

SPRING 2021 •

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# Business Futures



Jennifer  
Robinson

**PERSISTENCE**

**PAYS OFF**

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SACRAMENTO STATE  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

## MESSAGE FROM DEAN WILLIAM CORDEIRO

# Overcoming the Unexpected and Moving Forward Together

Last year was difficult for everyone. I am proud that the College of Business (COB) faculty, staff and students adapted well to our dynamic environment. I believe we are stronger for it. Of course, 100 percent virtual education has some drawbacks. We miss seeing our students. We all hope to be back together soon. While the situation remains fluid, we plan on offering about half our classes in-person in the fall 2021 semester.

The state budget was another challenge for our University and College last year – freezing hiring and curtailing many activities. Fortunately, the budget situation is improving. Consequently, we are currently hiring faculty for positions starting in the fall semester. Soon, we will begin the search process for several open administrative and staff positions.

During the last few years – including during the pandemic – the COB continued to focus on improving students' graduation rates. We are very proud that the College of Business has the highest six-year graduation rate among all Sac State colleges: 58 percent for first time freshman. For transfer students, we have the second highest graduation rate: over 80 percent.

Another milestone – we changed our name from the College of Business Administration to the College of Business. The term "Business Administration" has become a bit archaic and College of Business better fits who we are and what we do.

In the fall, we will submit our application for reaccreditation, followed by an in-person visit from the accreditation team in February. Accreditation is an important indicator of academic quality and overall achievement. The COB is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) that only grants accreditation to



6 percent of all business schools/colleges worldwide.

Our faculty and staff continue to demonstrate their dedication to our students' success. All of us – faculty, staff, administrators – work hard every day to create and offer learning opportunities to our students. We maintain partnerships with our community and value their financial and political support.

Finally, thanks to everyone for all you have done to help us get through a very tough year. I am extremely proud of our ability to pivot quickly in spring 2020 to 100 percent virtual instruction and administration. What seemed impossible at first quickly became our successful reality. Student learning continued despite worldwide disruptions.

While more challenges lie ahead, I believe that we have weathered the storm well and that the worst is now behind us. Working together, we can accomplish anything.

Remember our COB slogan is **BE THE BEST.**

Sincerely,  
**Dean William P. Cordeiro, Ph.D.**  
*College of Business*

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**Business Futures Magazine**

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**COB Business Futures** is published each academic year. The editorial office is in the College of Business, Sacramento State, 6000 J Street, Tahoe Hall 1010, Mail Stop 6088, Sacramento, CA 95819. To contact the editorial office, send e-mail to: [cba@csus.edu](mailto:cba@csus.edu) *csus.edu/COB • (916) 278-6578*

**College of Business**

**MISSION**  
 The Sacramento State College of Business develops engaged, responsible, and inclusive business leaders who enrich our communities.

**VISION**  
 The Sacramento State College of Business aspires to be the educational backbone of the Sacramento business community and an active force in creating a better future.

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# FLAT STICK PUB

2014

Drink Local, Putt 7.



Jennifer Robinson

## Jennifer Robinson **PERSISTENCE PAY\$ OFF**

Jennifer Robinson is on a mission to empower the Sacramento community. The owner and chief marketing officer of Flatstick Pub is a strong believer in supporting local businesses, artists and charities. Her new indoor, adults-only mini golf pub features local beer and wine exclusively from independently owned breweries and wineries. And to enliven the 15,000-square-foot space she recruited a diverse pool of Sacramento artists.

“The whole idea behind Flatstick Pub is a small business supporting small businesses,” said Robinson.

Robinson received a bachelor’s degree in marketing from Sac State in 2012. After graduation she went to work in

sales, first for AT&T and later in medical device sales, where her territory eventually grew beyond California into Oregon and Washington. Ever the entrepreneur, Robinson and her then-boyfriend (now husband) opened a number of medical spas around the country. But that business wasn’t her true passion.

Robinson’s job and medical spa business took her to Seattle often, and while there she and her husband stumbled on a mini golf bar.

“It was the first time we’d seen anything like it,” said Robinson. “We fell in love with it and wanted to create something like it in the Sacramento area.”

The couple reached out to the owner of the Seattle establishment, but the owner had no interest in expanding the endeavor.

A few years later, Robinson enrolled in Sac State's MBA program.

"At that point we had been reaching out to the mini golf bar company in Seattle for almost two years and they still didn't want to work with us. We decided maybe we'd just create it on our own," she said.

Robinson used her time in the MBA program to create a business plan for her own mini golf bar, part of a new category in entertainment known as "drinkertainment."

"Sac State's MBA program was the perfect place to cultivate ideas I was working on. I had all these bright minds working with me," Robinson said. "My classmates in the program were excited to work on something that was real and anytime I got stuck, they always had great ideas to help me move forward."

Once she completed the MBA program and her business plan was complete, Robinson decided to reach out to the Seattle company one last time.

"I sent them the business plan, and that was the first time they realized we were serious. They finally gave us a chance," she said.

Robinson and her husband are now the only licensees of the Seattle company, which has since expanded to six locations in Washington. Under that license, Robinson and her husband own the rights to open an unlimited number of Flatstick Pubs in Northern California.

Their current location in Downtown Commons near the Golden One Center opened in late 2019 and features a challenging mini golf course, a variety of mini-golf inspired games, a full restaurant and multiple bars.

"It's meant to be a gathering place for the community to come and enjoy games, local food and great local brews," she said. "It's a great venue for date nights, birthday parties, corporate events. It's a fun place to relax and do something interactive and tactile."

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the space is the artwork created by local artists. Nearly half of the pub's walls are painted in artist Maren Conrad's popular selfie-stylized murals. The space also includes photo-realistic mosaics of golf legends built from golf equipment created by Blake Byers. The centerpiece of the pub is an interactive replica of the iconic Tower Bridge crafted by metal sculpturist Gina Rossi. Composed of steel and a variety of found objects such as classic golf irons, railroad spikes from the Railyards, and vintage bike pedals, the structure represents the capitol city's geography and history.


"We wanted to bring in artists to help create something special and make the place an even more interactive destination," said Robinson.

In addition to serving only local food and beverages and featuring only local artists, Robinson also helps support the local community through a fund-raising effort called Sunday Fundraise.

"Sunday Fundraise stems from our goal to make Flatstick Pub more than just a bar to play games at and drink really great California beer," she said. "We want to team up with awesome local organizations to help spread the word and raise money toward their cause through some good times at the pub."

Each month, a new local charity is selected, and each Sunday of that month Flatstick donates \$1 for every beer and \$1 for every round of mini golf purchased to that charity. Last year the pub raised over \$100,000 through Sunday Fundraise. This year they are aiming for \$200,000.



Going forward, Robinson and her husband have plans to expand beyond their current flagship location. At press time they were in lease negotiations for additional locations, with plans to open a total of eight locations in Northern California over the next five years. 

# Student Investment Fund

## Growing SIF: How Mehrzad Adelzadeh Brought New Life to the Student Investment Club



Mehrzad Adelzadeh

When Mehrzad Adelzadeh transferred from Sierra College to Sac State and decided to concentrate on finance, he looked around for a finance club to join. Not finding one, Adelzadeh joined an accounting club instead.

"I stayed with the accounting club for a couple of semesters, and I learned a lot about how to manage a club successfully," said Adelzadeh. "But it was more geared toward accounting students, not finance students."

By chance, Adelzadeh stumbled on the Student Investment Fund (SIF). SIF is a student-run investment organization comprised of both undergraduate and graduate COB students. SIF was launched in the fall 2010 semester based on a \$250,000 investment fund allocated to COB by University Enterprises Inc. Today, SIF manages a \$600,000+

portfolio and provides members with first-hand experience in how to run and manage an investment organization.

Adelzadeh joined SIF in spring 2019 and immediately noted that the club was not marketed as well as it could be.

"We didn't have much of a campus presence," said Adelzadeh. "SIF has so much to offer. Students gain real-world experience in the field of investment management. They get an opportunity to build on their knowledge of the world's capital markets, sharpen analytical and team-building skills in a student-run environment, and learn about best practices in securities and portfolio analysis. I remember thinking, this is a great opportunity for students, but the word isn't getting out there."

The semester after Adelzadeh joined SIF, the current president had to step down for personal reasons. Adelzadeh immediately stepped up and was voted in as president.

"At that moment, I think we had around seven or eight returning members," said Adelzadeh. "It was the beginning of a very sleepless semester."

Adelzadeh immediately made it his mission to spread the word about SIF and generate more interest from students. Among other things, he created a SIF brochure, printed banners, and immediately started marketing the club.

"The brochure ended up being a really good move because we were able to recruit ten more members within a week," he said. "The success we had in such a short amount of time gave me faith that we could build the club and expand it even further."

Having created a new foundation for SIF, Adelzadeh continued marketing


efforts, including heavy participation in Club Days, overseeing the creation of a website ([www.csussif.com](http://www.csussif.com)), and community outreach. As a result, SIF had to turn students away in the spring 2020 semester.

"We can only sit 40 people in the classroom, so we are a bit limited in our membership by that," he said. "I had to turn students away, but found a compromise by including them on our email list, Canvas page, and GroupMe chats."

Adelzadeh credits his ability to grow the club to being active and dedicated to getting the word out.

"I think one of the keys to our success was finding people who genuinely want to learn about finance and understanding that targeted market," he said. "Then once we found those people, we showcased the benefits of the club. With SIF, you can get credit toward your degree, and you don't have to pay a membership fee."

Adelzadeh graduated in Spring 2020. Naturally, he was disappointed when SIF events were canceled during his last semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, he remains positive about the future of the club once things return to normal on campus.

"Right now, I'm focused on making sure everything we do gets handed down. I haven't done all this hard work to have it end with me," he said. "I really hope SIF becomes a home for people interested in investing and growing as students. I'll always be proud of my officers and I for what we did; it was a team effort, and the payoff was grand." 

# Outstanding Seniors of 2021: Mayra Cavazos & Prabhjyot Shinh




Mayra Cavazos was born in South Sacramento and grew up in Elk Grove. Although Sac State was an easy choice for her from a convenience perspective, the accounting major says her reasons for choosing the university went well beyond logistics. "Sac State is a top business school in the area," Cavazos says. "Selecting it was more about the opportunities I could receive."

In fall 2019, Cavazos was invited to join international business honors society Beta Gamma Sigma and serve as its treasurer. Soon after, the organization's president graduated, and Cavazos took over. She's run the organization ever since. Around the same time, Cavazos was selected to join the Business Honors (BHON) program. In 2020, she also got involved in the Accounting Society, which Cavazos says has been a "huge help in terms of networking and learning about accounting."

Participation in the Accounting Society is also how Cavazos met her future employer. In June 2021, soon after graduation, Cavazos will go to work fulltime as a financial and performance evaluator for the State of California Department of Finance. There she'll help audit other state agencies, assist with the state's primary audit, and begin studying for the CPA exam. "I have a lot of family that have worked for the state, and it appealed to me for numerous reasons, including a good work/life balance," says Cavazos.

The economics minor has already worked for a few state agencies, including the Franchise Tax Board, while attending school. She also worked for the College of Business' Office of Academic Programs, which she credits with getting her involved on campus on an unexpected level. "When I first started college my plan was to keep my head down and just focus on my studies," she says. "But working at the College of Business got me engaged with what the college was doing. I got to meet faculty and learn about all kinds of interesting programs and activities I didn't know about before. It motivated and inspired me, and from there my involvement in campus took off and my college career took a turn for the better."

In addition to being honored as an outstanding senior by the College of Business, Cavazos also previously won a Pamela Rae Ormaas scholarship for BHON accounting students and a KPMG scholarship. 



Prabhjyot Shinh moved from Punjab, India, to California by herself at the age of 17. "I came here for the opportunity to learn in a different country," she says. "My family believed I would have better opportunities here, and I wanted to see how I could adapt to a new environment and push myself."

Shinh landed in San Jose and enrolled at Evergreen Valley Community College. Though the first month was "scary," according to Shinh, she soon settled in. But soon after, she realized she wanted to attend a four-year university. "There are not a lot of extracurricular activities in community college," Shinh says. "I wanted to go to a four-year university and get involved in campus activities."


After completing a year at Evergreen Community College, Shinh applied to Sac State. "I was looking for a campus with a nice atmosphere, a diverse student body, and where I'd have an opportunity to meet people from all over the world and learn with them," she says. "Sac State was the campus for me."

Shinh transferred to Sac State in 2018 and is now a senior at the College of Business with a double concentration in business analytics and MIS. "I love technology and learning about what's going on in the world and how technology can be used to solve business problems," she says. "By focusing on both business analytics and MIS, I hope to help bridge gap between IT people and businesspeople."

Shinh didn't waste any time getting involved on campus. She completed all four phases of Sac State's leadership initiative, she is involved in both the MIS Association and the Business Analytics Club, and she's served as secretary for the International Student Association for several semesters. She's also vice president of the Peer Mentor Club and vice president of finance for Associated Students Inc. This semester, Shinh was recognized as one of the College of Business' outstanding seniors.

"I try my best to learn and grow as much as possible," she says. "There are many soft skills you can develop by pushing yourself into a new environment."

Once Shinh graduates this spring, she hopes to become a consultant for one of the Big 4 consulting firms.

"I am happy to be graduating but sad to leave Sac State," she says. "This university has been my home for the last three years. The faculty are amazing — they were my mentors and provided me with great learning opportunities. Everything I was dreaming of when I came to the United States was fulfilled at Sac State." 

# 2020 Dean's Award Winner

## Building a Campus Gaming Community



When Donna Walters transferred to Sac State, she wanted to find a way to get involved on campus and to get to know fellow students, faculty and administrators. Walters is an avid gamer, and her passion for gaming and helping others provided the avenues she needed to make those connections.

"I heard universities were getting involved in esports so I thought it would be a good way to introduce myself and make some friends on campus," says Walters.

Walters reached out to Stinger Esports, Sac State's student-run gaming organization. At the time, interest in the organization was limited, with fewer than 20 registered student members.

"The University of California (UC) system has exponentially increasing involvement in esports over the CSU," said Walters. "UC Davis has a gaming center on campus; UC Berkeley partnered with Andy Miller,

co-owner of the Sacramento Kings; UC Irvine offers students esports scholarships by running one of the largest esports programs in the country. I wanted to see what we could do to grow Stinger Esports and make Sac State and the CSU more competitive with UCs."

Walters soon discovered the president of the club had similar ambitions and quickly volunteered to assist the organization by spurring community and campus involvement.

Over the course of the next two semesters, Stinger Esports gained

support from professional esports teams San Francisco Shock, NRG and Team Liquid; computer component and peripheral producer CORSAIR; Tespa, game developer giant Blizzard's college program; and a variety of local businesses. Additionally, Walters helped organize the inaugural Bear Cup esports tournament at the California State Fair and brought Northern California universities together to produce a collegiate esports panel.

By the fall 2019 semester, Stinger Esports had more than 400 community members on popular online platform Discord; an increase of 2,000 percent within two semesters. As a result, Stinger Esports caught the attention of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)'s Big Sky Conference. Walters and her team helped produce a presentation for presidents of the conference advocating implementation of esports on each campus, connected Big Sky with each

campus' gaming organization, and introduced a partnership with "League of Legends" developer Riot Games; guaranteeing the winning university's placement in the championship tournament and opening up the potential for each student athlete to receive up to \$10,000 in scholarship winnings. As a result, a conference-wide league was formed and Big Sky honored Sac State as the chair for the inaugural season.

Now in her final year as an undergrad with a concentration in HR and organizational behavior, Walters recently stepped down as vice president of Stinger Esports to give other students a chance to lead and to serve in other capacities on campus. She is currently executive director of Associated Students Incorporated (ASI), serves as an instructional assistant and conducts research.

"Through my position with ASI I'm able to connect with students, faculty and administration," said Walters. "I love helping each level overcome roadblocks to success. During this process, I learn more about what students envision for their future and then have the privilege to support their efforts as they turn their dreams into reality."

"Winning the Dean's Award means the world to me," she said. "I never thought I would have the chance to graduate college, so this honor is beyond anything I've ever dreamed of receiving. This award motivates me to do even more for our campus and community."

Walters recently applied for graduate school and plans to pursue her MBA at Sac State. In her spare time, in addition to gaming, she enjoys travel and fine dining.





# 2021 Dean's Award Winner

## No Stranger to a Challenge

William Bradley has overcome many hurdles on his way to graduation as a double major in business marketing and film/video production this spring. In 2017 Bradley was attending Sierra College when his father passed away. Bradley's income was needed to support his family, including a younger sister who was in high school at the time. Bradley also lived far from campus, which made commutes tedious and expensive.

"It all had both a financial and emotional toll on me while going to school," he says.

But things soon got worse. The second mortgage that had been placed on his childhood home by his late father went into collections and the house began foreclosure. Over the course of that year, Bradley, who is a first-generation college student from an economically challenged rural family, spent much of his time facilitating his mother's and sister's moves out of the house as well as liquidating most of their household belongings, all while continuing his studies. "For the most part I am glad I had experiences like this as they have made me who I am and taught me much about being self-sufficient and independent," he says.

While in high school Bradley discovered a passion for film and video production. In 2018, Bradley transferred to Sac State to major in business administration with a concentration in marketing. Meanwhile, his interest in film and video production led to an apprenticeship at River City Studios, a video production company based in Roseville. There, Bradley learned how to create video content for nonprofits. He later added a second major in film/video production.

While at Sierra College, Bradley was on the Dean's and President's lists several times. He was also awarded the Crankstart scholarship at Sac State. This year, Bradley was honored with

the Dean's Award from the College of Business. "Getting the award was very exciting and also very unexpected," he says.

Bradley says his time at Sac State has provided him an opportunity to hone many different types of skills. "I have gained skills in web development, marketing content creation, analytics, statistics and managing people," he says. "Additionally, I have honed many soft skills, chiefly, nonverbal communication and public speaking. While at Sac State I was also fortunate enough to do a few internships, which gave me a lot of real working experience."

After graduation Bradley hopes to work in communications for the State of California. But he also plans to start his own firm. Bradley says his experience as a Sac State business student furthered his interest in entrepreneurial pursuits. "While I feel that I have gained countless skills, both practical and soft, that would be valuable to many institutions, I cannot shake the desire to run my own company," he says. "I am leaving my undergrad program confident that I have the knowledge, skills and abilities to do well in starting my own business or working for someone else.



William Bradley

Additionally, I have made some great connections and good friends while in the program."

Bradley says one of the things he likes best about the College of Business is the professors' interest in helping students succeed and the relatively small class sizes. "It's great to have that support," he says. "Going from a small college like Sierra to a large college like Sac State, I didn't expect that, but the support and individual attention has been amazing."

COB

# ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR, CRYSTAL COLEMAN



## For Alumnus of the Year, Moving Forward is All About Giving Back

**Crystal Coleman** believes in giving back. Over the years, Coleman has served Sac State as a faculty member and as a member of both the Dean's Advisory Council and the University Enterprises board. She is currently chair of the COB Advisory Council.

"When I was a student at Sac State, I worked full-time, went to school at night and I was teaching undergraduate classes," said Coleman. "My plate was really full, so I never got involved on campus. Once I graduated, I made an effort to change that. Since then, it's been a part of who I am -- serving and giving back on campus."

In recognition of her efforts, Coleman was recently named Sac State Alumnus of the Year.

After graduation from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis

Obispo she returned to the Sacramento area and took an operations manager position with Wells Fargo Bank and began pursuing an MBA degree at Sac State at night. She was later hired as a general manager by a local sales and distribution company where she ran inside sales and customer service and learned the business from the ground up.

"It was a really good experience for me -- I was involved in a lot of different aspects of the business," she said.

Over time she also took on some of the company's financial reporting duties and realized she really enjoyed accounting. That realization eventually changed her career course.

"I decided I wanted to become a licensed CPA," she said.

Coleman continued her studies at Sac State to pursue a master's degree in Accountancy.

After earning her Master of Science in Accountancy, and working part-time at a local CPA firm, Coleman left her position with the sales and distribution company to begin her career in the CPA profession.

"I decided I really liked the atmosphere, the professionalism, the constant learning in public accounting," she said. "So I took a 50 percent pay cut to go into public accounting."

Coleman joined local accounting firm GALLINA LLP, where she was promoted quickly and was invited to become an equity partner in just five years.

"The temporary setback in salary worked out very well for me in the long term," she said.

In 2017, GALLINA LLP joined CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) LLP, a Top Ten national accounting firm. Coleman now serves as an audit principal for CLA specializing in employee benefit plan audits, including 401K plans, health and welfare plans and employee stock ownership plans.

Coleman currently serves on CLA's Employee Benefit Plan Executive Leadership Committee, being one of just a few people that help set policies for the national practice, develop and implement strategic initiatives and identify areas for future growth.

Coleman said her favorite part of her job is meeting new clients. She also enjoys keeping up on new developments in her industry.

"I do a phenomenal amount of reading to keep up on future trends, upcoming changes in legislation and best practices. ERISA rules are always changing, and I like bringing the most current information to the clients I serve, looking

**Continued on page 11**

# Rachel Chu

## Three Years and Zero Debt: Making the Most of Her Sac State Education

Continued from page 10


at their plans and acting as a sounding board for them. I'm an impartial third party that can give them feedback on what I'm seeing out in the industry," she said.

Coleman's devotion to giving back also recently led her to form an endowed scholarship for Sac State students.

"I wanted to make sure that I was giving back in a way that would perpetuate benefits to the students," she said. "Sac State students are really head-and-shoulders above students at other universities because of their work ethic. They value their education and they take it seriously."

Coleman also believes in building a strong connection between Sac State and local businesses. Her current role as chair of the COB Advisory Council is focused on connecting the campus to the community in a way that supports student success.

"The driving purpose of the council is to be ambassadors for the college and to serve as a link between the university and the local business community," she said.

In addition to her role at CLA and multiple Sac State endeavors, Coleman enjoys reading, cooking and traveling. To date she's visited all seven continents and over 45 countries. 

Rachel Chu graduated from Sac State with a degree in marketing and international business in May 2019. But unlike many students, Chu graduated in just three years with a 4.0 GPA and zero debt.

Chu attributes this accomplishment to several things: taking AP classes in high school to get a head start on college credit; working hard while in college; applying for and being awarded a variety of scholarships; and working part-time while in school to stay out of debt.

Chu was born and raised in Sacramento, and when it came time to choose a college, she saw no reason to go anywhere else.

"One of the really cool things about Sac State is that you get to be in class with your future co-workers, your future managers, or your future employees," said Chu. "It's an environment where you're surrounded by brilliant people, both professors and peers. I gained a lot from at Sac State, whether it was engaging in lectures, asking professors for advice, or going to networking events and meeting business professionals in the area. The business school in particular hosts many events that bring people together."

Those connections led Chu to a part-time marketing operations job at Sacramento-based PowerSchool, a provider of K-12 education application technology.

"Working at PowerSchool made me realize I really enjoy the operations side of business – it just makes sense to me," said Chu. "And I like using analytics and data to drive business improvements and strategy."

Working while attending college not only prevented her from going into debt, it also taught Chu how to prioritize. "I planned out my daily schedule in advance, so I wouldn't waste the limited




Rachel Chu

time I had between classes and work."

After graduating, Chu went to work in the sales operations group for Oracle's North America Applications Consulting group in Rocklin, where she continues to work today. This fall she'll begin an online master's degree program at Penn State and continue to work fulltime at Oracle. Eventually, Chu sees herself as a chief strategist for a technology company or in a similar role that involves working with data to improve business.

"Using data, understanding data, and everything related to data is fascinating to me," she said.

Outside work, Chu enjoys reading, journaling and traveling. She also consistently makes time to learn new things.

"I believe we can all keep learning," she said. "That's something I try to keep in mind both personally and professionally -- the idea of always learning and discovering new things." 

# Brian Abrams & Mikayla Brettelle

## BHON Alums Launch Careers at Five Star Bank



The Business Honors (BHON) program is an accelerated learning program for selected COB students. Admission is based on both academic achievement and extracurricular activities. The two-year program immerses students in a cohort-based learning experience designed to challenge students and to equip them with knowledge and skillsets that embody the best of business practices.

The success of the BHON program has attracted the attention of regional businesses interested in working more closely with these rising stars of the business world. Five Star Bank, a community business bank headquartered in Sacramento, is one of those businesses. Five Star Bank already employs several Sac State grads, and recognized the value of the BHON program early on. But recently, Five Star Bank decided to take that interest a step further. The bank agreed to make a generous donation and become an official sponsor of COB's BHON program.

Recently, two BHON graduates accepted fulltime positions with Five Star Bank. Read on to find out what those former students are doing at the bank and how the BHON program helped them prepare for their careers.

### Brian Abrams

Brian Abrams completed an IT internship with Five Star Bank in the summer of 2018. Following that, he accepted a part-time job in the e-banking department. Upon graduation Abrams went to work fulltime as Treasury Manager in the e-banking department, where he recently played a pivotal role in creating and implementing Five Star Bank's revamped e-banking website. The new site, which boasts better reliability and functionality than the old one, launched just before Californians were directed to stay home due to COVID-19 concerns.

"It was fortuitous timing because online banking suddenly became even more important and the site saw substantially higher usage," said Abrams. "The new site handled the higher demand without any issues."

When the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) was launched in April 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it sparked additional challenges. Abrams and his team had to add about 600 new online profiles to the bank's website.

"We received PPP applications from all over the country," said Abrams. "In order to use those funds, businesses had to have an online banking profile created so that they could move the funds from Five Star Bank to their bank to pay themselves and their employees."

In addition to the many challenges of his job, Abrams says he enjoys the working environment at Five Star Bank.

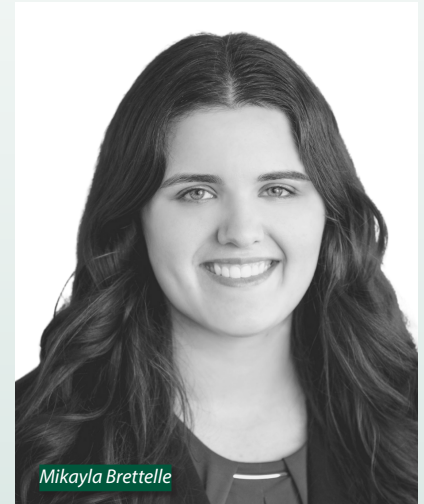
"We really are like one big family," he said. "I really appreciate the sense of camaraderie we all have."

Abrams believes his experience at Sac State and in the BHON program in particular were instrumental in helping him succeed at his job from day one.

"In the BHON program we did a lot of group projects and worked together as a cohort to solve big problems," he said. "When I jumped into my job here it was very similar – a small team, lots of group work, and we all help each other out. BHON was great preparation for my career."

### Mikayla Brettelle

Mikayla Brettelle accepted the position of Marketing and Communications Coordinator for Five Star Bank immediately after graduating from Sac State in May 2019. Her position involves working directly with the bank's chief marketing officer as



part of the two-member team that runs all aspects of marketing for the bank. Her duties cover a broad range of areas, including scheduling and planning events, managing community involvement activities, working with community partners, running social media campaigns, and creating traditional marketing materials such as flyers, videos, advertisements, etc.

"There are a lot of competing projects, so it helps to remain flexible," said Brettelle.

**Continued on page 13**

**Continued from page 12**


Brettelle enjoys the challenge of marketing for a bank.

“Banking is an ultra-competitive industry, so marketing is important,” she said. “At the same time, it’s challenging because banking as an industry is a little old-school, so new techniques like social media can be a tough sell. We also have to ensure we meet compliance regulations with everything we do.”

Brettelle also enjoys the fact that marketing is always evolving.

“You have to stay on top of what’s popular, what’s working, trends, etc.,” she said. “It keeps me on my toes.”

Brettelle says the BHON program helped her prepare for her current position and to better understand how Five Star Bank works beyond the marketing department.

“The additional classes we took provided a stronger foundation for my career because I was able to learn more about business as a whole instead of just marketing as a concentration,” she said. “In addition, being part of the cohort that Five Star Bank sponsored allowed us to get to know the bank in a way we may not have otherwise. We gained some true connections with the executive team that spent time with us throughout our two years there.” 

## Paul Lakkis Getting More Than He Bargained for at Sac State

When Paul Lakkis was looking at colleges to attend following high school, he made his parents a deal. The once Folsom resident would live at home for four years and attend Sac State so he could save up money to attend law school after getting his B.S.

While he may have considered Sac State his fallback at the time, Lakkis said he ended up getting much more than he bargained for.

After Lakkis graduated from Sac State in 2015, he began looking at law schools to attend. An urge to explore the east coast eventually led him to Boston College Law School. Lakkis now works for Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, one of the most distinguished law firms in the world. Lakkis practices corporate law for Morgan Lewis, and said he owes much of his success to his undergrad education at Sac State.

“My business degree at Sac State prepared me to be a junior lawyer much more than my law degree did,” Lakkis said. “Law school only teaches you about litigation, and there is a steep learning curve when it comes to corporate law. My business classes at Sac State gave me a broad background so I was able to hit the ground running and make that learning curve less steep.”

His work in corporate law includes representing issuers and underwriters in various capital markets transactions, such as IPOs and other registered securities offerings.




Paul Lakkis

As a corporate law attorney, Lakkis often deals with CEOs and CFOs.

“Most of them don’t know much about the law, which is why they have us,” he said. “But they know a ton about business, so I can relate to them better because I have a business background. Without that background, my job would be much more difficult.”

Lakkis said he has been thrilled to see the expansion happening at Sac State each time he returns to the area to visit family and hopes to stay involved with the university going forward.

“I’m very excited to see where the campus will be in 10 to 15 years, and I would love to be part of that growth,” he said. “Sacramento State is a large reason why I have been able to accomplish my goals.” 

# Nkiruka Catherine Ohaegbu

## EMBA Program Helps Ohaegbu Stand Out from the Crowd



Nkiruka Catherine Ohaegbu

Nkiruka Catherine Ohaegbu recently joined the Integrated Public Affairs team at Pacific Gas and Electric Company, enhancing and sustaining public affairs partnerships, programs, and government relations outreach strategy for a variety of PG&E's initiatives including the Clean Transportation program. Prior to joining PG&E, she served as a Business Loan Specialist with the U.S. Small Business Administration where she assisted businesses recovering from economic loss due to the COVID-19

pandemic, administering over \$194 billion in economic injury disaster loans and grants to over 3.6 million business owners in 2020. Nkiruka previously served as a gubernatorial appointee at Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency, filling various roles and managing the development and implementation of a variety of special projects. Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency oversees 11 departments, over 6,000 employees, and \$4.4 billion in expenditures. One of the many projects she has worked on was transitioning the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council into her agency to administer \$5 million in Homeless Emergency Aid. She created the new website for the Council, the online grant application, and other documents until permanent staff were later hired to distribute the funds. Although she had a very short timeline to work with, all the funds were distributed on time to the local jurisdictions due to superb preparation and planning. She also served in several positions in the Office of Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. including special assistant to the Governor and First Lady.

Nkiruka is a 2014 graduate of Sacramento State's Executive MBA program and is completing a Doctor of Business Administration degree from Georgia State University. She is a 2020 Senior Fellow with the Nehemiah Emerging Leaders

Program and currently in the 2021 class of Leadership Sacramento and Leadership California programs.

Nkiruka was awarded Sacramento Business Journal's Top 40 Under 40 Award, Diversity MBA's Top 100 Under 50 Emerging Leaders Award, and Sac Cultural Hub's Exceptional Women of Color Excellence Award. She currently serves on the board of directors for YMCA of Superior California and is the Secretary for her church's women's organization board. She also serves on the Connections Committee for the Nehemiah Emerging Leaders Program and on the Empower Committee for Metro Edge. From 2016-2018 she volunteered as her agency's chair for the Our Promise Campaign (California State Giving at Work) where she worked with the departments under the agency to raise awareness of the campaign to donate to local charities. She hosted her agency's charity bowling events and in 2018, increasing donations by 15%. In addition, she previously volunteered as assistant coach for her son's little league team. 

# Chelsea Minor

## Guiding Raley's Through the COVID-19 Crisis

Like most people, Chelsea Minor didn't realize the extent to which the COVID-19 crisis would upend her life and job.

As corporate director of public affairs for Raley's, Minor serves as the company spokesperson, handles government relations, and manages legislative and regulatory issues. When COVID-19 hit, grocery stores were on the front lines of the crisis. Even her many years in crisis response and public relations couldn't fully prepare Minor for what was to come.

"I've never handled a crisis like this before where the pressure on the business was so significant from so many different places – food suppliers, employees, customers, elected officials," said Minor.

Raley's leaders needed to quickly determine how to enable people to continue to purchase food and supplies safely. They also needed to ensure employees and customers were protected, and make sure food suppliers continued to deliver to keep shelves at 121 stores stocked.

"It was such a fluid situation. We would get new information daily to inform us about what we should do with our resources," Minor said.

Communications during the time was critical.

"We had to let consumers know about the steps we were taking to keep them and our employees safe; we had to keep elected officials apprised; and we had to discourage hoarding so we didn't run out of critical supplies. So much of what was happening was fear-based, so it was important to reassure people. Especially in grocery, loyalty is built through trust. I have an important role in making statements that stick and that people believe and trust."

Through the challenges and stress, Minor also saw a silver lining.

"It's been amazing to contribute to the positive changes we've been able to make within the organization and to see how agile we can be when we need to be," she said.

Minor has worked for Raley's for over six years, and said she loves working for a family-owned business.

"It gives me autonomy to develop things to help the community that would be tougher at a larger company," she said. "I love identifying needs in the community and trying to come up with creative solutions."

Prior to Raley's, Minor worked in politics and as a public relations consultant for a lobbying firm. But she soon realized she didn't want to simply consult, she wanted to drive communications and PR strategy for a company in-house. Minor's father was a senior HR leader in the Bay Area and had always told her that getting an MBA was a good way to differentiate herself. So Minor enrolled in a traditional MBA program, but quickly realized she craved more engagement. She considered Sac State's Executive MBA (EMBA) program, but at that time she didn't have the required management experience. After a few years in management, she committed to Sac State's EMBA program in 2013.

"I loved the cohort approach," she said. "The EMBA program taught me how to understand all the different functional areas of a company. When I'm handling a crisis, I understand how departments interact and connect and ultimately impact our bottom line."

Minor's final project involved developing Raley's annual sustainability report and after graduation, the company hired her. Minor became Raley's Director of PR and Public Affairs in February 2015. Soon after she was promoted to Corporate Director of Consumer and Public Affairs, and then to her more focused current role as

Corporate Director of Public Affairs.

Minor's work recently earned her recognition from Comstock's magazine as one of the Top 10 young professionals positively impacting the region during the COVID-19 crisis. Last year, she was also recognized by the Sacramento Business Journal as one of the area's top 40 under 40 businesspeople.

Outside of her primary job, Minor also serves as the Past Chair of the West Sacramento Chamber of Commerce,



Chelsea Minor

Chair of the Metro Chamber Political Action Committee, and the public appointee for the California Cattle Council. 

# Jita Buño

## Supplying the Frontline Through COVID-19

When COVID-19 officially reached California in March this year, Jita Buño's job changed overnight. As the Director of Supply Chain for UC Davis Health, Buño manages the personal protective equipment (PPE) used to minimize healthcare workers' exposure to hazards that cause illness for the entire UC Davis Health system. As the virus took hold in the state, Buño's job became a 24/7 undertaking.

"It's such an unprecedented situation," said Buño. "I am constantly asked if I have enough PPE for clinicians, but what is enough? We have no idea if we're going to go from five to 5,000 patients tomorrow. It changed the game for us."

The ability to handle this type of unprecedented and fluid situation is what makes Buño a great leader.

Born in India, Buño and her family moved to New York when she was a teenager. Navigating a new land, new language and new people was challenging enough, but Buño wanted to do more. After high school she joined the Air Force and served in the healthcare space for five years. Following 9/11, she transferred to the Navy as an intelligence officer.

"I think we all had a sense of duty after the terrorist attacks, and I wanted to do what I could to give back," she said.

Following her time in the military, Buño moved to the Sacramento region and went to work for UC Davis Health. Looking to take on more responsibility, she later enrolled in Sac State's EMBA program.

"The EMBA program helped me tap my leadership potential and taught me how to look at problems from a new perspective," said Buño. "I think

as people come up through the ranks, they don't always take the time to plan a strategy for the future. The EMBA program helped me hone new and existing skill sets and build a plan for what I wanted to do next."

Buño said she also appreciated the fact that the EMBA program is such a strong part of the Sacramento region.


"All the people I was in school with have all stayed here locally," she said. "Sac State really provides that regional connection with the people you're going to see and work with all the time – it's a great program to take advantage of."

Shortly after completing the EMBA program, Buño received a promotion to the position she now holds. In addition to managing UC Davis Health's supply chain, she also oversees purchasing, contracting, sourcing, receiving and analytics functions.

In 2019, Buño received a 40 under 40 award from the Sacramento Business Journal.

"Winning the award really drove home the fact that Sacramento is truly now my home," said Buño.

As this article was written, Buño was still working to manage daily COVID-19 chaos, but also seeing the positive side of that challenge.

"Look at what we've done in two months that we wouldn't have been able to do if we had planned for it," she said. "Traffic is down, air pollution is reduced, 80 percent of our patient visits are being done via videoconferencing. We're changing the game – it reminds us how capable, resilient and innovative we are when we have to be." 





# Laura Kennedy

## Finding New Opportunity in Challenging Times

When Laura Kennedy graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in real estate and land development in 2009, the great recession was just taking hold. As plans to help expand her family's real estate development company didn't appear feasible at the time, she quickly realized she needed a Plan B. Kennedy wanted to pursue a master's degree, but as a parent to two young children, commuting to campus every day would be tough. Kennedy researched online options and learned about Sac State's Master of Science in Accountancy (MSA) degree program, a completely web-based degree offered collaboratively by the College of Business and the College of Continuing Education.

"Having the MSA program online appealed to me since I had a family at home to care for – I could attend classes and complete coursework online but also be part of the campus when I was able," she said.

Kennedy enrolled in the MSA program and joined Beta Alpha Psi, a professional, honorary accounting organization that has served Sac State since 1964. The organization focuses on scholastic excellence and professional networking.

Kennedy served on the board for Beta Alpha Psi, which gave her the opportunity to elevate herself among her peers and gain recognition from leading professionals. She began working in public accounting with Moss Adams, LLP prior to graduating from Sac State with her Master of Science in Accountancy degree in January 2012.

"Getting the MSA degree gave me an opportunity to earn my CPA license and work in public accounting," she said. "And being involved in Beta Alpha Psi led to a number of networking and job opportunities, as well as wonderful friendships."

After a few years Kennedy moved on from public accounting into private accounting and was hired as the finance manager for Anton Development. This opportunity allowed her to couple her educational accomplishments with her previous work experience in real estate development and accounting. She enjoyed the challenges of her new role and became an integral part of the company's accounting department as they created a new brand and market for themselves. However, her ultimate passion was public accounting.

Today, Kennedy is an assurance manager at Macias, Gini & O'Connell LLP (MGO), one of the top 100 public accounting firms in the nation.

"I really enjoy the interactions we have with our clients," said Kennedy. "Learning about each of my clients' businesses is always exciting and providing excellent business services is my priority."


Kennedy also enjoys the fact that every day is different, and that she gets to help younger accountants learn the ropes. That love of teaching also led her to become an adjunct accounting professor. She began her teaching career at a satellite campus of Strayer University, then moved to teaching online, and eventually transitioned to online teaching at Ashford University. She also had the opportunity to teach courses at Cosumnes River Community College, where she coincidentally took her first accounting course.

"My professors at Sac State encouraged me and helped me get where I am today," she said. "I have a strong desire to give back and help students who are pursuing their degrees so they can be successful in their educational and career goals."



Laura Kennedy

Outside of her work duties, Kennedy has a passion for health and fitness. She serves as a Wellness Warrior at work, coordinating a variety of wellness activities and challenges to help MGO staff stay healthy. She also plays women's tackle football for the Sacramento Sirens, competes in CrossFit competitions and is a youth flag football coach.

Kennedy recently enlisted in the United States Air Force. She always had a desire to give back to her country and is proud to have the opportunity to serve and follow in her fathers' footsteps, who retired as a Lieutenant Colonel with over 30 years in the Army. She completed her basic training and technical training in early 2021 and is excited for her new adventure. 

# Coming this Fall: THE NEW MSBA PROGRAM

The College of Business is excited to announce the launch of the new Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA) program this Fall. The 100 percent online program focuses on using quantitative approaches and core technologies to help improve decision making and performance in business.

According to Dr. Joseph Taylor, chair of the Department of Information Systems and Business Analytics, the goal of the MSBA program is to prepare its graduates for data analytics-related positions such as analyst, data scientist, data engineer or analytics manager.

"These types of skills are in high demand both locally and nationally right now," said Taylor. "The MSBA courses will cover both the technical side of generating value through data as well as statistics and methods — the techniques that are necessary to effectively interpret data to create business value."

Taylor says a recent study revealed that analytics-related occupations are experiencing growth between 20 and 25 percent, with nearly 1,000 annual openings expected in the Sacramento area alone.

"There's huge demand in the business world for these kinds of talents trained in predictive modeling," agreed Dr. Min Li, director of the MSBA program and the Center for Business Analytics, who said

faculty from Marketing, Finance and other Business disciplines who are associated with the Center for Business Analytics conceptualized the program five years ago. "We want to bring the most cutting-edge developments in data analytics, data mining, machine learning and big data technologies into the business curriculum. The key is to show students how they can apply all these new developments, new technologies, new tools and new methods to business."

MSBA graduates will master, integrate and apply business analytics to

current, practical contexts and situations; demonstrate skills in business analytics software, tools and technologies; demonstrate an ability to translate data and analytics into clear and actionable business decisions

and insights; communicate analytics findings to business decision makers in a variety of formats appropriate to the audience; and demonstrate the ability to think creatively, analytically and critically when confronted with business problems.


"Students will gain hard skills around data management and data analysis so they can add value to a business immediately, but they'll also learn how to engage with readily available open-source tools so they can bring value to their organizations without requiring large investments," said Taylor. "In that



Min Li, MSBA Faculty Director



Joseph Taylor

way we also want to help students develop a sense of entrepreneurship regarding how data and analytics will change every industry in the next decade." 

## The MSBA program includes courses in:

- Data visualization tools and techniques
- Statistical modeling
- Data mining
- Machine learning
- Big Data technologies

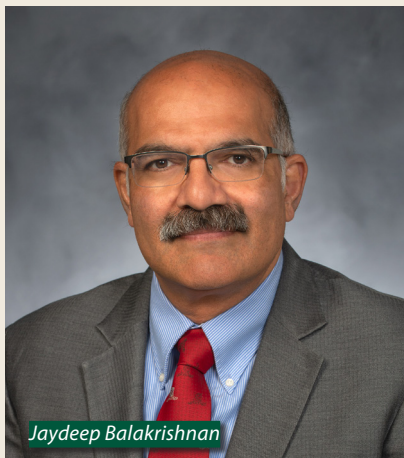
For more information on the MSBA program, visit [www.csus.edu/college/business-administration/graduate/ms-business-analytics.html](http://www.csus.edu/college/business-administration/graduate/ms-business-analytics.html)

# Introducing COB's New Faculty and Staff

## Jaydeep Balakrishnan

**Associate Dean, Faculty Support  
Professor, Marketing and Supply  
Chain Management**

After completing his Ph.D. at the Kelley School of Business, Indiana University, Bloomington, Jaydeep Balakrishnan was a professor at the University of Calgary in Canada for nearly 30 years, and an associate dean there for five years. When asked what brought him to Sacramento to become the new associate dean for faculty support and a marketing and supply chain management professor for COB, Balakrishnan's response naturally included the area's mild climate in comparison to Canada's harsh winters.



Jaydeep Balakrishnan

"I was looking for different challenges, the position sounded exciting, and I can't deny that weather played a role there too," he said.

Balakrishnan said supporting COB's faculty members in a variety of ways is his favorite part of his new role.

"For example, I help support the committees that hire full-time and part-time faculty, and then once new faculty are here, I support them in their orientation, advancement, etc. The

position is really about supporting all sorts of faculty processes," he said.

Balakrishnan also helps conduct faculty evaluations, works closely with COB Dean Cordeiro on a variety of initiatives, and supports many aspects of COB teaching and research. He also served as the interim associate dean for programming for several months as COB searched for a permanent hire.

"Doing both jobs kept me really busy, especially given COVID-19," said Balakrishnan. "On the flip side, I learned a lot about all of COB's programs."

Balakrishnan said he loves working with COB's highly committed faculty and staff.

"It's great to know I'm working in an organization that is so committed to students. In fact, one of the student advisors told me recently she received a lot of positive comments about how faculty members supported students when we suddenly went from a regular university to an online university due to COVID within basically two weeks. As you can imagine, that was stressful for everybody. It's great to be in an organization that is willing and able to change so quickly to adapt to the unexpected and to make sure that, at the end of the day, students are served as well as possible."

## Daun Jang

**Accounting**

Duan Jang began teaching accountancy at COB in August 2019. Prior to that, Jang was a research assistant and instructor in the School of Accountancy at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Jang's primary teaching interests include taxation and financial accounting and



Daun Jang

her research interests include audit quality, audit market dynamics, and auditor client acceptance/continuance decisions. Jang has won a number of fellowships over the years, including the AAA/ Deloitte Foundation/ J. Michael Cook Doctoral Consortium Fellow in 2017; the J.J. and Eleanor S. Ogle Fellowship in 2015-2019; and the Chancellor Fellowship in 2014-2019.

Jang said she enjoys the collaborative spirit at COB.

"I really like that the whole College of Business Administration is very collegial," said Jang. "People collaborate and help each other both in research and teaching. If I need feedback someone is always willing to help and offer feedback. COB is also very supportive of faculty. There are a lot of people I can reach out to for help if I need it."



## Won Jung Kim

### Accounting

Won Jung Kim began teaching accounting fundamentals and MBA accounting at Sac State in 2019. Prior to that, Kim was an accounting instructor at the University of Utah from 2017-2019. Kim's teaching interests include financial and managerial accounting, auditing, and government/nonprofit accounting. Prior to teaching, Kim worked for the Korean Accounting Standards Board in Seoul, Korea, as a senior researcher, and as a senior auditor for Ernst & Young LLP. Kim has published numerous papers and is currently working on "How Does the Market Learn about the Success of Corporate Acquisitions? The Role of Voluntary Disclosure, Required Financial Reports, and Financial Analysts" with Stephen Stubben and Feng Zhang.

"My research and teaching focus on financial reporting including government and not-for-profit accounting. Sacramento is the capital of California and Sac State is the place that inspires me most for my research and teaching," said Kim. "Since I joined Sac State last year, I have enjoyed working with the great COB faculty who are very open to new research and pedagogical ideas. I am also very grateful for their continued patience and openness to my questions."

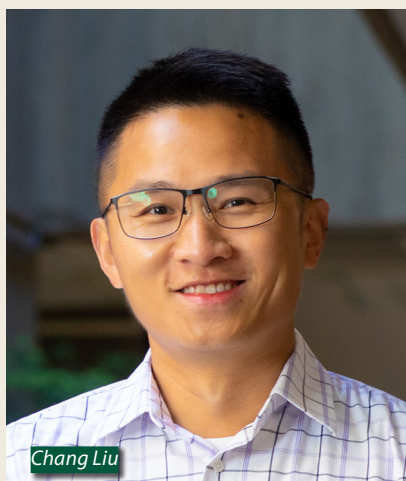
## Chang Liu

### Finance

Prior to moving to Sacramento, Chang Liu was an assistant professor of finance at Hawai'i Pacific University, where he taught finance courses at both undergraduate and MBA levels, including business finance, investment analysis, and portfolio management. He currently teaches multinational business finance at Sac State.

Liu's research has been published in academic journals such as the Journal of Financial Research, the Journal of Business Finance and Accounting, and the Journal of International Business Studies. Liu received his Ph.D. in finance from the Carson College of Business at Washington State University and holds the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation. He is a member of the Financial Management Association and CFA Society Sacramento.

"A few things come to my mind when



I think about COB and Sac State in general: first, an outstanding faculty dedicated to helping students and giving them the best education experience possible," said Liu. "Second, academic programs and growth opportunities (I am especially excited about the proposed Master of Science in Finance program which aims to help students prepare for the CFA exam), and third, the beautiful campus."



## Darcy Fudge Kamal

### Strategy & Entrepreneurship

Darcy Fudge Kamal joined the College of Business in September 2020. She teaches Strategic Management (GM 105) in the Strategy & Entrepreneurship Department. Prior to that, Fudge Kamal was a faculty member at Chapman University in Orange County. She received her doctorate from the University of Minnesota and is originally from Canada.

Fudge Kamal says part of what brought her to Sac State is the California State University's overall mission and its emphasis on excellence in teaching. The Sacramento area appealed to her as well. She's conducted extensive research about the thoroughbred horse industry over the years, and the California Horse Racing Board recently moved its meetings to the Sacramento area, which provides Fudge Kamal easy access to critical information about that industry. "Thoroughbred breeding and racing activities are interesting to study for us to understand business strategy, buyer and supplier relationships, and how business networks impact performance," says Fudge Kamal. "The Sacramento area is an ideal place for me to conduct my research."

Her work on the industry was recently published in Strategic Management Journal, the flagship journal of her field.

Fudge Kamal says she is enjoying her time at Sac State so far. "Sac State students are very hard-working. A lot of them are juggling multiple jobs and managing a lot while going to school,

yet they come to class enthusiastically and with a lot of positive energy," she says. "I also love the diversity that Sacramento and Sac State represent. The different viewpoints and openness to different perspectives make Sac State students unique."

## Fernanda Maciel

### Information Systems & Business Analytics

Dr. Fernanda Maciel joined the College of Business as a Business Analytics assistant professor in fall 2020. She also teaches the Statistics Bootcamp for the Executive MBA program.

Originally from Brazil, Maciel received a BS in Statistics from the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro and a Masters in Business Administration and Marketing from Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro. In 2011, Maciel had the opportunity to come to the United States and pursue a masters in Marketing Analytics from Bentley



Fernanda Maciel

University. "It was a brand new program and exactly what I was looking for – a combination of analytics and marketing. I was very excited," she says.

Once she completed the program, Maciel worked for a consulting company and a marketing research company in Boston before returning to Bentley University to pursue her PH.D. in Business Analytics. She also taught at

Bentley for three years before accepting the position at Sac State.

Maciel says Sac State appealed to her because of its diversity and the high ratio of first-generation college students. "I was the first one in my family to go to college and I feel like I set a path for my sisters, who also went to university," she says.

Though she says moving to a new university during a pandemic has been challenging, and she's looking forward to being on campus and interacting with students in person, Maciel has been impressed with the College of Business faculty and staff. "Everyone I've met at the College of Business is committed to student success, strong research and good teaching," she says. "I love how everything is centered around the students and helping them succeed."

## Brent Bynum

### Director, COB Graduate Career Services

Brent Bynum joined COB as the Director of the Graduate Career Services Office in November 2019. Bynum meets with COB graduate students to provide career advising, job search and networking strategies, while building relationships with employers to create job and internship opportunities that enhance the students' overall MBA or graduate level program experience. He also hosts and sponsors career-related programs, workshops and campus events. Bynum's purpose is to serve as a catalyst to help students determine their next professional steps.

Prior to his arrival at COB, Bynum worked for UC Davis as a Client Engagement and Community Relations Manager. Earlier in his career, he was the Assistant Director of the MBA Career Center at UC Irvine's Merage School of Business. Bynum received his undergrad degree from UC Davis, but did his graduate studies at Sac State, and said he especially enjoyed the Sac State culture and considered it "home." So

when the COB opportunity at Sac State came up, he jumped at it.

"I was excited to come back and help students like I was helped during my master's tenure," he said. "To be able to help COB students was something I had been interested in for a while."

With campus closed due to COVID-19, and with the hiring and onboarding



Brent Bynum

processes of internships and full-time jobs being substantially affected, Bynum is currently focusing on creative ways to help students. "COVID-19 has definitely made searching for a job more challenging," he said. "I think networking in purposeful, strategic, and innovative ways is now more important than ever. Whether it's through Zoom, phone calls, email and/or LinkedIn introductions, students can still make connections that will help put them to work once hiring conditions lift and job opportunities are back on the rise."

Bynum said he's enjoyed his time at COB so far and appreciates the college's collaborative spirit.

"The staff has been very welcoming, supportive, team-oriented and professional," he said. "I also love that we are connected to so many other departments on campus – that helps benefit COB and our students, too."

## Cyndy LaFitte

### COB Budget and HR Analyst

Cyndy LaFitte works closely with Dean Cordeiro as well as associate deans, directors, faculty chairs and staff at COB regarding all budget and human resources matters. In the budget area, she oversees all funding sources, including stateside, self-support, donors, grants, etc. Her work includes financial reporting and projections, budget analysis, defining fiscal policy and procedures, and acting as the COB liaison to the broader university on all fiscal matters.

"I often tell people I do everything from paying the bills and depositing checks to creating the overall college budget," said LaFitte, who previously spent 17 years in finance at Hewlett Packard.

LaFitte also oversees human



resources for COB, including position management, recruitments, appointments, position changes, and other miscellaneous HR items. She'll also work on AACSB accreditation surveys, financial data and accreditation reporting as those efforts ramp up.

"There are a few things I really like about the job. For starters, the people and learning environment. Everyone I've met has been wonderful – staff, faculty, administrators, peers, etc. Everyone was willing to answer my questions and help me in any way they could," she said. "I also really enjoy the variation of the work."

## Tim Richter

### COB Director of Development

Tim Richter joined the University as Director of Development for the COB in November 2018. He previously worked for UC Davis Health, where he helped manage corporate partnerships including the organization's relationship with Sac Republic FC. Prior to that position, Richter worked on the main campus of UC Davis as Director of Development for UC Davis Athletics. Richter saw the position with the COB as an opportunity to blend his previous experiences to help drive



COB development efforts and build relationships with community partners.

Richter was born and raised in Sacramento, and said he understands the importance and role that Sac State plays in this community and region.

"I'm a big believer in the mission of the university," said Richter. "Almost half of our students are first generation college students. I love the fact that we are integrated into the Sacramento community as we admit many students from this region, and then provide them with a high-quality education and college experience."

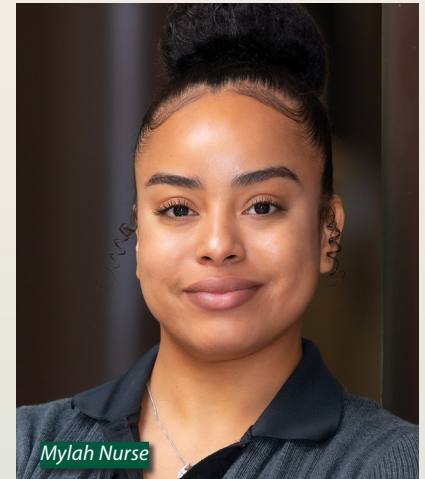
Richter said he enjoys working with COB and the partnership with Dean Cordeiro.

"My goal is to ensure that I do everything possible to provide resources for our COB students, faculty, and staff. I really value having the opportunity to highlight all the amazing things we are doing within

the COB, and the positive impact that we provide to the greater Sacramento region."

## Mylah Nurse

### Administrative Coordinator, COB Dean's Office



Mylah Nurse has worked at Sac State since August 2012. Before joining COB in August 2019, Nurse worked for the School of Nursing as a placement coordinator. Prior to that, she worked at the College of Continuing Education.

Nurse said her favorite part of her job at COB is working with all the students, faculty and staff. She also appreciates the "high level of professionalism that is imbedded into this College."

# Master Your Future

With a Graduate Business Degree at Sacramento State

	PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	OVERVIEW	PROGRAM COST	CLASS PROFILE
 <p><b>MBA</b></p>	<p>A flexible program designed for working professionals. Students receive an extensive management education and opportunity to select a field of specialization. Case studies, lectures, and group projects facilitate students' professional growth and develop leadership and technical skills.</p>	<p>Flexible Timeline Average 18 Months – 2.5 Years</p> <hr/> <p>Classes one evening each week 6:00 pm - 8:50 pm for 16 weeks. Students choose 1 - 4 classes every semester.</p> <hr/> <p>Concentrations: General Management   Finance Business Analytics in Healthcare Entrepreneurship &amp; Global Business</p>	<p>\$26,300 (Average)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Average years of work experience: 4.7</li> <li> Average age: 28</li> <li> Female students: 38%</li> <li> Students of color: 45%</li> <li> Average GPA: 3.3</li> </ul>
 <p><b>MBA for EXECUTIVES</b></p>	<p>Designed for experienced professionals who aspire to leadership positions. This cohort-based program offers an exceptional return on investment, with a dynamic learning environment, strong sense of community, outstanding networking opportunities, and an international study trip.</p>	<p>15 Months</p> <hr/> <p>Classes Friday, 3:00 - 7:00 pm, and Saturday, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. Each course lasts four weeks. Every 3rd week, courses conducted online. 12 courses. Final 3 months are spent on individual projects.</p> <hr/> <p>Concentration: None; students receive a General Management degree.</p>	<p>\$36,300 (Includes textbooks, course materials, meals, networking events, and international study trip.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Average years of work experience: 13.5</li> <li> Average age: 41</li> <li> Female students: 45%</li> <li> Average GPA: 3.1</li> <li> Average salary: \$123,000</li> </ul>
 <p><b>ONLINE MBA</b></p>	<p>The 100% online MBA prepares students to become business leaders in the global marketplace. This 12-month accelerated program combines a rigorous and strategic management education with the unique hallmarks of a global focus and a highly diverse student network.</p>	<p>12 Months</p> <hr/> <p>Classes Friday, 3:00 - 7:00 pm, and Saturday, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. Each course lasts three weeks. 100% Online.</p> <hr/> <p>Concentration: International Business Management</p>	<p>\$29,520 (Includes textbooks and course materials)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Average years of work experience: 7.2</li> <li> Average age: 31</li> <li> Female students: 56%</li> <li> Average GPA: 3.13</li> </ul>
 <p><b>MS ACCOUNTANCY</b></p>	<p>The MSA provides students with an advanced understanding of the rapidly changing field of accounting. This program uses a combination of online course materials, streaming video, and instant messaging. The curriculum is 100% compatible with the CPA exam.</p>	<p>18 Months</p> <hr/> <p>100% Online; students can sign in and listen to lectures on their own schedule. Each class lasts six weeks.</p> <hr/> <p>Concentration: None 100% compatible with the CPA exam.</p>	<p>\$22,200</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Average years of work experience: 6</li> <li> Average age: 30</li> <li> Female students: 51%</li> <li> Average GPA: 3.2</li> <li> Average GMAT: 536</li> </ul>
 <p><b>MS BUSINESS ANALYTICS</b></p>	<p><b>COMING FALL 2021</b></p> <p>The MSBA prepares students to connect data and models to substantive business problems so effective business decisions can be made. This 100% online program focuses on using quantitative approaches and core technologies to help improve decision making and performance in business. Students will master, integrate, and apply knowledge and skills of business analytics to current and practical contexts and situations.</p>	<p>24 Months</p> <hr/> <p>100% Online. Students can sign in and listen to lectures on their own schedule Ten 3-unit courses over 2 years. Eight core courses (24 units) + two electives (6 units).</p> <hr/> <p>*Fall 2021 launch pending final approval.</p>	<p>Coming Soon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> TBD</li> <li> TBD</li> <li> TBD</li> <li> TBD</li> </ul>



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