Experiential learning

MBS Students Visit Boston’s Fidelity Investments

Story on page 4
Grants and Daniel study leadership types and effectiveness

"Millennial Leadership: The Oppositional Relationship Between Leadership Type and the Quality of Database System’s Development in Virtual Environments,” written by assistant professor of management information systems Matt Graham and associate professor of marketing Harold Daniel, will be published in 2015 in the International Journal of e-Collaboration.

The study targeted millennial students at the Maine Business School, who were assigned to virtual teams tasked with developing a database management system. The goal was to determine whether leadership type — transformational, transactional, or management-by-exception — was significantly related to leadership effectiveness in a virtual team. Findings suggest that leadership style and virtual team effectiveness did predict project quality.

Porter co-writes article on entrepreneurs’ beliefs

An article, “Social Ontology and the Emergent Moment: A Theoretical and Action Research Inquiry into Rural Microenterprise Development,” co-written by associate professor of management Terry Porter, has been published in the journal Systemic Practice and Action Research.

Porter wrote the article with University of Maine agricultural economics professor James McConnon and MBS alumna Ana Zivanovic-Nenadovic ’08 (MBA).

The paper examines entrepreneurs’ internal beliefs about social reality in relation to new business development, and suggests that business people’s sense of being in the world conditions their perceived resources, strategic options and approaches to stakeholders.

Agrawal co-writes article on ETF liquidity


This article seeks to determine the migration of exchange-traded fund (ETF) liquidity and its factor constituents in the U.S. market over time, with the ultimate goal of making the ETF market more efficient and transparent. Using a set of factors commonly thought to impact liquidity, the authors develop a four-factor liquidity scoring algorithm (A–C liquidity score), extending the 2009 study by Agrawal and Clark.

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ON THE COVER: A skyline view of Boston (Thinkstock). See the story on page 4.
Dear friends,

As I travel around the state and the country speaking with Maine Business School alumni, I am continually amazed at the outreach of the MBS and impressed with the caliber of our graduates. They hold prominent positions in international, national and Maine organizations, run small and large businesses, and serve as CEOs, bankers, controllers, managers and consultants. Each, in his or her way, is helping to grow the economy and provide job opportunities.

In this latest issue of MBS Connects, we are proud to bring you news about our alumni, faculty and students. As you read, please remember that we need your help if MBS is to continue to serve as the center for business education, research and outreach at the state's flagship university. Tuition, fees and state funds no longer cover the entire cost of a student’s education, so additional support from loyal alumni and friends like you is more valuable than ever.

MBS prepares students to meet the professional and social challenges of the future by providing valuable real-world experience and opportunities through the school’s ongoing relationships with the business community and through organizations such as the Student Portfolio Investment Fund (SPIFFY), which manages a portion of the University of Maine Foundation’s investment portfolio.

Our status as a business school accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) ensures the quality of our faculty, the relevance of our curriculum, and the prestige of your degree, while our facility, located in the D.P. Corbett Business Building, offers state-of-the-art instructional classrooms and computing labs.

We hope you enjoy the Spring 2015 MBS Connects. Please let us know what’s happening in your life by calling 207.581.1968 or sending an email to dangelo@maine.edu. We look forward to hearing from you.

Ivan Manev

Mahon assists research in Canada

MBS management professor John Mahon has been asked to assist the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the federal research-funding agency that promotes and supports postsecondary-based research and training in the humanities and social sciences.

Mahon will provide an online assessment of an application submitted to Insight Grants, one of three SSHRC funding opportunities, which supports and fosters excellence in social sciences and humanities research to increase the collective understanding of individuals and societies, and inform the search for solutions to societal challenges.

Mahon is the John M. Murphy Chair of International Business Policy and Strategy, and founding director of the School of Policy and International Affairs (SPIA).

Mahon serves on U.S. Global Leadership Coalition’s Maine Advisory Committee

MBS management professor John Mahon has been invited to serve on the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (USGLC) Maine Advisory Committee, a coalition of more than 400 businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and military and community leaders in support of U.S. global engagement as supported by the International Affairs Budget.

As a member of USGLC, Mahon will attend events around the state and in Washington, D.C., featuring prominent foreign policy and national security experts. He will network with other top state and local leaders, and have access to the latest information on foreign affairs.

USGLC works to educate the public and policymakers on the importance of American leadership, and the role of diplomacy and development alongside defense as part of a foreign policy. The nation’s top military and business leaders have made it clear that a small investment in the International Affairs Budget will help create jobs and strengthen national security.

BBC interviews Mahon

Universities should think about delivering education in new ways, said MBS management professor John Mahon in a BBC interview in England after he delivered the first guest lecture at the University of Chester’s new center.

“We have this underlying assumption that the only people who can offer value in the classroom are those who have doctorates,” said Mahon, who has been a visiting professor at the University of Chester since 2011.

“But people who have worked for as little as a few years can add value to the classroom. Let me tell you about a failure I worked through, let me tell you what I learned through involvement in this project, about the teamwork I learned on the job.

“There are things people in the community can offer,” either during a visit to someone’s classroom or through a semester-long course, he said.

Jones, Mahon guests on Maine Calling

Nory Jones, professor of management information systems, and John Mahon, professor of management and the John M. Murphy Chair of International Business Policy and Strategy, were recent guests on the Maine Public Broadcasting Network’s “Maine Calling” radio show. Jones and Mahon spoke about what it means for a corporation to be socially responsible.

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Ivan Manev, Dean

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MBS visits Fidelity Investments in Boston

Last fall, 19 Maine Business School students got an up close and personal view of one of the largest wealth management firms in the world during a visit to Fidelity Investments in Boston.

Led by MBS Dean Ivan Manev, associate professor of finance Pank Agrawal, and associate professor of human resource management Niclas Erhardt, the trip was organized by MBS alumnus Howard Galligan ’88, president of Fidelity Pricing & Cash Management Services at Fidelity Investments.

The visit was a "wonderful educational opportunity that provided a window into the asset management industry," said Manev. "We hope that this is the first of many visits to Fidelity, and that we have established a connection with the company that will result in internship and job opportunities for our students.

“We are grateful to Howard, who was with us for the entire day. His attentiveness reflects the commitment with which Fidelity runs its business.”

When Manev contacted him about a possible visit, Galligan said he immediately agreed to host the event. "It's a wonderful way to stay connected to my alma mater. The overwhelming support I received from my colleagues was magnificent, and equally impressive was the caliber of talent from the University of Maine. The students were attentive, inquisitive and courageous, which are all strong predictors of future leaders. I am looking forward to future events.”

As part of a full itinerary, students toured the Fidelity offices overlooking Boston Harbor and listened to presentations from equity operation executives, portfolio managers and research associates. They visited the company’s trading floor ("which is as big as a football field," said Manev), as well as the human resources and marketing departments, and the "chart room," where performance data of mutual funds, commodities, blue chip companies and bond markets is posted and updated regularly.

"Students had to apply to participate in the visit to Fidelity and were among MBS' top scholars," said Dean Manev. "A number of them had expressed an interest in working in the financial services industry. They all asked terrific questions and obviously were well prepared thanks to professors Agrawal and Erhardt.”

The visit was enhanced when one of Fidelity's portfolio managers, who was addressing the students, issued heartfelt thanks to Agrawal. The MBS professor had worked in the financial industry years ago and recommended the young man for his current job.

“This was really an emotional moment,” said Manev. “It wasn't part of the program, but turned out to be a great opportunity to demonstrate the quality of our finance faculty.”

Agrawal and Erhardt said the visit to Fidelity was an invaluable experience that enabled students to network and learn about career possibilities.

"Such trips have a long lasting and positive impact on student thinking," said Agrawal. "Students had first-hand interaction with some of the top players in the asset management industry and were clearly inspired by the whole experience.”

Erhardt said “these trips give students a glimpse of what it could be like to work in a highly reputable organization such as Fidelity that values performance, as well as ethics and relationships.”

The students said they appreciated the opportunity to visit Fidelity and learn about life at a large investment company.

“I enjoyed meeting the executives and hearing the advice that they had to give young business students like myself,” said sophomore Anthony Sementelli. “It really gave me a good look at a big investment company and how it operates. I learned what it took to get to that point and what it's like working at Fidelity. I also learned interview tips.”

Tyler Picard, who graduated from MBS in December 2014, said he was impressed with Fidelity's workplace culture. "It was clear that employees loved their careers, and are motivated and happy to perform their jobs. It gave me the utmost appreciation of the Boston headquarters and the entire private firm.”

With managed assets of $2 trillion, Fidelity is among both the largest asset management firms in the world and the largest mutual fund companies in the U.S. The company is the number one provider of workplace savings plans and IRAs.
Borgman named MBS interim graduate director

Finance professor Richard Borgman has been named interim graduate director of the Maine Business School.

Announcing the appointment in January, MBS Dean Ivan Manev said he is pleased that Borgman has accepted the position and looks forward to working with him.

“His wealth of expertise, collaborative spirit and attention to detail will be put to good use,” Manev said.

Borgman, who regularly teaches an MBA course in financial institutions, directed the program from 2001–04, and said he is excited about returning.

“I am proud of the quality and rigor of the program, and my goal is to make sure it continues to be relevant to Maine. I hope that by working with our graduate faculty, and the business school dean and associate dean, we can maintain our quality, adapt to the changing environment and grow the program.”

Manev and Harkins co-author article


They wrote the article with Tatiana Manolova and Bojidar Gyoshev.

The article examines whether firms that pursue hybrid strategies outperform those pursuing pure strategies in a transitional economy (Bulgaria). The authors found that hybrid strategy is indeed superior for these firms, and that the relationship between strategic type and performance may be affected by the intensity with which firms pursue their strategy, with more intensely pursued strategies doing better than less intensely pursued strategies, regardless of type.

Jones wins 2014 Steve Gould Award

Management information systems professor Nory Jones, founder and faculty adviser of MBS Corps, the Maine Business School’s community outreach organization, has been named winner of the 2014 Steve Gould Award.

Jones established MBS Corps in 2005 as a way for students to help small Maine-based nonprofit organizations while developing their leadership, organizational, management, marketing, networking and other business skills.

Students participate in food drives to benefit community pantries and volunteer with organizations including the Ronald McDonald House, Bangor Area Homeless Shelter, Spruce Run and the Bangor Humane Society. They regularly serve as Troop Greeters at Bangor International Airport — an initiative for which Jones has volunteered since 2008.

MBS Corps won the 2013 Active Citizenship Award from UMaine’s Bodwell Center for Service and Volunteerism.

Jones, who joined MBS in 2001 and chairs the UMaine Student Veterans Advisory Committee, “epitomizes the spirit, achievement and zest for life that Steve Gould espoused,” MBS staff said in nominating her.

The annual Steve Gould Award was created to honor the former UMaine police chief who was noted for his student-centered approach. Gould was an active community volunteer and musician who went on to serve in the Maine House of Representatives.

The Steve Gould Award will be presented to Jones as part of the Employee Recognition Luncheon in March.
Welcome to Clint Relyea who joined the MBS faculty last September and teaches principles of management, organizational behavior, introduction to international business and international management. He serves as adviser to the University of Maine’s Sigma Chi fraternity.

A native of Cazenovia, New York, he came to Maine from Arkansas State University, where he was associate professor of management and coordinator of ASU’s International Business Program.

How are you enjoying Maine Business School?
My time at MBS has been even better than expected. Everyone here has been friendly and welcoming. The students are engaged and enthusiastic, which makes for some interesting classroom discussions. I enjoy interacting with young people because of their optimism and open-mindedness.

I have also enjoyed getting to know the Orono community. The Store Ampersand has become part of my morning ritual several times a week. I’ve met many wonderful people there and had some great conversations. In fact, I am there so often that I bought the store a new toaster. They jokingly call it the “Clintster.”

Why MBS?
The University of Maine was the perfect place for me since I wanted to return to the Northeast, and love the outdoors, as well as hockey. The fact that MBS is accredited by AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) was a real draw.

Where did you obtain your education?
I earned a bachelor’s degree in education from the University of Denver and an MBA and a doctorate in educational leadership from ASU. I also studied international business at the University of South Carolina and management at the University of Mississippi.

What type of research are you doing, what is your teaching philosophy, and how do you want to influence students?
My research involves creating a global mindset in students. Global citizenship is a passion for me, and my goal is to help students understand their role in the world and the things they can do to impact people everywhere.

I emphasize service above self. I want my students to understand the responsibility they have to perform some action that will be life-changing for them and the people around them.

Hopefully, this will minimize conflict and result in better understanding among people. We are all in this together and we need each other.

Experiential learning also is central to my philosophy of education. When I was at ASU, I created a program with Rotary International and the Jonesboro University Rotary Club in which business students visited the village of Salinas de Bolivar, Ecuador, twice a year to work as consultants in various microindustries and to plant trees to prevent soil erosion. I hope to be able to start something similar here at MBS.

Graham joins OHI Board of Directors
Assistant professor of management information systems Matt Graham has been elected to the Board of Directors of OHI, Inc. (ohimaine.org).

A Maine-based, public nonprofit organization providing support and services to people with intellectual and cognitive disabilities, OHI owns and operates 24 homes, as well as the Brewer Area Food Pantry.

In his role on the board of directors, Graham will provide guidance on technology planning, procurement and implementation.

“Between 1993 and 1998, I worked as a developmental trainer’s assistant — what today is called a direct support provider — helping people with intellectual and cognitive disabilities,” he said.

“It was very rewarding work. Serving on the OHI board of directors has given me the unique opportunity to again help people living with cognitive and intellectual disabilities.

“Beyond ensuring that OHI has its technological and computing needs met, I look forward to researching several adaptive technologies that can go a long way in improving the quality of lives for people with disabilities.

“Of course the other great thing is that I can bring this leadership experience to my classroom lectures on how information systems and technology can help businesses achieve their goals more efficiently and effectively.”
Welcome to Matthew Skaves, lecturer in finance and accounting, who joined the MBS faculty last semester after serving as an adjunct professor in 2013. Skaves, who earned an MBA from MBS in 2005, worked previously as chief investment officer and portfolio manager for Deighan Wealth Advisors in Bangor, Maine.

In addition to teaching valuation and business finance, Skaves is conducting the first classes in the business school’s new Gerard S. Cassidy Capital Markets Training Laboratory, where he instructs students on the use of the Bloomberg terminals, as well as basic research methods.

Skaves said he enjoys teaching students the ins and outs of the terminals, which are used by finance professionals around the world.

“I became familiar with the Bloomberg terminal when I worked as a portfolio manager. Knowing how to effectively operate the terminal is a valued skill that gives students an advantage when applying for work,” he said.

A native of Orrington, Maine, Skaves earned a bachelor’s degree in English with a minor in business from the University of Maine in 2004. After a career in industry, he is delighted with his new path.

“I enjoy interacting with students and helping them learn skills that will be useful, whether or not they become finance professionals,” he said. “My goal is for students to come away with an understanding of, and an appreciation for, finance.”

His previous work as a portfolio manager and his own student experience inform his teaching, Skaves said.

“As a portfolio manager, I had to communicate effectively with a wide variety of clients, make presentations to large groups, and explain complicated concepts in layman’s terms,” he said. “I know how to connect with people. I always reflect back on the teaching techniques my own professors used in class to engage and reach students.”

Taking a cue from MBS finance professor Bob Strong, one of his former teachers, Skaves said he makes it a point to encourage students to earn the prestigious Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation. This spring, MBS is offering a course taught by Skaves specifically geared toward taking the Level I CFA exam.

“Professor Strong urged me to pursue the Chartered Financial Analyst designation and I am very glad that I took his advice,” said Skaves, who earned the designation in 2011. “I tell students that if they earn the CFA charter, they will rarely be out of work.”

Matthew Skaves

I enjoy interacting with students and helping them learn skills that will be useful, whether or not they become finance professionals. My goal is for students to come away with an understanding of, and an appreciation for, finance.”
Greg Leonard ’78
Leonard co-founded Quality Containers of New England

I wanted to follow in the footsteps of my father Robert F. Leonard, who graduated from the business program at UMaine in 1952. He told me that if I wanted to do business in Maine, the Maine Business School would open up opportunities to network with other business graduates. He was right.”

How did you start Quality Containers?
I always hoped to own my own business, but knew I needed to get experience working for someone else before I went out on my own. Directly after graduation, I started working at Old Tavern Farm Dairy in Yarmouth, first as sales rep and then as sales/general manager. From 1978 to 1990, I gained valuable experience in product merchandising, production ordering, human resources, inventory control, purchasing, product design and customer service. After Old Tavern closed in 1990, Kevin Burns and I acquired what remained of the dairy’s assets and renamed the business.

The only part of the business worth salvaging was the plastic blow-molding division. Most of the bottles being manufactured were being used “in house” for the dairy. To successfully run the business, we had to find a market for our bottles. In the early years, our goal was to get a paycheck and break even. That took several years. I spent much of my time traveling throughout New England and New York, trying to build our customer base. As our customer list grew, we became more profitable. Customer demand forced us to make more products and invest in more equipment. At this point, less than 10 years into our business, we had three to four head injection blow molders and manufactured six different products. As demand grew for other products like glass bottles, we became distributors of glass for food packaging. Around 1998, as microbreweries became more popular, we started supplying beer bottles throughout New England.

Today, glass products account for around 20 percent of our sales. We have 13 full-time employees and approximately 150 customers from all over the U.S., including water companies, juice companies, dairies, jam, jelly, salsa, salad dressing and condiment makers and microbreweries. Purchases range from one box a year to 12 trailer loads a week, depending on the customer.

Brad joined the company in 2012. His work experiences bring a unique perspective to our business. A 2006 Syracuse University graduate, he has worked as assistant photo editor for Skiing Magazine, as well as for other publications, and as a dive master in the Virgin Islands.

What are your duties and what does a typical work day entail?
Most of my workday involves sales, marketing and customer service. Sales drive production, distribution, payables and receivables. Every aspect of this small business is connected.

What are some of the challenges involved in running a business?
The biggest challenge is managing risk. With the responsibility of employees, customer liability, bank loans, and equipment breakdowns, there is never a dull moment. If you have the stomach to handle these risks, then there is potential for financial rewards.

How do you use the skills and training you received at MBS?
My formal education at MBS gave me the basics, like knowing the difference between a debit and a credit, how to figure out costs and...
A.J. Walker ’83
Walker founds Guidance Point Retirement Services to fill a niche

MBS alumnus A.J. Walker ’83 created Guidance Point Retirement Services LLC in 2009 after noticing a gap in the retirement services industry.

“Very few small or midsize companies with retirement plans understood their fiduciary responsibility and liability, and there were very few independent advisors or consultants with experience in the Employment Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) to address this need,” said Walker, a Maine native who graduated from MBS in 1983 with a degree in marketing.

“I saw there was room in the marketplace to help companies improve their fiduciary governance and reduce the costs of their retirement plan by offering fee-based, independent, objective consulting advice,” he said.

His foresight has paid off.

Today, Guidance Point provides retirement plan, fiduciary and investment consulting advice to corporate and tax-exempt institutions, endowments and foundations throughout the U.S. and into eastern Canada. With offices in Bangor and Portland, Guidance Point consults on more than $500 million in client assets and expects to continue to grow.

“Our growth prospects look very good,” said Walker, who has been involved with the retirement services industry for more than 30 years.

“This is a very noisy market, with brokers, mutual fund companies, insurance companies and banks all trying to sell retirement plan products to plan sponsors. People often don’t know to whom to listen, how to compare the various retirement plan products or how to determine the true cost of a retirement plan. That’s where we come in with our extensive investment expertise, ERISA experience and independence.”

What was your career path?
After graduating from MBS, I joined my father, William Walker, at Walker Associates, a retirement plan consulting, recordkeeping and administration firm he founded in Bangor in 1968. We expanded to Portland in 1991. In 1995, we created Walker Alliance, Inc., a multifaceted retirement services organization. While serving as president, we acquired an actuarial consulting organization and trust company in Manhattan, where I served as executive vice president. After four and a half years, we sold the company and I returned to Maine and started Acacia Associates, the predecessor of Guidance Point Retirement Services. Through networking with both personal and past professional relationships, I began to share my vision, growing the business one client at a time. The business began to take off.

In 2012, we reorganized the company and changed the name to Guidance Point Retirement Services, LLC. The same year, we took over the retirement plan accounts served by Acadia Trust, N.A., a wholly owned subsidiary of Camden National Bank. As part of this transaction, retirement and investment consultants Benjamin Smith, CFA, and Brenda Clements joined Guidance Point from Acadia Trust. Ben and Brenda have become an important part of Guidance Point Retirement Services, and Ben is a principle of the firm. I am pleased to report that today, we have more than 50 clients — both profit and nonprofit companies — and manage retirement plans ranging from $5 million to $100 million.

Why do you enjoy your job?
I enjoy helping people navigate the uncertain and volatile retirement services industry, assisting them in getting their financial house in order so they can retire with peace of mind. I find myself continually challenged and motivated by the ever-changing legal and regulatory environments, and by the unpredictability of the capital markets. I also like the entrepreneurial aspect of owning my own business.

How did MBS help you succeed in your career?
The business school exposed me to a broad overview of business management, marketing and finance. In 1983, small companies were just beginning to look at computers, and the background in programming and technology that I received at MBS enabled me to help modernize Walker Associates.

What were some of your fondest MBS memories?
I enjoyed and learned a great deal from our class projects. I liked the teamwork and the creative aspect of developing a marketing plan or even a new business plan. I remember some fun assignments that included starting a regional airline and marketing log homes in Japan. We learned a lot about a number of industries, as well as about cooperation and collaboration — skills that have been valuable during my career.

What advice would you give to MBS graduates about finding a job they love?
Because Guidance Point regularly hires MBS interns, I am often asked career questions. I challenge everyone to consider what makes him or her tick and what he or she would really like to do, then go for it. Don’t let anything — including finances — hold you back. Don’t think of all the reasons you can’t — or shouldn’t — be an artist, a baker or a financier on Wall Street. Break down walls and start following your dreams.
Alumnus enjoys a successful second career in the construction industry

I was fortunate to be able to enhance my management, leadership and communication skills in [MBS and Army ROTC]. At MBS, I learned the fundamentals of how businesses work, how to manage people in a civilian setting, and how to think critically and analyze problems. In ROTC, I learned discipline, commitment, teamwork and perseverance.”

What was your career/education path after graduating from MBS?
I started my military career as second lieutenant in the Army Corps of Engineers, working on projects that ranged from the construction of roads, helicopter landing zones and airfields in the continental U.S. to more complicated humanitarian support projects, such as schools and infrastructure in such austere environments as Honduras and Korea. As a major, I served in both the Corps of Engineers Sacramento and San Francisco district offices, working on flood control projects and Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) projects throughout California.

I retired as a lieutenant colonel in 2005 and after a 30-day hiatus, started my job as business development manager at Turner Construction in Chicago. I stayed there for nine years and started my new job with Bulley & Andrews in summer 2014.

Why do you enjoy your job?
Our employees are great. They have a strong work ethic and obviously like what they are doing. Lots of our people have been here for many years, so the morale is very high. I enjoy the challenges, too. Chicago has a strong array of high quality construction firms, so this is a very competitive industry. But we have a well-deserved reputation as a high quality, professional company in which clients can put their trust.

It’s rewarding to see the fruits of your labor as you walk around the city — we have constructed academic buildings and labs at the University of

Patrick Healy continued on page 17
Nicole Record ‘97 (MBA)
Record attends SPIA at UMaine, while teaching business law at EMCC

After earning her MBA from the Maine Business School in 1997, Nicole Record obtained a JD from the Maine School of Law in 2004. Today, the Winslow, Maine, native is a part-time student in UMaine’s School of Policy and International Affairs (SPIA), earning a master’s degree in global policy with a concentration in international trade and commerce. She’s also teaching business law and finance at Eastern Maine Community College.

“I enjoy demystifying our legal system, and introducing students to the basic principles and concepts that form the laws to which we all are held,” said Record, a member of the Maine State Bar and licensed to practice law before the U.S. Court of International Trade in New York City.

“My goal is to help students understand the American legal system as it relates to business topics, and offer a working knowledge of the law of contracts as utilized in business and consumer transactions.”

Continuing education is a priority for Record. “I have always been a lifelong learner, with a strong belief in the importance of education,” she said. “I applied to the SPIA program because I felt the curriculum would enable me to expand my knowledge of international issues, specifically those related to policy, and thus enhance my understanding of the global issues that affect us all.”

How are you using your MBS education? The comprehensive business education I obtained at MBS is invaluable. Thanks to the holistic nature of my MBA program, I was exposed not only to the specifics of each area of business, but also to the overall context in which those areas exist. Because the MBA program provided a broad scope of business and management concepts, including the study of real-world situations and cases, as well as a strong foundation in finance, accounting, and statistics, I find I am always drawing from the skills and training I received in the program. I am well prepared as a business instructor thanks to MBS.

Why do you enjoy teaching? I completed my student teaching requirement during my undergraduate years at Thomas College, where I earned a degree in business education. I really enjoyed interacting with my students, listening to their ideas and sharing my love of learning. After receiving my bachelor’s degree, I taught various adult education courses in which most of my students were former millworkers seeking skills to help transition into another career after the mills closed.

Nontraditional students like this bring a lot to the classroom because of their real-world experience, and I always welcome their presence. It is rewarding to help someone improve and expand his or her life through education. I enjoy teaching anyone who is motivated and eager to learn.

What was your career/education path? After graduating from MBS in 1997, I spent four years in managerial positions in the healthcare sector, including operations management, direct training and supervision of employees, budgeting, contract negotiation and marketing. In 2001, I entered the Juris Doctor program at the Maine School of Law. After I graduated in 2004, I became involved in a wide range of research, writing and editing projects in business, law and the arts. I practiced transactional law as general counsel for what was then a German-owned biologics company with a production facility in the U.S. My love of education brought me back to the teaching profession in August 2011.

How else do you spend your time? I believe in giving back to the community and society. I spent five years offering pro bono services to artists through the Maine Chapter of Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Two years ago, I became involved with the Greater Portland Coalition Against Sex Trafficking and Exploitation. I work with the Portland Police Department as the human trafficking victim emergency fund manager. It is important to me to utilize my legal training to assist organizations whose work I admire.

My SPIA classes tie directly into volunteerism. For example, as part of a SPIA requirement, I completed a grant writing class and helped a nonprofit write a grant proposal to fund a residential home for victims of human trafficking. I am also an active member of the American Bar Association and attend conferences on international law and business law. This participation enables me to keep on top of emerging legal issues even though I am not currently practicing law.

What are some of your proudest accomplishments? I am most proud that I have taken advantage of every opportunity placed in front of me. I am an adventurous person and enjoy new experiences, exotic settings and foreign cultures. I have a passion for international studies and have combined my love of travel and education to participate in various study abroad programs that included the Sorbonne, the National University of Ireland at Galway, the University of Vienna School of Law and Charles University in Prague. I was fortunate to visit other countries while participating in these programs, and have returned to many.

I am proud to have been awarded a Fellowship at the Irish Centre for Human Rights this summer. The opportunity enables me to complete a component of the SPIA program and focus on matters related to the global impact of human trafficking, the International Criminal Court and any human rights issues on the world stage at the time.

Why did you enjoy the MBS program? The program was extremely rigorous and I felt a huge sense of accomplishment when I graduated. I can say without reservation that my life is much richer for having graduated from MBS.
Maine Business School alumnus Aaron McMorrow ’01 has been named a vice president of Kilbride & Harris Insurance Services LLC, responsible for the development and growth of the company’s employee benefits division.

A native of Waterville who majored in management at MBS, McMorrow has been with the Portland-based firm since 2005. He holds his Registered Health Underwriter (RHU) designation and his Registered Employee Benefits Consultant (REBC) designation as well as a Consultant License.

He and his wife, Mary (Erickson) McMorrow, who graduated from UMaine in 2001 with a bachelor’s degree in nursing, live in Cumberland with their young daughter.

**Why do you enjoy your job?**
I most enjoy the interaction with people. I appreciate the ability to provide a valuable service as well as be a resource to clients. As with many sales roles, relationships are developed and maintained over the years, and I enjoy fostering those associations. I also enjoy being exposed to many different types of businesses and to the unique challenges that coincide with providing solutions to each client’s individual needs. These challenges are the best of part of my job and finding solutions is definitely rewarding.

Health insurance is an ever-changing market and there are many opportunities taking place within the field. Being one of the younger producers in Maine’s marketplace, Kilbride & Harris has allowed me to thrive in this setting as I meet the changing needs of our clients and bring innovative solutions to their health insurance dilemmas.

**What did your career path after graduating from MBS?**
I started off at a State Farm agency in Portland doing sales and service. From there, I worked at Mass Mutual for several years selling individual insurance and investments. In 2005 I found a great fit as an insurance producer at my current employer, Kilbride & Harris.

**What did you like about the MBS program?**
The offerings are relevant and career focused. I also appreciated that the business school had its own culture. MBS provided a structure and skill set that have carried me far. Thirteen years after graduating, I am constantly using the business fundamentals I learned at MBS as well as the communication, problem solving, team building and conflict management skills. The relationships I made at MBS also have carried over into the business world.

**Why did you choose MBS?**
Coach Walter Abbott had my ear when I was considering colleges. The University of Maine’s affordability and the reputation of MBS definitely influenced my decision as well.

**What are your fondest memories of MBS and UMaine?**
I have a lot of great memories. I made some great friends, and college will always be one of the best times of my life. Meeting my wife Mary is my best memory. We met at Knox Hall during Bumstock weekend and have been together ever since.

**Do the skills and training you received at MBS help you in your day to day duties?**
MBS prepared me to seek information in the business world as well as how to put it to use. I always knew I wanted to be involved in the health insurance business and MBS was a great choice for me. So much of the time spent in college is learning about oneself and maturing, MBS helped guide me in that process and gave me the skills to be where I am today.

**What advice would you give to recent graduates about launching a successful career and finding a job they love?**
Steer in the direction of something in which you are interested. You have to have a passion to put in the work it takes to be successful. It also helps to enjoy the people you work with every day — the people associated with any organization really make the difference. Life is too short to position yourself somewhere that does not assimilate with your value system. I’ve been very lucky at Kilbride & Harris — I have a great position and as well as great colleagues.
Ten years after earning his bachelor’s degree in management, Jon Finch ’04 is vice-president/managing broker at Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Brunswick, Maine.

Finch, who previously worked as a broker at Coldwell’s Saco branch, was promoted to his current position in August 2014.

He and his wife, Catherine (Eshleman) Finch, a 2004 University of Maine graduate, live in Wells, Maine, in the house in which he was raised.

What are your duties as manager?
I support and coach an office of more than 20 agents, providing learning activities and opportunities for growth. I run sales meetings, review all listings, contracts and disclosures, and recruit agents.

Why do you enjoy your job?
I am passionate about real estate because it is an essential part of people’s lives. It’s not only a big investment, it’s about creating a home and providing comfort and security for one’s family.

I love the challenge of running a real estate office. I enjoy helping my agents and their clients overcome obstacles and solve problems. It is rewarding to know that I asked the right question to help agents arrive at the solution they feel is best. I am constantly reminded that real estate is an industry in which one learns through experience rather than a textbook.

What was your career path?
After graduating from UMaine, I worked as a line cook at Dysart’s in Hermon while my wife completed her student teaching. In summer 2005, I got a job at Congdon’s Doughnut Restaurant in Wells, where I remained part time after earning my real estate license and affiliating with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Saco. I was a sales agent from 2005–07, and eventually obtained my associate broker and broker licenses.

How did you land your current job as manager?
I participated in my company’s Management Assessment Program, which enables future sales managers to gain insight into their leadership style and behavior, and receive coaching to build a plan for personal and professional growth. Throughout my time at Coldwell Banker, I communicated regularly with our regional vice president, who has a history of helping aspiring agents become top producers. I expressed an interest in becoming a manager and he served as my coach, providing the tools I needed to succeed.

I like his philosophy: “Tell me where you want to go and I’ll show you how to get there.” It’s basically an approach to help people identify their goals and create a realistic path to achieve them.

How do you use the skills and training you received at MBS in your day-to-day duties?
My MBS education gave me a good sense of how to run an ethical business practice. I try to manage things systematically and creatively. When there is a problem, I identify the most favorable solution. If all avenues to reach that outcome have been exhausted, I figure out what is the next best solution. Whenever applicable, I use an “outside-of-the-box” way of thinking. I am a creative problem solver by nature, but there is one quote that has always stuck with me from my time at UMaine: “If you don’t have the best of everything, make the best of everything you have” — Coach Shawn Walsh.

It’s so important not to stress over things we can’t control and, instead, focus on those we can. When you are part of a company, it’s not just about making money, but being part of something bigger than yourself and providing a service that benefits society, such as helping people achieve the American dream of home ownership.

What accomplishments are you particularly proud of?
During my first full year with Coldwell Banker, I received the company’s New Associate Top Producer award. As a Coldwell Banker sales associate, I earned membership in the International Sterling Society — a designation awarded to the top 16 percent of all sales associates internationally — as well as the International Diamond society — a level achieved by only the top 11 percent of Coldwell Banker’s associates internationally.

What is one of your fondest MBS memories?
Participating in the Canadian Business Studies course that ended with a weekend field trip to Montreal to visit Alcan Inc., a Canadian mining company and aluminum manufacturer. It was an amazing learning opportunity and a wonderful chance to bond with my classmates.

What is your advice to young people about finding a job they love?
Determine your passion and then find a way to use your MBS degree to share that passion. If you go into sales, make sure you sell something you believe in. Then it’s not just a job.

“... It’s so important not to stress over things we can’t control and, instead, focus on those we can. When you are part of a company, it’s not just about making money, but being part of something bigger than yourself and providing a service that benefits society.”
Tim Stormann ’13

MBS graduate finds it gratifying to be working in health care

I had wanted for a long time to be involved in healthcare. Also, being able to find a job in Maine that enabled me to use my MBS education was a dream come true. I started here in December 2013 and knew it was the right fit from the start.

To have the opportunity to work at a nationally recognized integrated health care system that serves communities from across Maine, and to be able to see the direct impact of the work I am doing is extremely gratifying. Our group is in a unique position to observe many aspects of EMHS’ business operations — from strategic and operational management to the front lines — and to understand how EMHS serves the community and addresses the constant changes in healthcare regulations.

I enjoy being part of an organization where everything we do ties back to how it affects patients in our member hospitals and how we can better serve them. Everyone here has the same attitude. We all realize that our patients are our prime stakeholders and that all our roles converge to serve them. This motivates me to constantly improve.

It’s especially fascinating to be working in health care in Maine. There are a lot of exciting things happening here now. Our state is facing some unique challenges. We have both a declining population and one of the oldest state populations in the U.S. I believe we can serve as a model and develop some best practices to address many of the issues the U.S. medical system faces. It’s an exciting organization to be part of.

On a personal level, I am in my element here. I’m an Excel nerd, and am happy and proud that I am developing expertise in a variety of amazing data analytic tools. I collaborate with a great team that includes four analysts and about 10 consultants, some of whom have practical experience. They look to us to provide them with the data they need.

What did you like about MBS?
Both the undergraduate and graduate programs not only provided broad-based business skills, but also taught us analytic skills and how to be effective communicators and critical thinkers.

What were your most memorable experiences at MBS?
Participating in the John Molson MBA International Case Competition in Montreal gave me the opportunity to challenge myself. I was appointed as an alternate, and intended to watch and learn as I sat on the sidelines. But I ended up competing on the spur of the moment as part of an international team. Even though my teammates and I didn’t know each other and had very little time to practice, we made a decent showing and even received the team spirit award. To have people recognize our effort was a really big deal.

The MBS trip to Germany was a great ending to an intense academic year. We provided business advice to German companies, which was a wonderful learning opportunity.

I particularly enjoyed my strategic management capstone class with professor John Mahon. I asked him to review my work more frequently and he was always happy to go the extra mile for me. I also appreciated the opportunity to work as graduate assistant with professor Patti Miles. She encouraged me to pursue my MBA, and without her help and support, I doubt I’d be where I am today.

What advice would you give to MBS graduates about finding a job they love?
Be selective and figure out where your skills and talent are best used. View yourself as your own “brand.” Be passionate and energetic, always seek out opportunities to grow your skill sets, take on new challenges and test yourself. It’s always a good idea to get your prospective employer to see you as indispensable and as the best fit for the company. Finally, be yourself and be confident about who you are.
Less than a year after graduating from the Maine Business School, Emma Wilson ’14 is business manager of Zeomatrix, an Orono-based start-up company that makes the Zeo Bag, a biodegradable cat waste bag lined with patented zeolite technology to absorb odors.

“I’m the marketing director, the sales manager — I’m everything,” said Wilson, who graduated with double majors in management and marketing, and a concentration in international business.

“I’m learning a ton and getting some great experience. There aren’t many 22 year olds who can say they have run a business.

“Each day I make a to-do list of 10 to 15 things. Sometimes they get done, sometimes they don’t. It depends on how many problems I run into.”

Manufactured in Presque Isle, Maine, the Zeo Bag will be sold at pet shops in the Portland and Boston areas this summer in 30-count packages made of recycled cardboard.

“Because the product is so green, I was determined to have the packaging be eco-friendly, too,” said Wilson who worked with a paper industry consultant to determine the logistics for producing the bag.

“The great thing about the Zeo Bag is that you can put it in your household trash without worrying about any odor,” she said. “It is made with zeolite — a powdery white volcanic mineral that is biodegradable. The cat waste bags on the market now are either biodegradable or odor absorbing. We’re both. That’s what makes us unique.

“We are saving the world, one smelly cat at a time,” she said, quoting the company’s slogan.

Zeomatrix was founded in 2006 by Susan MacKay, her husband Don MacKay and scientist Karl Bishop, who did postdoctoral research with Susan MacKay at the University of Maine.

Wilson has a lengthy history with the Zeo Bag. In her senior year, she worked as an intern for Zeomatrix, then located at UMaine’s Foster Center for Student Innovation, as part of the Blackstone Accelerates Growth Innovate for Maine Fellows Program, an effort to create jobs and economic development in Maine.

As part of the internship, she conducted market research and sales forecasting, managed social media, redesigned the website and created the product’s first Kickstarter campaign on the Internet to build greater awareness of the product.

Wilson continued her internship after graduation in May 2014. In August, when she was asked to stay on as business manager, she jumped at the chance to assume total responsibility for the nascent company.

Wilson’s efforts got a huge boost last September when she won the Big Gig, a program in which local entrepreneurs pitch their business ideas to an audience, receive feedback, network with peers and business experts, and compete for a cash prize to help bring their product or service to market.

The days fly by for Wilson. Aiming to build awareness about the Zeo Bag, she presented it at the Maine Technology Institute (MTI) Walk at the Cross Center and at the Bangor Humane Society’s Paws on Parade.

She also has been busy on the financial front. Wilson recently received a $3,200 MTI TechStart grant to conduct a national survey of cat owners to verify the Zeo Bag’s target market, see if there may be additional target markets, and determine the retail price of the product.

“Our biggest competition is the plastic grocery bags that grocery stores give away,” she said. “We have to verify that our target market is cat owners who care about the environment and don’t mind paying to dispose of their pets’ waste.”

Nowadays, Wilson is busier than ever. She is participating in Top Gun, Maine’s entrepreneurial accelerator program sponsored by the Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development (MCED) and University of Maine’s Target Technology Incubator, to compete for a $10,000 prize in June. In April, she plans to participate in the final round of the Big Gig competition to win $1,500, and this summer, she hopes to earn the chance to vie for $30,000 through LaunchPad, a business plan competition sponsored by Gorham Savings Bank.

“I’m learning a ton and getting some great experience. There aren’t many 22 year olds who can say they have run a business.”

Spiffy meeting well attended

In fall of 2014, 67 students attend a SPIFFY meeting. Faculty adviser Bob Strong says a record number of students have been involved in the UMaine investment club which gives them a unique opportunity to manage University of Maine Foundation money and apply what they learn in classes to real-life investing.
Working as an organic marketing/business coordinator for MOFGA, the oldest and largest state organic organization in the country, Heather Omand '14 (MBA) said she is proud to be part of this "amazing organization with a rich and lengthy history of good work and inspirational acts."

"In some ways, MOFGA's story reads like a history of the '70s peace and love movement, except it never stopped adapting, moving forward, and accomplishing its mission piece by piece as the years went by," said Omand, who majored in business and sustainability at the Maine Business School.

A significant part of MOFGA's mission is to help farmers and gardeners grow and sell organic food, fiber and other crops. "It took a village to create and maintain this organization throughout the years and it has often been ahead of the curve on supporting organic farmers’ needs and sustainability into the future," Omand said.

Omand, who lives in Greenbush with her husband Tyler, works at MOFGA's headquarters in Unity, where the group hosts the popular Common Ground Country Fair each year.

When did you start at MOFGA?
I was offered the position in June 2014, shortly after I graduated. I think my MBA in business and sustainability, as well as the internship I did at CEI (a nonprofit organization that provides financing and consulting to emerging companies in Maine, while advancing its mission to create positive social impact) made me a competitive candidate.

What are your duties?
Working at a nonprofit like MOFGA requires a lot of multitasking, and the willingness and energy to pitch in for many different tasks and events. My position is focused on serving the organic farmers certified by MOFGA. This means producing the Organic Price Report, the Organic Maine publication that is a directory of all certified organic producers and processors in the state; facilitating the Farm Beginnings curriculum, a business and whole-farm planning course developed by Land Stewardship Project and offered to MOFGA journeypersons; working one-on-one with farmers on marketing and business management; connecting farms with existing markets; and working with organizations statewide to develop new markets for farmers. However, I also pitch in throughout the week of the Common Ground Fair, help plan and offer training at the Agricultural Trade Show and the Farmer to Farmer Conference, and work on other organizations' events and workshops.

What does a typical work day entail?
There really isn’t a typical workday. Some days I travel to Augusta to meet with groups like Maine Farm to School or the Maine Local Food Access Network. Other days I travel to meet some of our certified organic farmers to talk about their experiences, help them with marketing or engage them in an opportunity to teach other farmers. I am currently working on a survey we hope to administer to farmers across the state about their marketing choices, and am interviewing applicants for our journeyperson program. When you are working to try to support and create new opportunities for a diverse group of people like Maine farmers, you do whatever it takes.

How do you use the skills and training you received at MBS in your job?
A lot of the classroom learning I gained at MBS is relevant — understanding markets, conducting market research, and engaging in business management and business planning, all applies to farmers in much the same way it applies to small business owners.

However, there is so much to learn about farming, such as the seasonality and challenge of cash flow, communication between farmers and markets and the effect of production techniques on financials. I am learning all this on the fly.

But without the base understanding and training I received from MBS, I wouldn’t have ground to stand on.

Additionally, the one-on-one support I received, as well as the opportunities to specialize my learning to the agricultural world, meant I came into this position with many great connections throughout the state. Thanks to my MBS experience, I understand farmers’ business needs, how small business differs from the corporate world and how to teach others about business. I often reflect on some of the case studies I encountered as an MBA student and realize that they still are relevant even though the scale is much different from the folks I deal with day-to-day in my job.

Why do you enjoy your job? What are the challenges and the rewards?
Working for an organization like MOFGA is an incredibly enriching experience. The history of the organization and the great work we do is spiritually fulfilling. Each farmer I work with could be my hero or heroine. They are doing the kind of agriculture that not only sustains their livelihood and enriches the lives of consumers, but also gives back to the soil and ecosystem that provide that livelihood. It’s really inspirational.

Maine has the largest percentage of young farmers in the nation and MOFGA is often credited with playing a major role in that statistic. The organization has been offering amazing programs for new farmer training for many years. In fact, the Partridge Foundation gifted the organization $1 million for its new farmer training programs, with another million to come if we can match it. The rewards are bountiful when you are working for a group of people that really walks the walk instead of just talking the talk.

In many ways, the challenges of my position also are bountiful. Recently the Maine Food Strategy found that Maine consumers place more importance on labels like antibiotic-free, GMO-free and chemical-free than organic, leaving me wondering what people think.

Heather Omand continued on next page
Heather Omand continued from previous

Since my father was in the military, we moved to various places around the country. My family worked in U.S. history. Media exposure was astounding in the Midwest. My undergraduate years. At the time, we were all rooting for the Black Bear hockey team, which was just starting to become a national power. Also, I was heavily involved in fraternal intramural sports as a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. Some of my best friends today were my fraternity brothers from UMaine.

Greg Leonard continued from page 8

I wanted to follow in the footsteps of my father Robert F. Leonard, who graduated from the business program at UMaine in 1952. During his successful career, he owned Granite Farm Dairy, Northeastern Plastics and Old Tavern Farm Dairy. He told me that if I wanted to do business in Maine, the Maine Business School would open up opportunities to network with other business graduates. He was right. I run into other Maine alumni all the time at various social and work-related events.

Patrick Healy continued from page 10

The one-on-one attention and support I received from the work study program. I gained a lot of on-the-job experience during my undergraduate years working at the Sears catalogue department, delivering dairy products for Old Tavern Farm, and working in the Student Activities Office at the University of Maine.

Campus life and activities, including serving on the Inter-Fraternity Council, belonging to the Senior Skull Society and participating in intramural sports also were helpful. I came to understand how volunteering can benefit one's business life, as well as personal and family life. Currently, I am treasurer of the Bailey and Orrs Island Fire and Rescue board of directors. I have served on the board of directors for the Casco Bay YMCA and the Greater Portland YMCA. I stay connected with UMaine through the Southern Maine Alumni Association, where I assist with scholarships.

What is your advice for those who want to start a business?

First, get on-the-job experience working for someone else. You can even keep your day job while you are working on your new business ideas. It is important to have an income stream as you develop your new business, because the new business may not generate income for a while. Also, you are more likely to secure bank financing if you have an income. Shop around for a bank that will provide the best financing terms.

Other advice: Find a niche market and cultivate your customers. Your customers should want to do business with you because no one else can meet their need the way you do. Find ways to give your customers a "value added" experience. You can never have too much detail in a transaction — the more detail the fewer the mistakes. Use a reliable accounting package like QuickBooks or MYOB. Using and understanding a good accounting package will make life a lot easier when it comes to billing and receivables, profit and loss reports, inventory control, balance sheet and year-end tax reporting. Finally, control your costs and reinvest in your business.

Why did you choose MBS?

I wanted to follow in the footsteps of my father Robert F. Leonard, who graduated from the business program at UMaine in 1952. During his successful career, he owned Granite Farm Dairy, Northeastern Plastics and Old Tavern Farm Dairy. He told me that if I wanted to do business in Maine, the Maine Business School would open up opportunities to network with other business graduates. He was right. I run into other Maine alumni all the time at various social and work-related events.

What are your fondest memories of MBS?

There are many. I had an awesome time serving as the alternate team member at the John Molson MBA International Case Competition in Montreal. That experience is right up there with my MBA international field experience in Brazil.

Any advice for new graduates about how to find a job they love?

Build a resume of experiences relevant to what you really want to do in life, embrace the terror, take time for yourself and have a plan B. Also, don’t put all your eggs in one basket.
Last fall, MBS senior Sarah Goode ‘15 was among 17 college and university students from across the country selected as finalists for a leadership development program at Raytheon Company, a technology and innovation leader specializing in defense, security and civil markets worldwide.

A total of 10,000 students applied for the two-year post-graduate program at the company headquartered in Waltham, Massachusetts.

Although she ultimately wasn’t one of the four students chosen to participate in the program, the marketing major from Westford, Massachusetts, said she was gratified to have been in the running, and that the experience strengthened her communication, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. She also enjoyed meeting students from all over the U.S.

“It was a highly selective process that included lengthy phone and in-person interviews, as well as a challenging case study competition, so it was pretty daunting,” she said. “But getting as far as I did made me feel confident about my abilities and in my MBS education.

“Thanks to my business classes, I knew how to communicate with people and how to sell myself. I felt good about how I differentiated myself from the other participants and explained how I would be an asset for Raytheon. I was well prepared for the case study competition, which involved a case from the Harvard Business Review, since I had done similar exercises in my international marketing and retail management classes with MBS Executive-in-Residence Paul Myer. The material was familiar and I knew what to focus on. Many of the students I competed against were from well-known private colleges and universities, but I always felt well prepared thanks to MBS.”

Goode is making the most of her time at the Maine Business School. She is enjoying her senior year, serving as a student ambassador, and tour guide for the university and promoting UMaine to new and prospective students. She is one of six students to have been selected to represent MBS this April at the rigorous International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition in Anaheim, California, in which students run a simulated company and have the opportunity to network with business executives from all over the world.

As an active and involved undergraduate, Goode has been able to bolster her teamwork and leadership skills, and gain valuable professional experience. She served in the UMaine Student Senate as vice president of student affairs, and as assistant business manager for The Maine Campus, and director of chapter events and director of community service for Alpha Phi Fraternity. She worked with Woodman’s Bar and Grille and Verve in Orono, and for the Bear Brew Pub in Orono, developing social media marketing strategies, planning events and distributing promotional material.

What are your post-graduation career goals?

I have a real passion for event planning and entertainment marketing which can include such things as budgeting, selecting and reserving the event site, acquiring permits, coordinating transportation and parking, developing a theme, scheduling speakers and arranging decor, event support and security, catering, emergency plans and cleanup. My dream job is to help plan and coordinate the Grammy Awards.”

I was able to gain some great experience in event marketing as vice president of student entertainment and assistant vice president of student entertainment, managing a $300,000 budget for shows and events. I sent out bids, coordinated contract negotiations with artists and with UMaine offices supporting each event, created marketing plans, advertisements and proposals for the booked acts, did student outreach, worked with student affairs, campus activities, and athletics. I also developed strategies for public relations among the UMaine and Orono/Bangor community, and managed all operations during the day of the show.

In October 2013, as a member of the Student Senate, I was lucky enough to be able to attend the Karrass Effective Negotiating Seminar in California to learn contract negotiation skills and work with professionals from Fortune 500 companies.

How has MBS changed you?

I have learned how to better manage my time. As an MBS student involved with a fraternity, Student Government and a variety of jobs, including teaching skiing, I learned quickly that it’s never good to procrastinate.

What is your proudest MBS achievement?

Getting an A in business finance during the spring semester of my junior year. It was an extremely challenging class, but I worked hard and was really gratified to see my hard work pay off.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Taking over the world.
Janelle Tinker ’14, ’16 (MBA)

I loved my undergraduate years here and am having the same positive experience as an MBA student. I like the encouraging learning environment where everyone is respectful of each other. I also like that the classes are the perfect size — not too big or too small.”

What is your hometown?
Lubec, Maine

What is your concentration?
Accounting

What is your career goal?
I am keeping my options open, but am considering becoming a partner at a firm or opening my own.

Why have you enjoyed MBS?
I loved my undergraduate years here and am having the same positive experience as an MBA student. I like the encouraging learning environment where everyone is respectful of each other. I also like that the classes are the perfect size — not too big or too small.

I am getting terrific experience working as a graduate assistant; I help professors with various tasks, including conducting research, grading assignments, proctoring exams and sometimes teaching a class.

Also this year, I have an internship with Loiselle, Goodwin & Hinds CPAs in Bangor. I am working as a tax intern, helping to prepare individual and business taxes. It’s great experience.

What achievement are you most proud of as an MBS student?
Being named Outstanding Graduating Student for MBS.

How has MBS changed you?
Coming from a small town in Maine, my experience at MBS has broadened my horizons and strengthened my resolve to succeed. I am grateful for the support and recognition I have received through membership in Beta Gamma Sigma and through earning the Maine Business School’s Excellence in Accounting Award, the Maine Bankers Association Award and the Maine Association of Professional Accountants Scholarship.

What has been your most memorable experience at MBS?
Participating in the flash dance in the MBS atrium during Homecoming 2013. It was a blast. I also have enjoyed tutoring accounting majors since I was a first-year student at MBS. I really like interacting with college-aged students. I like their maturity and the fact that they actually want to learn. I love being able to successfully explain a concept and then watching the light bulb go off. As a tutor, it was fun getting to know students’ various learning styles, preparing lesson plans and writing progress reports.

What are you passionate about?
Helping people. As part of my church group in Lubec, I spent two weeks at a Navajo reservation in Leupp, Arizona, in 2010 and 2013. Among other things, I helped make repairs to the church roof, install plumbing in the home of an elderly couple, and run a vacation Bible school. A lot of the kids were hungry so we made sure they had breakfast and a snack, and sent them home with a packed lunch. When we returned for our second visit in 2013, they all remembered us. It was awesome and incredibly gratifying. It made me realize how much we take for granted.

What is something unexpected about you?
I know way too much about the Roosevelts. For several summers, I have worked at the Roosevelt Campobello International Park in New Brunswick. Last summer, I started working with the “Tea with Eleanor” program, in which we served afternoon tea and gave presentations about the former First Lady. I ended up learning so much about her. It was wonderful listening to co-workers speak so highly of her and her accomplishments. We heard many stories from visitors who actually met her. People were what mattered to Eleanor. She was so humble and never wanted to intimidate anyone. She even bought her clothes from Sears & Roebuck.

Also thanks to my job at Campobello, I became comfortable with public speaking. Those skills came in handy last summer when I was asked to give a 15-minute presentation on Eleanor Roosevelt in front of 500 people at the State Theatre in Portland. It was scary — but fun.

What are your hobbies/downtime activities?
Snowboarding, tennis, photography, hiking and exercising.
People started to relax. But on the third night, everything looked good the second night, too. The first night, there was no problem. “We were putting into place a new mainframe and another, he told the class. An overload to the CPU (central processing unit) caused a breakdown at another of his companies that day. A power outage brought one of his prior employers’ IT system to a standstill, while flooding caused massive tech problems at his previous jobs and at Bangor Savings Bank, where he has worked for nearly three years.

A power outage brought one of his prior employer’s IT system to a standstill, while flooding caused massive tech problems at another, he told the class. An overload to the CPU (central processing unit) caused a breakdown at another of his companies that resulted in a 36-hour service interruption.

“We were putting into place a new mainframe with new servers and a new storage array — a method for storing information on multiple devices,” Blake said. “We tested the heck out of it. The first night, there was no problem. Everything looked good the second night, too. People started to relax. But on the third night, the overnight operator noticed the system was starting to slow down. Eventually it became unbearable.

“We learned that the problem was because of a little bug in half a dozen lines of firmware that run the IBM storage array, which is used by companies all over the world,” he said. “It was our particular arrangement of systems and protocols that no one else had hit yet.”

He emphasized that IT departments work tirelessly to avoid technology malfunctions and that the vast majority of changes work seamlessly. Bottom line, there is no such thing as bug-free software. “Microsoft Windows is probably the most complicated human endeavor ever,” he said. “It’s approximately 60 million lines of code that have innumerable interactions with each other. And yet we’re surprised when it crashes. The key to reliability is simplicity, because the more complicated something is, the more possibilities there are for failures. Testing helps, but you can’t think of everything. That’s the nature of being human.”

Troubleshooting tech problems is like wandering through a labyrinth. It’s tempting to keep going, hoping that the solution is around the next corner. But that can be a trap. Ultimately, we decided to stop trying to fix the malfunction and go to our secondary data center in another city. It sounds easy, but it’s not like throwing a switch. Since the storage arrays are connected, we discovered there was some data corruption, so we had to clean that up, too.

The IT failure cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, including overtime, correction of processing errors, the work that went into fixing the technical problem and opportunity costs of work that couldn’t be completed.

IBM, the technology provider, was partly responsible for the malfunction, according to Blake, who said the multinational company agreed to provide credits against future purchases.

“But there was nothing it could do to make up for the customer who came in and couldn’t get his or her question answered.”

Blake said the malfunction taught the department how to more efficiently navigate IBM’s support system. “The guy we should have gone to is the national duty manager, who prioritizes incoming work. Although we got to ‘priority one’ pretty fast, what we didn’t know is that there is another tier above that which is called ‘critical situation.’ If you’re ‘priority one,’ you’re dealing with people on duty for the night. But if you can get to ‘crit-sit,’ they’ll wake up the developers.”

In the end, he said, “we basically had one business day of customers being impacted with the disruption. And a whole lot of cleanup work for us.”

New technology inevitably comes with new problems, he cautioned students.

“If you like the new problems better than the ones you’re currently dealing with,” Blake said, “then that’s a win.”
Erhardt’s human resource management assignment prepares students for a career

Each year, associate professor Niclas Erhardt gives a unique assignment in his Human Resource Management class that provides students with a leg-up on their career development plans, including, in some cases, job offers.

For the semester-long project, the juniors and seniors are required to interview managers at three companies, and ask about their duties and responsibilities, and the skills and experience needed for their jobs. Students must select one of the three jobs that appeal to them and then develop an action plan as to how they would go about landing it. Then they write an essay, summarizing each job that they investigated and explaining why it does or doesn’t appeal to them. Finally, they give a five-minute oral presentation to the class about the three jobs they examined.

The assignment has become an important part of his class, according to Erhardt, who said students have told him they are grateful for the experience. The project also dovetails with the Maine Business School’s goal to graduate students who are career-ready, he pointed out.

“I’m trying to challenge students to think proactively about careers, and explore the fit between their skills and interests and a particular job so they will have an understanding about what they want to do when they graduate,” said Erhardt, who has assigned the project for the past five years.

“My goal is to have students get outside their comfort zone and talk with people in the workplace to understand what they do and how they got there. It pushes students to pick up the phone and ask someone for half an hour of their time. It enables them to apply the human resource skills we discuss in class — creating an interview protocol and conducting an interview — to deepen their understanding about different jobs, get ideas about what they would like to do in the future and gain insight into how to network.

“In some cases, the assignment has led to an actual job placement,” he said. “The managers who were interviewed have contacted the students to tell them about an opening and ask if they are interested.”

That’s what happened with MBS student Michael Werner, a Hermon, Maine, native, who obtained a summer job thanks to Erhardt’s assignment.

“After interviewing the project manager of a construction company, he told me I obviously had a grasp of the issues and asked me if I wanted a job for the summer,” said Werner, who has a double major in business management and computer science, as well as a concentration in management information systems.

“I spent last summer at work sites in Utah and Louisiana, where I got some great experience in managing people and in using information systems to estimate how much each construction job would cost,” said Werner, who shadowed the manager as he oversaw crews laying pipes to run methane gas to flare stations in landfills.

“I noticed that he trusted his employees to think for themselves and to get the job done on their own,” Werner said. “He always double checked their work, but gave them the responsibility to complete the job in a professional way. His management style resulted in great morale among the employees.”

Erhardt said he encourages students to ask managers to reflect on their own college careers and think about courses they wish they had taken that would have helped them be better employees.

“It’s good for students to hear how people in the workplace view college and whether they think about courses they wish they had taken that would have helped them be better employees,” Erhardt said.

Professors lauded for application paper at Decision Sciences Institute annual meeting

Associate professors of management Grant Miles (center) and Patti Miles (right) receive the award for Best Application Paper at the Decision Sciences Institute annual meeting November 2014 in Tampa, Florida. The title of their paper is “Disentangling the Corporate Social Responsibility and Financial Performance Relationship: Examining the Mediating Role of Productivity.”
Maine Business School students are serving as consultants to more businesses than ever, thanks to a new partnership with Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) in Bangor.

EMDC, a private, nonprofit organization that supports the region’s businesses through a variety of programs and services, is connecting entrepreneurs with MBS faculty whose students spend a semester working with these companies, providing consulting assistance on a variety of fronts.

“Our new collaboration with EMDC gives students additional opportunities to obtain the important hands-on experience that complements the theories they learn in class,” said management information systems professor Nory Jones, whose students have helped businesses create and update websites, enhance their social media presence, and develop e-commerce strategies, among other things.

Associate professor of management Jason Harkins, who teaches small business management, said the collaboration enables MBS to “tap into EMDC’s ability to identify businesses that need help.

“I like knowing I can reach out to EMDC and ask if they know any businesses that are looking to grow,” said Harkins, whose classes have worked with companies on several projects, including writing an employee handbook, creating an inventory management system and developing a franchise manual.

“Thanks to MBS students, businesses are getting another resource that can make a huge difference,” said EMDC Deputy Director Kitty Barbee, a 1985 MBS alumna.

“We don’t have enough personnel to provide the in-depth assistance that our businesses often need. It is wonderful that students are able to spend an entire semester working with them on a host of things, including developing their marketing and advertising strategies and writing their business plans.”

Jones and MBS alumna Angela (Bohovich) Campbell ‘10, former EMDC business services specialist, came up with the idea for the collaboration last summer after striking up a conversation on LinkedIn.

EMDC businesses were enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with MBS students and happy to take advantage of their expertise, enthusiasm and fresh perspective, according to Campbell, who said her clients had been pleased with the recommendations provided by MBS consultants.

She even had developed a waiting list of businesses that wanted to work with MBS.

Harkins seeks ‘black belt’ in innovation engineering

Aiming to enrich his teaching and research in entrepreneurship and small business management, MBS Associate Professor Jason Harkins is earning a “black belt” in innovation engineering (IE), a new field of study formally adopted by industry in 2009.

His goal is to become fully trained in the groundbreaking program that provides a systematic approach to innovation and enables people to take their ideas to market faster, with less risk.

“Innovation engineering has tools and methods for creating, communicating and commercializing meaningfully unique ideas,” said Harkins, who started his “black belt” training last August. He attended a weeklong seminar at the Eureka! Ranch in Cincinnati, Ohio, headquarters of the Innovation Engineering Institute founded by University of Maine alumnus Doug Hall, a former MBS adjunct professor. The Eureka! Ranch R&D team developed IE based on scientific analysis of more than 30 years of client projects. UMaine is helping to share the program among educational institutions.

“IE enables organizations to build a system and train people in a repeatable, predictable process to create a meaningfully unique product or service, as opposed to developing something helterskelter or paying a guru to innovate for your company,” Harkins said.

UMaine’s Foster Center for Student Innovation offers IE as a minor or graduate certificate that complements any major or field of study, including the sciences, arts, humanities,
Myer helps Maine entrepreneurs market their products

The entrepreneurs who mentor and advise MTI portfolio companies have different backgrounds and skill sets, work well together sharing information networks, and are passionate in our commitment to support entrepreneurial success in Maine.”

Maine Business School faculty member Paul Myer is helping some of the state’s most innovative entrepreneurs commercialize their products. He serves as an entrepreneur-in-residence (EIR) at the Maine Technology Institute (MTI), a publicly funded, nonprofit corporation that works with entrepreneurs, innovators, businesses and institutions to help them fund and grow their ideas, accelerate progress to the market, leverage additional private and public investment, and expand their economic impact in Maine.

Myer, who teaches MBS marketing, sales and international business courses, was appointed an EIR in 2013. As an MBS faculty member, he had been collaborating with MTI for a number of years and said he was honored when MTI asked to formalize the relationship in initiating its new EIR program, which aims to support the growing need to focus on commercialization.

“MTI funding has been devoted to creating products, with little attention and support for commercialization of those products,” said Myer. “The transformation signals a new appreciation of the importance and opportunity presented by the startup economy.”

Today, Myer is one of four seasoned entrepreneurs who mentor and advise MTI portfolio companies.

“We have different backgrounds and skill sets, work well together sharing information networks, and are passionate in our commitment to support entrepreneurial success in Maine.”

Throughout his lengthy career, which spans politics and government policy, global business and academia, Myer has consulted with a broad range of Maine businesses and community organizations. He has served as a mentor in Maine’s Top Gun Program — designed to accelerate entrepreneurial development — and as a principal of UMaine’s Knowledge Transfer Alliance — a three-year, federally funded initiative in which UMaine faculty helped businesses and communities overcome economic challenges.

With his numerous entrepreneurial accomplishments and vast networking capabilities, Myer has been a boon for MBS. He has enabled the business school to gain a statewide presence in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, enhanced his classes by providing real-world business examples that complement the theories he lays out, and helped a number of MBS undergraduate and graduate students obtain internships and employment.

He has collaborated for many years with UMaine alumnus and entrepreneur Soren Hansen, who started Sea & Reef Aquaculture in Franklin, Maine, a successful business that specializes in culturing high-quality marine ornamental fish for aquariums.

“Myers’ unique perspective brings a wide range of skills and experiences to this collaboration,” Hansen said. “Paul brings a personal touch and real business experience. That helped me in a big way, because he knows what works and what doesn’t. To this day, he is involved with Sea & Reef, and serves on the company’s advisory board.”

Black Belt continued from previous

business, engineering and education. In the program, students learn how to employ the tools and methods of innovation in their field of interest. These skills are valuable in the global economy and will prepare graduates to lead innovation processes in large businesses.

Earning a “black belt” in IE involves mastering 48 skills, including patent mining (a “create” skill), creating visual prototypes (a “communicate” skill), and cost and price estimating (a “commercialize” skill). Additionally, those seeking the “black belt” designation are required to watch an innovation engineering project, lead an innovation project and teach an innovation project.

Although Harkins said he isn’t sure when he will complete the program, he is enjoying the process and plans to discuss IE in his small business management classes. He will be among a handful of UMaine faculty and students who have earned the prestigious designation.

“It has been very interesting and, at times, challenging,” he said. “I like the notion of pursuing innovation systematically. I really want to understand the system, see how it links with my teaching and research, and figure out how it can help people make good business decisions. For the most part, IE is oriented toward innovation in existing companies. But my goal is to see how the system can be tweaked to apply to new ventures or very small companies.”
From the archives

Pictured are: (Standing) Assistant professor of management information systems D. Bruce Sun, Dean Virginia Gibson and (seated) finance professor Bob Strong with a representative from AT&T, which awarded a $500,000 grant for computer equipment. (1990, Courtesy Raymond H. Fogler Library Special Collections)