Lee Adds MBA Program

By Britain Miethe

The Department of Business at Lee University is pleased to announce that the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program begins in August 2013. The 36-hour program is designed to equip individuals with a faith-based approach to senior level leadership in industry, government, and nonprofit organizations.

Students will complete two courses each semester and complete the part-time program in 24 months. The curriculum is designed with a focus on experiential learning so that graduates are prepared to apply theory to actual business problems. Dr. Shane Griffith, Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in Business said, “Today’s dynamic business environment means that organizations face complex challenges. We designed the Lee MBA with this idea in mind. Beginning in the first course, our students will be engaged in solving difficult business problems and will be prepared to lead into the future.”

The Department believes that individuals will be better prepared to face the challenges of a complex world equipped with an advanced degree in business taught from a Christian worldview. According to Dr. Griffith, “We believe that success should not be measured only by profit, but also through how an organization and its employees make a difference in their communities. Our MBA is a faith-based approach to delivering long-term value.”

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges notified Lee late last summer that the program had its full accreditation. This is the first graduate degree offered by the Department of Business which received national accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs in 2008.
Thompson Receives ACBSP Teaching Award

By Evaline Echols, Ph.D.

Dr. Dewayne Thompson, Chair of the Department of Business at Lee University, has been selected as the recipient of the 2013 ACBSP Teaching Excellence Award for Region 3. Lee received specialized accreditation in business by ACBSP (Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs) in 2008. He, along with other regional award recipients, will be guests of ACBSP at a special Salute to Regions Luncheon on June 23, 2013, during the Annual Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Teaching Excellence Award is based on five criteria; classroom teaching and learning, professional development, institutional versatility, curriculum development, and community commitment.

In a letter of recommendation, Dr. Matthew Melton had this to say: “Dewayne is a consummate classroom teacher. I have had the chance to observe him and to work with students who have taken him for classes. No one in a Thompson classroom has any doubt that he or she is getting quality material. Hundreds of graduates think warmly of Dewayne when they think of their time at Lee University. His impact on them continues far past their time as students, and many of them stay in touch with him for advice and counsel in their professional lives.”

As a colleague of Dewayne for the past 28 years and on behalf of all the business faculty, we say, “Congratulations to an outstanding leader and excellent teacher. Only history will reveal the impact he has made in the Department of Business and with hundreds, maybe thousands, of business, accounting, and computer information systems alumni.”
Last year I mentioned the renovation of a room for Policy and other student teams to use in rehearsing their presentations. That room is now complete with recording and immediate playback capabilities to critique a team’s presentation. That may be all of the pending news from last year’s newsletter; however, the new emphases in information systems and business administration are now in full swing.

In terms of new initiatives, we have the healthcare administration major and the MBA launch. The healthcare administration major was housed in the Behavioral and Social Sciences Department from its inception. While the Department was involved in the development of the major, it was housed in that Department due to some curricular issues. Dr. Sargent, the chair, and I talked and decided that the major was a better fit for the Department of Business, so we made the curricular adjustments to satisfy Accreditation Council of Business Schools and Programs curricular standards. The program is officially approved by all appropriate bodies and will be included in the Department of Business fall 2013. Our close relationship with Life Care Centers of America will continue as we expand the program to local healthcare providers outside of the long-term healthcare industry.

Many of you continue to express interest in Lee offering an MBA. We are pleased to announce the program’s launch for fall 2013! While Dr. Shane Griffith will discuss this program in other sections of this newsletter, I want to congratulate the Department, with his leadership, in developing a fine MBA curriculum with its attendant dimensions of the program that will set it apart from other MBA programs. The MBA Admissions Committee met and accepted our first students about two weeks ago. The President and The Cabinet (all campus vice presidents) supported the Department and encouraged our work and guided our deliberations until the finish product was delivered and approved by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Our Volunteer Income Tax Preparation (VITA) continued this year. You may remember that VITA is a government program where our students, under Mr. Della Franco’s supervision, complete tax returns for lower income families. Last year these accounting students set a record and generated $720,055 in returns for these taxpayers. This year to date we have 375 returns and over $625,000 in refunds, with about two weeks to go.

We expanded our experiential learning focus to include Volkswagen this year while continuing with our existing partners such as People for Care and Learning and Merck. The internship program, under the direction of Dr. Guy DeLoach is gaining momentum with more requests from local organizations than we have students to fill positions. Currently, students intern at Impressions Catering, Life Care Centers of America, Chamber of Commerce, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), People for Care and Learning, and Lee University to name a few. The Cambodia Project, I introduced this to a couple of years ago, continues to gain momentum. Students continue developing business plans, which help to break the cycle of poverty for some in Takam Village, Cambodia. If you haven’t already seen People for Care and Learning’s (PCL) project, Build a City, please do that now and “like” it on Facebook. The second annual symposium titled “Breaking the Cycle of Poverty: 2013” was held on campus at the Church Street Annex property. This year we had Dr. Doug Jackson as our keynote speaker, the founder of Project C.U.R.E.; additionally, several breakout sessions were held by local NGOs.

As you can see, we’ve been up to a lot! Please come visit your alma mater. The faculty and I would love for you to visit us Lee Day and Homecoming. If you do not receive my periodic emails regarding events and news around campus and job opportunities, please email me and I’ll add you to the list. Don’t forget to let us know if you are changing your email or you have a preference that we use a different email address. My email is dthompson@leeuniversity.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

Dewayne Thompson, D.B.A.
Chair, Department of Business
Randy Joiner, a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) with 30 years of combined accounting and management experience, joined the Business Advisory Council in 2010. He has a Master's degree in Organizational Management from Pfeiffer University in Charlotte, North Carolina and a Bachelor of Accounting (1982) and Business Administration (1980) from Lee University. His professional experience from 1990 until the present includes work with companies such as Georgia Power Company, Coca-Cola, and Bank of America, to name a few.

While at Lee University, Randy was president of Alpha Gamma Chi, a gentleman for Delta Zeta Tau and a member of the Lee Singers. His wife, Cyndi Howell Joiner (1982) and son Blake (2010) are also Lee graduates. Cyndi is a Managing Director in the Atlanta office of Alvarez and Marsal, an international consulting firm. She is also past president and a board member of the Delta Zeta Tau Alumni Association. Blake is a second-year law student at Mercer’s Walter F. George School of Law in Macon, Georgia.

Dr. Dewayne Thompson, chair of the Department of Business, had this to say about Randy: “Randy Joiner’s infectious smile and his positive approach to life cause people to gravitate toward him. I asked Randy, a classmate of mine from our Lee days, to join the Business Advisory Council because of his consistent and devoted Christian walk, coupled with his successful business career. His insight and experience make him a valuable resource to Lee University generally and the Department of Business specifically.”

In the words of Randy, “I joined the Business Advisory Council because I strongly believe in Lee University and its mission. Hopefully, my experience in the workforce for 30 years and my educational background can contribute to the new MBA program and other programs in the Department of Business.”
The Business Advisory Council of the Department of Business held its annual meeting March 22-23 on campus. This is the 27th year of the Council, whose purpose is to advise the Department on issues such as curriculum, strategic planning, and program development.

The Council is composed mostly of senior-level managers or business owners from various industries; however, some members represent universities and consulting firms.

Members of the Business Advisory Council include, front row from left to right are Hermilo Jasso, Kim Daugherty, Holly Hopkins, Lauren Thompson, Dewayne Thompson, Greg Della Franco, Matt Carlson, and Evaline Echols. Middle Row from left to right are Shane Griffith, Ingrid Hart, David Smartt, Alan Burns, Gary Farlow, and Patrick Long. Back Row from left to right are Randy Miedaner, Lee Stewart, Mava Wilson, Kim Casteel, Randy Joiner, Deane Osner, Tanya Mazzolini, Mike Seago, Guy Deloach, Barry Ray, Alan Smith, and Mike Harden.
Eight years ago (2005) Greg Della Franco joined the Lee University faculty in the Department of Business as Assistant Professor of Accounting. In addition to his teaching load, he also serves as Coordinator of the Accounting Curriculum. Before coming to Lee, he taught as an adjunct faculty member at Keller Graduate School as well as Alverno College from 1998 until 2005 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Earlier accounting positions included University of North Carolina in Charlotte and Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina.

Mr. Della Franco was also a financial consultant for Jefferson Wells, International in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from 2000-2005. He has more than 30 years of professional accounting experience at various levels—external and internal auditing, controllerships, as well as financial management consulting.

In addition to being a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Management Accountant (CMA), and Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), his educational experience includes a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from St. Joseph’s University in Philadelphia, an MBA from Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois, and he is currently pursuing a Doctor of Business Administration in Accounting at Argosy University.

In addition to teaching a full load of accounting courses, Mr. Della Franco has also been involved in the global perspective program at Lee where he accompanied a group of students to Italy during the Christmas break. He said, “Traveling to Italy has opened my eyes to how my ancestors grew up. Also, it is rewarding to see the interaction between the students and to see how they learn to appreciate beautiful artwork and buildings, and to have the opportunity to expose them to international cultures.”

In the words of Dr. Dewayne Thompson, Chair of the Department of Business, “Mr. Della Franco has an incessant desire for students to learn accounting. He tries to find ways to transfer his knowledge and love for the discipline to his students.”

As is mentioned in another article in this newsletter, he also directs the VITA program which, in his words, “makes his job very rewarding when he is able to give back to the community by saving people money by helping them get the highest refunds on their income taxes.” He is not only an asset to Lee University but also to the Cleveland community. In 2010 Lee University awarded him the Charles W. Conn Faculty Service Award for his leadership and involvement with the VITA program. Greg is married to Vicky, and they have five children and five grandchildren.
Accounting Gala

By Hannah Jones

According to Mr. Della Franco, the Accounting Gala is one of the best ways to highlight the talents of accounting students. The Accounting Gala is a formal event that occurs every fall at Lee University where junior and senior accounting students have the opportunity to dress up, bring their resumes, and meet with local professionals who are looking to hire graduates. This event has become a priority to students who wish to get their name known in the professional world and to receive guidance in the business world. Representatives of corporations such as Henderson, Hutcherson and McCullough from Chattanooga and Life Care Centers of America from Cleveland attend the event searching for fresh talent. Tanya Mazzolini, Vice President of Accounting for Life Care had this to say about the event: “The Lee University Accounting Gala provides our company a place to network with upcoming graduates for potential employment, as well as candidates for our intern program. It allows our various Accounting Departments to come together in one place to find knowledgeable and professional candidates.”

“The purpose of the Gala is for students to meet people who are actually doing taxes and audits, so that they can see the opportunities they will have in the future,” says Della Franco. Many students leave the Gala with internship offers, and some even receive entry-level jobs. This is a great way for students to gain the experience that will give them an advantage when they start looking for a career in the competitive business world.

Vita Program

VITA is a program that provides Lee University students with the opportunity to help the community. VITA stands for volunteer income tax assistance—a program that trains volunteers to assist with the taxes of those in the community with an income below $50,000.

Not only can students apply their knowledge and gain experience in the tax return field, they can also earn up to 20 service hours that will go toward their 80 required hours. The community greatly benefits from this program, as shown by the $4 million that have been saved since the program started five years ago. Instead of going to H & R Block where they have to pay for these services, community members can receive the same services free at Lee. This is a significant benefit the individuals who get to keep their hard-earned money, and the community because the money remains in Bradley County.

Mr. Greg Della Franco, the program’s chair, is proud of a recent article in a local newspaper about the work that Lee University is doing with the VITA program.

This program can always use more volunteers, and the process is easy. Anyone can volunteer, although some accounting background is suggested. Once a training program on the IRS Web site is completed, students are officially volunteers. The program transpires during the spring semester in the downstairs computer labs of the Walker Memorial Building on Fridays from 2:30-5:30 p.m. and Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to noon.
Sabbatical In Lebanon

By Kimberly Williams

Dr. Bill Jaber was granted a sabbatical during the 2013 spring semester in Beirut, Lebanon where he is studying Arabic, and Lebanese spoken Fusha at the American University of Beirut (AUB). Dr. Jaber will be studying in Lebanon until about the middle of May before returning to the United States.

There are several reasons a professor may choose to go on sabbatical:

1. To do research
2. To take a class in their field
3. To take a class to expand their abilities

When asked, during a Skype interview, why he decided to go on sabbatical for the semester, Dr. Jaber responded, “To refresh myself.” He stated that he believes this is an area that is increasing in importance to the economy and the University. He also was drawn by a personal interest because of his Lebanese background. Dr. Jaber hopes to use his studies from AUB at Lee University later on. He said, “There are a lot of benefits that students could learn.”

Although the work is difficult, with four to eight hours of studying for every class, Dr. Jaber’s studies are going well. He explained that he is slowly making progress. We are looking forward to having Dr. Jaber back at Lee University, using the skills he learned while studying in Beirut.
Greece and Italy

During an interview with Dr. Bill Jaber via Skype, I got a taste of what he and a group of Lee students were able to experience in Greece and Italy from December 12, 2012, to December 24, 2012. The journey began in Athens, Greece, where they toured the Acropolis and the nearby museums to gain a better understanding of the rich historical and cultural wealth of Greece outside the classroom. While in Athens, the students attended two lectures at a university and interacted with the local students. Later, the group visited world-renowned sites such as Parliament, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and Delphi. They also enjoyed succulent dishes from celebrated Greek restaurants. “It was the best food I think we’ve ever had,” said Dr. Jaber when mentioning the local cuisine.

After their experience in Greece, the group of students visited Italy, where they were involved in a lecture at a local university before checking into their hotel. The group then headed to St. Peter’s Square where they joined in for a papal audience. The itinerary then took them to visit more historical landmarks, such as the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter’s Basilica, the Roman Coliseum, the Parthenon, and many traditional restaurants. While the schedule did not allow for much down time, the students were able to visit the iconic boutiques where they shopped and admired European fashion. According to Dr. Jaber, “It was a fast-paced, exhausting trip, but we had a great group of students.” He later told me that judging by the students’ daily journals, this ten-day trip impacted them in incredible ways.

Uruguay and Argentina

Dr. Hermilo Jasso leads frequent trips to Uruguay and Argentina to give Lee students a better understanding of South America’s cultural and historical wealth. “I love this trip because it forces the students to discard the faulty mentality that everyone born in Latin America is simply from Mexico,” said Dr. Jasso in a playfully serious tone. During this sixteen-day trip to Uruguay and Argentina, the students discover the riches found inside these beautiful countries.

The venture will begin in the picturesque capital city of Montevideo, Uruguay. While in the capital, the students study international business and economics at the University of Montevideo (UDE). Dr. Jasso explained: “What’s special about the students studying at a local university is that they get to interact with fellow pupils their age; thus, obtaining a better understanding of the similarities they share.”

After spending time in the university, the group will visit governmental buildings and meet with top executives from local companies. Finally, the group will tour different sites around Uruguay before moving to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Upon arriving in Buenos Aires, the students will meet with executives at a local trading port where they will learn about the operations that take place daily and impact the local economy. After taking in all the facts and information, the students will get a taste of the traditional Argentine culture by attending a Tango show and enjoying a delicious and customary “asado.” Students leave the experience with a brand new perspective of South America and all that it has to offer as an ever-growing economy. The next seventeen students are scheduled to leave for this trip during July of this year.
The Delta Mu Delta International Honor Society is the honor society for students in the Department of Business. The society serves two primary purposes: to promote higher scholarship in business education and to recognize and reward scholastic achievement of business students who are juniors or seniors. The minimum GPA requirement for entry is a 3.5; however, the junior student average is usually around 3.7 and the senior student average is around 3.8. Students at the masters and doctoral levels of study are also eligible to join the society, providing they are within the top twenty percent of their class.

Membership in the society is lifetime, which means entitlement to the various member benefits. These benefits include lifetime recognition of outstanding academic achievement, scholarship programs, acknowledgement for federal employment, lifetime contact through the society newsletter, and the *Bloomberg BusinessWeek* Subscription. Because the Delta Mu Delta Honor Society is one of the highest international academic recognitions a business student can earn, it is beneficial for students to include this on their resume for potential job offers.

It is also advantageous for students because Delta Mu students are eligible for the society’s annual scholarship awards program. For information on these scholarships, visit [www.deltamudelta.org/Scholarships](http://www.deltamudelta.org/Scholarships). Also, Delta Mu Delta fulfills one of the requirements for entrance at the GS-7 Federal Level. Membership also includes a free one-year subscription (50 issues valued at $5 each) to the *Bloomberg BusinessWeek* magazine, one of the most highly distinguished business magazines in the world.

Delta Mu Delta Honor Society recently inducted twenty-four new members into the organization. Dr. Shane Griffith was also inducted as an honorary member of the society. The new officers who were elected are, from left to right: Zachary Lawson (public relations), Tamara Malakhov (treasurer/secretary), Brittany Kanerva (president), and Ayodeji Oluwajana (vice president).
Career Flickers

By Caleb Hiddleson

The Center for Calling and Career at Lee University is partnering with the Department of Business in helping students find internship opportunities through a variety of their resources. One way this is accomplished is by sponsoring Career Flickers during the fall and spring semesters. These events give aspiring junior and senior students an opportunity to meet actively hiring businessmen and women and start getting their name out in the job market. The events are small-scale to create a more intimate atmosphere between student and employer as the CC&C only invites five organizations to attend each flicker. Students are to dress professionally, submit a completed resume and be prepared to explain their goals and aspirations in their particular career field. Any student is welcome to attend; however, this event is specifically targeted at juniors and seniors who have not found a job. Lee alumni are also encouraged to come if they are interested in hiring any of the aspiring Interns.

The Center for Calling and Career and the Department of Business at Lee work hard bringing in successful employers and maintaining good relationships with them. Ms. Stacy Ballinger, director of the CC&C, stated that these employers come in looking for hard-working, young students, and there is often times immediate return from the employees, either conducting interviews at the Flickers or setting up interview times in the weeks following the event.

There are several different areas of study such as Business, Natural Sciences, Behavioral Sciences, Education, History, Communications, and Political Science that will have their own individual flickers. There is also a Multi-Discipline Flicker that invites students from any major to attend and network with potential employers. Lee Students have several opportunities to attend Career Flickers, as the CC&C sponsors around six or seven events every year. This academic year there were four events, with around 100 or more students attending each Flicker. The Career Flicker is an excellent resource to have as an undergraduate student at Lee, and the rising success and the list of participant businesses make this event a highly beneficial experience for anyone who chooses to participate.

For information about Flickers or further internship opportunities, contact the Center for Calling and Career or visit the Web site at http://leeuniversity.edu/calling-career/.
Phi Beta Lambda
By Kimberly Williams

Phi Beta Lambda, recently reactivated in January of 2012, is off to a good start. According to Dr. David Smartt, the former sponsor of PBL, the club is currently being considered for an award because of the large number of students in the club. He believes Phi Beta Lambda is an important experience and a good service component for business students.

Phi Beta Lambda has created interest within the student body, as shown by the number of students attending the meetings. President Nate Byram stated: “Since last spring, we have almost tripled our numbers in membership. Basically we want to combine the service, ministry, and fellowship aspect of the club and present that in the community.”

While portraying these aspects to the community, they also competed in national competitions, which took place in April. The competitions were tests of about fifty questions for different subjects in the business field, including CISS, Accounting, Business Law, etc. Also, Phi Beta Lambda and the business faculty held a hot dog cookout in April to attract undeclared majors to the Business Department.

Phi Beta Lambda is also happy to announce that soon they hope to invite students majoring in Healthcare Administration to become members of PBL because the officers of the Healthcare Admin have all graduated. As Dr. Smartt said, “Bigger club . . . smaller struggling.”

It will be exciting to see what Phi Beta Lambda has in store in the upcoming years!

Phi Beta Lambda Officers, pictured below, from left to right, Nate Byram, Ayo Oluwajana, Rebecca Thomas, Liz Sjoquist, and Deborah Kroboth
Tanya (Baldree) Mazzolini

Tanya (Baldree) Mazzolini, a 1984 graduate of Lee University with a bachelor of science degree in accounting, has been promoted to vice president of accounting for Life Care Centers of America. Beecher Hunter, president of Life Care, said, “Mazzolini’s professional skills, her can-do spirit, and her proven leadership made her advancement to the VP level an easy call.” Steve Zieler, chief financial officer, said it this way: “Tanya is a highly intelligent individual with a broad knowledge of accounting principles and an understanding of the importance of the business function in fulfillment of our mission.”

Tanya joined Life Care in May 1985 as a staff accountant and worked her way up. She presently supervises a staff of 11 accountants and accounts-payable specialists in preparation of 500-plus entity consolidation, financial reports, and analysis, as well as preparation of general ledger and corporate financial statements. She also supervises and coordinates yearly financial audits with outside auditors, and works with Information Technology in systems development, conversions and implementation.

Tanya and her husband, Dr. Michael Mazzolini, reside in Cleveland, Tennessee, and they have four children and eight grandchildren.

Robert Malone

Robert Malone graduated from Lee University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Accounting in 2011. Since graduation he has been employed at Henderson, Hutcherson, and McCullough, an accounting firm in Chattanooga, Tennessee. In addition to serving the audit and tax needs of nonprofit, construction and real estate clients, he provides business solutions through HHM’s Management Advisory Services group department.

In the words of Robert, “I believe a strong work ethic and having a passion for your career are keys to success; but more importantly, I believe being successful is linked to the individuals who support you and your future career. Lee University provided faculty members who were focused on my future by providing opportunities for me to succeed.”
Hermilo Jasso III

In May 2006 Hermilo Jasso III graduated from Lee University with a degree in Business Administration. He is currently employed with Merck & Company, Inc. in Wilson, North Carolina as a Senior Specialist Business Consultant where he coordinates and leads in continuous improvement, change execution and strategy initiatives.

Hermilo had this to say: “My Lee University experience and time in the Business Department equipped me with the knowledge, ability, skills, and values needed to successfully launch my career, and I am proud to call myself a Lee Alumnus.”

Joshua Smith

Joshua Smith graduated from Lee University in 2004 with a degree in Business Administration. He is currently the owner of CadrEnglish, a small communication consulting company he established in Paris, France, in 2010. He specializes in strategic response (in English) in the advertising and marketing sectors. He also runs a website http://blog.shareableadvertising.com where he interviews business owners and advertising professionals from advertising agencies from around the world to inspire other entrepreneurs.

Joshua said it like this: “I transferred to Lee intent on getting a pastoral degree; however, I changed my degree to business administration the semester I transferred to Lee in the Fall 2002. Since I worked full time to pay my way through college, I did not get a chance to really experience university life like most of my friends did. That I regret; however, I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at Lee.”

Benoy Thomas

Benoy Thomas graduated from Lee in 2007 with a degree in accounting. After graduation he worked for Optimum Staffing in Cleveland, and later pursued graduate work in the field of healthcare administration. He earned two Master’s degrees—one in Healthcare Administration and a MS in Health Informatics at the University of Missouri. He was then employed for seven months at HMS Holdings in Dallas, Texas, where he dealt primarily with the State and Federal Government as a Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC). He is currently employed at Cerner Healthcare Company where he was able to move back home to Dubai.

Benoy said he picked Cerner Corporation because of its global operation, especially in the Middle East. In his words, “Since Cerner Corporation is a fairly new market, I am hoping to be presented with the opportunity to take Cerner products to another level with some innovation and ingenuity.” He also expressed appreciation to the Lee faculty for believing in him and investing in him in and out of the classroom.
Business Alumni Update

By Evaline Echols, Ph.D.

Brian Workman

In 1999 Brian Workman graduated from Lee with a degree in business administration. He is currently employed as a sales and leasing associate at Bender Realty in Cleveland, Tennessee. To further his experience, he received the CCIM commercial designation, the highest designation a commercial realtor can achieve. He then became chapter president for the local Greater Chattanooga area and then for all of East Tennessee.

In his words, “I loved my time at Lee. During my time there, I was amazed at the level of interest some professors took in my success. But what has been more amazing, is the level some faculty members still take in my present success. I not only found mentors for my time at Lee, but also mentors that I have counted on every day since.”

Jerry Redmon

A Lee graduate of business administration in 1982, Jerry Redmon serves as Managing Senior Partner of Second Life of Chattanooga, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating awareness and collaborative action about the issue of sex-trafficking in Southeast Tennessee. Jerry’s primary responsibilities for Second Life include acting as its primary public and media spokesperson, long-range visioning and organizational development, as well as being the organization’s primary liaison with the law-enforcement and government agencies with which Second Life partners. Jerry also serves as co-chair of the Executive Committee of the Greater Chattanooga Coalition Against Human Trafficking. Jerry guest lectures at Lee University each semester, focusing primarily on the faith community’s role in the fight against human trafficking and the overall fight for human rights.

Jerry holds a Master’s degree from Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He lives in Cleveland, Tennessee, with his wife Jeanine (graduate of 1983), and they have one daughter, Jennifer.

Kayla Hannah

Kayla Hannah, a December 2009 accounting graduate from Lee University, is currently employed as Income Tax Manager at Life Care Centers of America in Cleveland, Tennessee. Her responsibilities include preparing partnership and S Corporation tax returns, reviewing quarterly tax projections to calculate estimated tax payments, and other various tax research projects.

Kayla had this to say about her experience at Lee: “During my time at Lee, I appreciated the amount of involvement each professor took in not only making sure I succeeded academically, but also in the business world. It was through networking events such as the Accounting Gala that I was able to meet with many Cleveland business representatives, and as a result was employed by Life Care Centers of America before my graduation date.”

Kayla is also pursuing her Master in Taxation degree at Golden Gate University in San Francisco, CA. She plans to complete this program by December 2014.
Business Alumni Update

By Evaline Echols, Ph.D.

Olumide (Stephen) Adedo

In December 2012 Olumide Adedo graduated from Lee University with a Bachelor of Business Administration (Emphasis in Management Information Systems) degree. He is currently employed in Nashville, Tennessee as Project Administrator at Parallon Business Solutions, a health care organization. He is a business analyst who is focused on delivering Project Management and Business Intelligence solutions in information technology to positively impact the company’s growth from an IT perspective with a positive attitude toward work and people.

While Olumide was a student at Lee, from July 2011-December 2012, he was a business analyst intern where he assisted in management of requirements and reviewed IT changes through the Systems Development Life Cycle (SDLC) for multiple projects. For two years he served as a student admissions counselor/ambassador in the admissions office at Lee. He also chaired the committee in the business communications class that published the Business Department newsletter, THE BOTTOM LINE, in 2011.

Paul Morgan

Paul Morgan graduated from Lee University in 2010 with a degree in Computer Information Systems. After graduation he worked in a Python development shop making web apps before getting his current job at CHS, a fortune 200 company that owns 150 hospitals. Paul works in the corporate office as an in-house Python/Javascript developer. He has developed from the ground-up a robust information, tracking, and reporting web portal for CHS.

In an email to Dr. Mava Wilson, Paul said: “Thank you for the effort you put into my education at Lee. I have no doubt that were it not for Lee’s staff, and specifically some of the help you gave me, I would not be able to be here today.” Paul and his wife live in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Hannah Devine

In 2012 Hannah Devine graduated from Lee with a double major in accounting and business administration. While at Lee she was involved with Pioneers for Christ and the VITA tax program. Along with these activities, she worked as a business analyst, student worker, tutor, and computer lab instructor at the University. She received the Accounting Award in 2012 and was nominated to Who’s Who Among College Students.

Hannah had this to say: “These Lee experiences in and out of the classroom have prepared me for a strong career, and I am proud to represent Lee University at Tractor Supply as a staff accountant at their Store Support Center (Corporate Office) in Brentwood, Tennessee.”
Gina (Lakins) Anderson

In May 1997, Gina (Lakins) Anderson graduated from Lee with a bachelor of science in business administration. After working as a project manager in the media industry for seven years, she continued her education at Regent University where she received the Master of Education degree in 2005. Since her husband was a Captain in the Army, they moved many times, finally moving back to Knoxville (her hometown). She was then able to complete her requirements for Tennessee teaching license from Lincoln Memorial University in December 2012, and she is now certified to teach business and history classes.

Her experience in the classroom has included working at an alternative school in Clarksville, Tennessee, for a year, serving as the GED teacher for seventeen-year-olds who had been court appointed to earn their GED before their eighteenth birthday, and recently covering a maternity leave where she taught eight weeks at Farragut High School to 130 AP history students.

In her words, “Lee’s Business Department gave me an overview of all aspects of business, and I felt well prepared for my first professional job. They made my experience personal, and I never felt like just another number. An added bonus was the mentorship I received from my professors.”

Jennifer Pendergraft

Jennifer Pendergraft graduated from Lee in 2004 with a bachelor of science in business administration. In 2006, Jennifer was hired as an executive assistant to Tom Seidler. She has worked her way up through the ranks and was recently promoted to General Manager of Visalia Rawhide.

In the words of Seidler, “We had to hire a new General Manager, and it was an easy decision. Jen’s been here six years, started as an executive assistant (worked her way up) to Assistant General Manager the last several years. I feel confident that even though I’ll be in San Diego, getting updates from Jen and the staff, things are going to go really well.” As the general manager, Pendergraft will handle the day-to-day business operations of the Rawhide, which is the Advance-A affiliate of the Arizona Diamonds.

Jennifer stated: “As usual, I have already found ways to get more involved with the community and fill my spare time, including joining a Rotary Club and a women’s flat track roller derby team. Thanks to the business faculty for the way you impacted my life.”

Distinguished Business Faculty and Staff
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