER ANALYTICS CHALLENGE

The 2024 Super Analytics Challenge, hosted by the University of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University, West Virginia University, Carnegie Mellon University, and Penn State University, is an annual platform where graduate students from various disciplines use data analytics to tackle pressing regional issues. This year’s challenge was to develop solutions for the workforce shortage in southwestern Pennsylvania’s advanced manufacturing industry.

The competition was marked by a unique collaboration between students from Duquesne, Pitt, Carnegie Mellon, Penn State, and West Virginia University. Each team, under the expert guidance of an Executive Coach, navigated through three challenging phases of the competition.

The first-place team included James Cole, a student in the School’s MS in Analytics and Information Management (MS-AIM) program. Team members will receive fellowship funding to implement their solutions through the Katz Bridge Program, sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Jacqueline Gerber, Associate Professor of Information Systems and Technology, served as one of the team judges. Dr. Karen Donovan, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Executive Education, served on the advisory committee and as a Phase 2 judge. Justin Mallgrave, VP Global IT at Xylem Water Solutions and a School Executive-in-Residence served as an Executive Coach.



Left to Right: Kee Won Song, Anirudh Narayanan, James Cole, and Shiv Waleacha



SCM students, faculty, and industry experts pose outside of Rockwell Hall.

5th Annual Duquesne New Venture Challenge Soars

SETTING RECORDS AND GAINING RECOGNITION

The School of Business hosted its annual Duquesne New Venture Challenge (DNVC) during the 2023–2024 academic year. Now in its fifth year, this national entrepreneurship competition has garnered increased attention for its commitment to fostering innovation and supporting early-stage startups with incredible potential.

Open to companies less than four years old, the DNVC offers entrepreneurs a unique platform to present their innovations, receive expert mentorship, and vie for over \$100,000 in cash prizes and resources that could propel their ventures to new heights.

Groundbreaking ideas and inspiring entrepreneurial spirit marked this year’s competition. After competing in Stages I and II, five finalists moved on to the final round, presenting to a panel of industry experts in the Louis D. Mallet Entrepreneurship Zone in Rockwell Hall.

Aquatonomy was named as the overall winner of the 2023–2024 DNVC, a startup that has developed an autonomous robotic inspection solution for underwater applications. The firm’s cutting-edge technology accelerates inspection and repair processes, mitigates risks to human workers, and ensures vital infrastructure safety. The innovative team behind Aquatonomy includes Dr. Michael Kaess, Dr. Xiaoyu Kaess, and Jane K. Joseph, a proud 2012 graduate of Duquesne University. Their impressive win earned them 1st place prize money of \$20,000.

We are thrilled to share that after winning the 2023–2024 DNVC, Aquatonomy was named one of ten “Startups to Watch 2024” by the Pittsburgh Business Times.

The DNVC also recognized four other exceptional startups that showcased their innovative approaches to pressing challenges:

- 2nd place: Revitalize Energy, winning \$10,000 for its energizing eyedrops designed to alleviate screen fatigue.
- 3rd place: VELO.Ai, winning \$5,000 for its audio and visual alert system to enhance cyclists’ situational awareness.
- 4th place: Flowcellutions, winning \$3,000 for its diagnostic solutions that optimize the longevity and efficiency of flow batteries.
- 5th place: dashcam.bike, winning \$3,000 for its innovative approach for transforming a smartphone into a high-quality bike camera that promotes safety for cyclists.

In addition to cash prizes, the top three teams received up to 10 hours of free legal education from Duquesne’s Thomas R. Kline School of Law, up to 15 hours of free consulting from Duquesne’s Small Business Development Center, and up to five hours of advisement with the School’s Entrepreneurship program leaders to discuss funding strategies and connect with regional funding sources.

“Getting to know these teams and their businesses throughout the competition is a true privilege. Supporting their development and growth is a wonderful part of the DNVC,” noted Staci Offutt, Director of the Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship at Duquesne University. “I look forward to stewarding in the next group of innovators for the 2024–2025 Duquesne New Venture Challenge.”

For more information about the DNVC competition, contact Staci Offutt, Director, Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship at offutts@duq.edu.

Road Trip Across Florida Builds Relationships

FOR THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Building and nurturing relationships with donors, alums, and friends is vital to the success of the School of Business. Moreover, making such relationship-building a consistent, ongoing priority is something Dean McFarlin strongly believes in. As he puts it, “*Always making the time for face-to-face meetings with donors and alums is invaluable for deepening connections and relationships. Such meetings offer important opportunities to explore where donors’ passions and interests might align with School priorities as well as demonstrating how well we are stewarding the gifts that they have already made.*”

For example, earlier this year, Dean, his wife, Laurie, Adam Viers (the School’s Assistant Dean for Advancement) and Jim Miller (Senior Vice President for University Advancement), embarked on a series of visits across Florida. Dean and Laurie started in Tampa, then traveled south along the west coast of Florida before crossing alligator alley and driving up the east coast. During this road trip, they met with influential alums and supporters of the School in Naples, Deerfield Beach, Delray Beach, and West Palm Beach.

By visiting and personally thanking our donors, we acknowledge their significant contributions and share the tangible impact that their generosity has on our students, faculty, and programs. This personal touch reinforces the donor’s connection to the School and showcases the difference-making power of their gifts in action.

During their travels in Florida, Dean, Jim, and Laurie had lunch in Deerfield Beach with Enrico (Rico) and Dee Francani, who split their time between Buffalo, NY and Boca Raton, FL. Rico was awarded an honorary degree at our May 2022 commencement ceremony. His incredible business career resulted in Rico becoming one of the largest McDonald’s franchisees in the country, with several dozen restaurants. Rico supports the Duquesne New Venture Challenge and he exemplifies the business acumen, entrepreneurial spirit, and success that our School of Business strives to instill in all its graduates.



Left to Right: Rico Francani, Dee Francani, Dean McFarlin, Laurie McFarlin, and Jim Miller at Oceans 234, a restaurant in Deerfield Beach, Florida.

Traveling to visit successful alumni, donors and supporters is a privilege Dean is grateful for. Building broader and deeper connections to our alumni base will only help the School going forward by securing even greater financial investments and strengthening our culture of philanthropy. Indeed, more travel is on the horizon in 2024–2025 for both Dean and members of the School’s Advancement Team Adam Viers, Amanda McQuillan, and Martin Black.

2024 Day of Giving

ANOTHER SUCCESS FOR THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

On Wednesday, February 7, 2024, Duquesne University hosted its annual Day of Giving, an online fundraising event. The 2024 edition of the Day of Giving proved to be another big success—a testament to the generosity of all Duquesne alumni, students, and community partners who participated.

The mission of the School of Business is to provide transformative education rooted in the Spiritan tradition. We are committed to developing ethical business professionals who understand the complexities of the global marketplace and serve others by leading with integrity to transform their communities, organizations, and society.

Your contributions directly enhance the educational experience of our students, providing them with the resources they need to thrive in an ever-evolving business landscape. We prepare our students to succeed and lead with purpose through cutting-edge business technology, engaging curricular and extracurricular projects, competitions, and invaluable networking opportunities.

Day of Giving donations made to the School go directly to our Innovation Fund. This fund plays a vital role in our students’ success, supporting hands-on learning experiences, forward-thinking curricular innovations, and state-of-the-art learning environments.

With 111 donors, we topped the leaderboard for the most donations among all Duquesne University schools. The School of Business Innovation Fund raised an impressive \$119,616. This remarkable achievement underscores the dedication and generosity of our community.

Several supporters pledged to match contributions to the Innovation Fund, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$40,500. This generous challenge reinforces our commitment to offering a difference-making business education that prepares students for the future. We are excited to share that the challenge was met.

The School of Business’ Day of Giving was successful due to the collective effort of our many supporters. Whether through direct donations, spreading the word on social media, or encouraging others to contribute, each action played a crucial role in our success. We are deeply grateful for the support and commitment of our alumni, students, faculty, staff, and community partners.



Left to Right: Dr. Xiaoyu Kaess and Dr. Michael Kaess, Aquatonomy
Left to Right: Jane Joseph (B’12), Taylor Pool, Dr. Michael Kaess, and Duquesne’s Staci Offutt
Left to Right: DNVC Finalists Alison Treaster, Dr. Clark Haynes, Taylor Pool, Dr. Michael Kaess, Becca Segel, Armin Samii, and Kyle Guinness



Left to Right: Duquesne’s Dr. Dean McFarlin, DNVC Judges Rich Longo, Allison Howard, Bill Generett, Melanie Simko, Pete Ferraro, Afshan Khan, Tom Lauwers, and DNVC Director Staci Offutt

The DNVC exemplifies the School of Business’s dedication to fostering difference-making innovation and entrepreneurship.

The 2024–2025 Duquesne New Venture Challenge launches in the Fall Semester. Stay tuned for details.

2-5-25

Save the Date for our Annual DAY OF GIVING

We have bigger goals to meet during the 2025 Day of Giving.
With your support, on February 5, 2025, we will:

- Double the number of individual donors
(That's over 200—are you ready to give?)
- Issue a matching gift challenge in excess of \$50,000
- Increase the number of donations from Young Alumni
- Continue to Cultivate a Culture of Philanthropy within the School of Business


We are excited to see how your generosity helps take the School of Business to new heights—with your support, the difference-making possibilities are endless!

Join us for 2024 Homecoming and Family Weekend! October 4–6, 2024

Homecoming and Family Weekend is a Duquesne Tradition that involves the whole Duquesne Community! With a full schedule of events, starting with student activities the week before and culminating with a weekend of reunion festivities, the weekend hosts celebratory gatherings and family-friendly activities—including golden celebrations for the class of 1974's 50th Reunion. It's a time when everyone enjoys being back on the Bluff, cheering on Duke's football, and reconnecting with the Red and Blue!


Join us for the School of Business Academic Showcase
Friday, October 4
Rockwell Hall from 4–6 PM
For details and registration, visit duq.edu/homecoming



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