



Maine Business School umaine.edu/business

MBS *Connects*

University of Maine • Fall 2017



Business safari

Students travel to Africa

From Dean Ivan Manev



Dear friends,

The 2017–18 academic year has officially launched and MBS is looking forward to an exciting and productive year.

We are pleased to welcome four new faculty members: Erin Carter (marketing), Dmitri Markovitch (marketing), Stephen Jurich (finance), and George Violette (accounting).

On Aug. 28 we welcomed our largest first-year class to date. Enrolling at MBS were more than 300 students, nearly half of whom hail from other states and countries. This diversity adds value to the educational experience and helps students broaden their perspective, increase their knowledge of the world and prepare for workplace success.

Graduating students with job readiness continues to be a priority at MBS. We are steadily growing our internship program and currently have relationships with 105 organizations — both in and out of state — to ensure that students obtain valuable real-world experience.

In other career development news, we are collaborating with the Career Center to launch a digital badge program. Digital badges are powerful new tools for identifying and validating students' skills, knowledge, accomplishments and competencies.

We hope you enjoy this issue of MBS Connects with stories about our first MBA trip to South Africa led by management professor John Mahon; alumnus Bill Buckley, who owns one of the top-rated franchise opportunities in the world; professor Nory Jones and associate professor Jason Harkins, who are helping to grow small businesses in Maine; and senior Marie-France Georges, a native of Haiti, who is making her mark at UMaine.

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MBS Connects

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Fostering a coalition

UpStart Maine acts as umbrella for entrepreneurial coalition

MBS ASSOCIATE Professor Jason Harkins is helping to steer a new nonprofit aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in the Bangor region to foster economic development and generate jobs and innovation.

He is on the board of directors of UpStart Maine, which consists of a network of entrepreneurial support programs, area business incubators and accelerators. UpStart Maine's goal is to build the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the greater Bangor region by linking entrepreneurs with these resources.

UpStart Maine will also serve as an umbrella organization for the coalition partners, coordinating messaging and fundraising and facilitating collaboration.

"UpStart is doing something that has never been done in the Bangor region — building a larger ecosystem of entrepreneurship," Harkins says.

The founding coalition partners that have joined UpStart Maine are: Big Gig — a business pitch competition and networking event program; Top Gun — a program for entrepreneurs that combines weekly curriculum with a mentor network; Scratchpad Accelerator — a program that helps female-founded companies get to scale more quickly and access capital; The UpStart Center for Entrepreneurship (formerly the Target Technology Center) — an office space and incubator in Orono that supports companies as they grow; Bangor

Innovation Hub — which helps startup entrepreneurs develop a more fruitful relationship with the larger economy and with each other; and CoVort — Bangor's coworking space.

"These programs and organizations will support entrepreneurship from the earliest networking and idea formation stage through incubation and acceleration," Harkins says. "Together, they are focused on the idea of working with people to deliver value and building a culture of entrepreneurship which we hope will help us retain the talent drawn to this area by the universities and hospitals."

Harkins is one of eight members on the board of directors which includes businesspeople, business leaders, educators and entrepreneurs. They spent the spring and summer of 2017 getting the word out about UpStart and its mission to spur the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Bangor region.

In addition to making presentations to the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce as well as to dozens of business leaders and entrepreneurs, they used a \$10,000 gift from Maine Accelerates Growth to bring Kansas City Startup Foundation Executive Director Matthew Marcus to Bangor.

Marcus spoke to the Chamber about what his group is doing to create a culture of entrepreneurship and the lessons Bangor can learn from that experience. He also met with the UpStart Maine board to drive the members to think about the gaps in the ecosystem.

"We got some incredibly valuable information," Harkins says. "We learned that UpStart Maine needs to own two distinct aspects of building the ecosystem: collecting and spreading the news about entrepreneurship in the greater Bangor region and promoting and supporting a culture of entrepreneurship."

One of the things to come out of all of the work UpStart Maine has been doing is the formation of a "meetup," Solve for B, where anyone interested in a variety of topics can come together to share information, problem solve, and network. Among the many topics the group discusses are building a great culture, learning from failure, and tips and tricks for hiring and firing.

UpStart Maine also created a program for micro-grants for those interested in starting other meetups.

"We want to grow the Bangor region from within by supporting current entrepreneurs as well as those who want to be entrepreneurs but have never taken the leap," Harkins says.

Plans for UpStart include an annual appeal to support "gap funding" for the participating programs, bringing on additional entrepreneurial assistance programs, and creating a newsletter with stories about the exciting things happening with entrepreneurship in and around the region, according to Harkins.

For more information about UpStart, email jason.harkins@maine.edu. ■



Business safari

South African MBA trip inspires and educates students

TEN MBA students traveled to South Africa last spring for an entrepreneurial, political and cultural exploration of one of the biggest and most developed economies on the continent.

Led by management Professor John Mahon and accounting Professor Gloria Vollmers, the first-ever trip to South Africa was part of the MBA program's international field study class, a rigorous course with assignments before, during and after the trip.

The travelers followed a busy itinerary, which included meeting with entrepreneurs, listening to lectures, visiting historic sites, learning about the country's wine industry and its importance to the economy, and participating in a variety of sightseeing and cultural activities.

Pronouncing the 11-day trip "inspirational" and "powerful," students say they came away with a

better understanding of the challenges faced by an emerging market as well as the impact of apartheid on South Africa, which continues to struggle with poverty, unemployment and inequality.

The MBS travelers agreed that a high point of the trip was meeting the business owners and entrepreneurs in Khayelitsha — the largest and poorest township in Cape Town — and hearing how they are working to provide goods and services, create jobs and build a path to economic freedom and prosperity.

"Words cannot describe the destitution of the area, yet we met amazing people who were working hard to change their circumstances," says Aili Robinson '18 of Jefferson, Maine. "They understood the need to be role models and give back to the community because it was the only way to improve the odds against the 1.4 million people living in extreme poverty without a real education. Khayelit-

sha is not a place I will forget in my lifetime."

Owen Maguire '17, of Brunswick, Maine, was struck by how entrepreneurship can drive social change. "I realized this goes beyond the ideas of corporate social responsibility or creating value for your customers," he says. "The real way to be successful in all aspects of business is by helping people live better lives through what you do or what you create."

Among the entrepreneurs with whom the MBS travelers spoke were: Lufefe Nomjana, known as the "Spinach King," who is transforming the eating habits of the people with his famous spinach bread; Wongama Baleni, co-founder of the Department of Coffee, the first locally owned artisanal township coffee shop; and three female business owners who overcame social and financial barriers and ultimately turned their catering, construction and cleaning operations into a successful partnership.

“The more time we spent in South Africa the **more I came to realize how much the economy is driven by local businesses.**”

Kimberly Fiore '17

“The entrepreneurs of Khayelitsha have a great attitude and believe in creating their own destiny despite limited resources and opportunities,” says Kristin Hall '17 of Anaheim, California. “It was wonderful to see the impact a positive attitude can have despite one’s environment.”

Matthew Fowler '18 of Milford, Maine, says he now has a better understanding of the “effects of racial segregation on economic conditions and how these effects linger long after the official laws are gone.

“Apartheid has ended, but as we talked with business owners and entrepreneurs living in black majority settlements, we learned there are still significant challenges, including limited access to education and difficulty obtaining funding for small businesses,” he says.

Students visited the Impumelelo Social Innovation Center, a nonprofit that seeks to identify, reward and promote socially innovative projects that improve the quality of life for the poor, and the Stellenbosch Business School where they listened to a lecture by Professor Andre Roux on the socio-economic conditions of South Africa, the relationship the country has with the world, and how recent political developments have influenced its economy.

Also on the itinerary was a tour of the Solms Delta Wine Estate, where students learned about sustainable farming and other aspects of the wine industry for which South Africa has developed an international reputation.

Kimberly Fiore '17 of Framingham, Massachusetts, says she now has “a broader look on life and an appreciation of the advancements we have here in the U.S.

“The opportunity to visit a region that is still developing was extremely valuable for me as a business student. Seeing the innovation and resourcefulness of the local business owners was an unforgettable experience.”

Other activities included a safari and visits to the Buffelsdrift Game Lodge; Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens; Robben Island, where former president of South Africa Nelson Mandela was imprisoned; District Six, where 60,000 inhabitants were forcibly removed during the 1970s by the apartheid regime; and the Dutch East Indies Company, established in 1602 and the first company in history to issue bonds and shares of stock to the general public. ■

MAHON SPEAKS AT CONFERENCE IN SHANGHAI

MBS MANAGEMENT Professor John Mahon was a featured speaker at the 2017 WLSA & College Admission Network (CAN) Conference at Jiaotong University in Shanghai, China.

The WLSA Foundation is a nonprofit educational foundation that aims to promote cooperation and academic exchange between leading secondary schools in the world as well as experts in the field of higher education.

The theme of this year’s conference was “International Education: Exploring & Expanding its Relevance.”

Mahon is the John M. Murphy Chair of International Business Policy and founding director of the School



of Policy and International Affairs at UMaine. ■

CLARK PRESENTS AT INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONFERENCE

MBS MANAGEMENT Information Systems Lecturer Joe Clark presented a paper at the 23rd annual Americas Conference on Information Systems (AMCIS) in Boston on Aug. 11.

Clark co-authored “Information Systems and the Problem of Work: Protocol for a Systematic Review” with MIS Professor Nory Jones and MIS Assistant Professor Matt Graham.

The paper deals with the contributions that the information systems discipline has made to the availability or quality of rewarding and satisfying work.

“We chart the conceptual landscape of the problem of work and develop a protocol for a systematic literature review of contributions from IS research to creating good work or making work better,” Clark says.



AMCIS, a preeminent information systems research conference, is conducted under the auspices of the Association for Information Systems and attracts more than 1,000 attendees from all over the world. ■

MBS PROFESSORS JONES AND MAHON CO-AUTHOR BOOK

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION Systems professor Nory Jones and management professor John Mahon have co-authored a book about the most successful methods of transferring knowledge and how businesses can benefit from the creation of new knowledge for continual innovation and competitive advantage.

“Knowledge Transfer and Innovation” is almost ready for publication by Routledge/Taylor-Francis. ■



Christopher Bowen '20 and Austin Cashman '20

“

We were looking for hidden gems — **beautiful, unspoiled places in rural areas that few people know about.**”

Nory Jones, MBS professor

Undiscovered gems

MBS professor, students quest to showcase little-known Maine destinations

MBS Professor Nory Jones and students Christopher Bowen '20 and Austin Cashman '20 took an inspiring road trip through some of the northern- and eastern-most parts of Maine last June, searching for unique and interesting places that tourists would enjoy if they only knew about them.

The travelers were on a quest to find businesses in Aroostook County and Downeast Maine to include on www.mbs.maine.edu/undiscoveredmaine, a website created by Jones in 2012 to publicize areas that are underserved in terms of tourism.

“We were looking for hidden gems — beautiful, unspoiled places in rural areas that few people know about because potential tourists typically associate Maine with the coast,” Jones says.

Undiscovered Maine features information about shops, galleries, restaurants, recreational areas, farms and museums that aren't well known because they are off the beaten path and because the business owners often don't have the time or resources to advertise.

Each year, Jones and her students work to update the site. They search the web for reviews and other information on out-of-the-way attractions, visit the sites and interview business owners about why their establishments are unique. The MBS researchers then add descriptions, maps and photos to the Undiscovered Maine website and Facebook page.

The educational research project enables students to learn web and social media strategies as well as organizational, management and marketing skills to help small businesses that may be struggling.

The most recent travel experience took place one sunny weekend in June when Jones, Bowen

and Cashman logged nearly 700 miles traveling through Aroostook County and Downeast Maine.

With Jones behind the wheel and Cashman and Bowen in charge of the itinerary, the travelers started out for northern Maine on Saturday. Guided by a Maine Atlas to find the fastest route, they toured Amish country in Fort Fairfield, and stopped in Caribou, where they saw the Veterans' Memorial Cemetery, ate at a new restaurant, and visited a recently opened craft brewery. They hiked Aroostook State Park and checked out a bicycle shop in Presque Isle.

On Sunday they hopped in the car again, this time heading toward Downeast, where they toured an organic farm in Edmunds, visited shops and galleries in Lubec, and walked on the ocean trail in Quoddy Head State Park and on the beach at Roque Bluffs State Park.

“The trip was a great adventure,” says Cashman. “We got to traverse the state and see all it has to offer.”

“I was astonished at how many cool places there are that are hidden and that people would never think to visit,” Bowen says. “I had never heard of many of the different state parks in Downeast, but visiting them made me want to see more places in these small towns around Maine.”

Each business was unique in its own way, says Jones.

The business people were pleased when they heard that MBS was helping promote them, according to the students.

“Many of them shared the common challenges of lack of foot traffic and changing market conditions,” Cashman says. ■



Strategy pays off

FIVE MAINE Business School juniors and seniors tested their skills last spring when they participated in one of the most comprehensive and rigorous collegiate business competitions.

As part of the annual International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition, which includes participants from business schools in the U.S. and around the world, competitors create a company, produce an annual report and a strategic business plan, and give an oral presentation to a panel of judges who act as a “board of directors” for the company. The competition consists of a three-month remote phase followed by a three-day on-site phase in Anaheim, California in April.

MBS participants were: Mindy Downing '17, a marketing and management major from Brownville, Maine; Jacob Stutzman '17, a finance and marketing major with a management information systems minor from Harmony, Maine; Sierra Santomango '17, a finance major from Greene, Maine; Alex Rahman '18, a finance major from Bangladesh; and Ian Lichtenburg '18, a marketing and management major from Lincoln, Maine.

The students, who decided to sell cellphone cases, called their company Blizzard Cases. They say they enjoyed the challenging and exciting experience and appreciated the opportunity to hone their teamwork, leadership, critical thinking and

time management skills and meet students from all over the world.

“This was an amazing learning experience for our students,” says Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship Jason Harkins, the team’s faculty advisor.

“We were just edged out of winning runner-up for best documents for our division and the students’ performance improved dramatically during the competition.”

As part of the remote phase, students make quarterly decisions for three simulated years — or a total of 12 rounds of decisions about product price, marketing, salary, transportation costs, finance expenses and even inventory storage details. They make decisions according to deadlines that occur with increasing frequency over a 10-week period. The team’s performance each quarter determines the situation their company faces for each subsequent set of decisions.

During the final, on-site phase in Anaheim, students complete the last two years of their company’s quarterly decisions and make presentations to judges.

Downing, who served as vice president of marketing for the simulated company, says students had to work quickly since there was only one hour between the time they received the results from each round and when they had to submit the next series of management decisions.

“Our day started at 8 a.m. and we stayed up until well after 1:30 a.m. working on decisions and our final presentation,” she says. “It was a very long day but we handled it well and were very productive.”

Rahman, who served as CEO, says the on-site phase included some unanticipated tasks.

“On the last day of the competition, one of the judges threw me a curveball and asked me to put together a pitch to recruit the vice president of finance from another company,” he says. “Given that we had to work on our presentation for the following morning and how strapped we were for time, it was certainly a challenge to make it all come together.”

Santomango, vice president of finance, appreciated the real-world aspect of the competition. Creating and running a company is “an experience I’ll take with me to future employers,” she says.

Having teammates who “think differently” was a boon, says Lichtenburg, “so when making a decision we’d approach it from a variety of perspectives and that would create conversations that led us to the best possible resolution.”

Stutzman appreciated that the team was given “lots of autonomy.”

“We had to think for ourselves and so we learned a lot more from this than we would have in a traditional classroom setting,” he says. ■

Learning by doing

IT WAS a summer of learning and exploration for MBS student Amber Chadrawi '18, who worked as an IT/social media intern at the Maine Savings Federal Credit Union in Hampden, Maine.

A finance major with a management information systems (MIS) concentration, Chadrawi is the first MBS student to participate in the internship, which was created last spring.

"I was able to advance my technology skills and gain insight into the credit union industry and how it applies to management information systems," says Chadrawi, who is president of the business school's MIS Club.

Rob Carmichael, senior vice president of human resources, training, IT and facilities at Maine Savings, pronounced the experience a resounding success.

The credit union benefited from Chadrawi's expertise, enthusiasm and fresh perspective as well as her willingness "to help out in any way, learn, listen and offer thoughts and suggestions," he says.

Meanwhile, Chadrawi is grateful for the valuable real-world experience as well as the opportunity to use her MIS training. She was able to earn several IT industry trade association certifications thanks to being exposed to a variety of new software during her internship.

Students with a strong business background coupled with MIS training make them a perfect fit for the internship, says Assistant Professor of

“

I was able to **advance my technology skills and gain insight** into the credit union industry and how it applies to [MIS].”

Management Information Systems Matt Graham, who worked with Carmichael to create the position.

"It's important that my students not only learn how to work with and manage IT in a business, but also that they learn that these IT skills have real-world business uses," he says.

The days flew by as Chadrawi worked on a host of projects and assignments, often teaming up with the website vendor and credit union training manager. Among other things, she converted the website content to be ADA compliant; identified and resolved common web service issues; managed multiple software systems;



transferred business accounts to a new platform; took steps to make the credit union completely paperless; helped select a new website provider; and offered suggestions about software and other website-related technologies.

She also weighed in about the use of social media, which she says is an important way for the credit union to engage members, reinforce branding, generate interest and show potential customers how a credit union can fit into their lives.

"I am grateful for the opportunity that Maine Savings gave me by allowing me to be part of their friendly, welcoming team," she says. ■

MBS ALUMNUS AND WIFE WIN INSPIRATIONAL BOOK AWARD

MBS ALUMNUS Tim Bishop '79 and his wife, Debbie, have won a prestigious national literary award for an inspirational book they co-authored about their cross-country bicycling adventures.

"Wheels of Wisdom: Life Lessons for the Restless Spirit" was awarded a 2017 National Indie Excellence Award in the inspiration category. Released in 2016, "Wheels of Wisdom" is a seeker's devotional based on the trans-America travels of the Bishops, midlife newlyweds who volunteer as "Hope Coaches" for Dawson

McAllister's "TheHopeLine." Along the way, the couple reflects on adopting the right mindset, overcoming obstacles and relishing life's journey.

Tim Bishop was raised in Houlton, Maine, and spent more than 30 years in the Bangor area. He and Debbie live in Thompson's Station, Tennessee.

The Bishops have coauthored four books, including "Two Are Better: Midlife Newlyweds Bicycle Coast to Coast" in 2013. Their books have received accolades from Publishers Weekly and

the Midwest Book Review. Early in 2017, giant e-book promoter BookBub selected "Wheels of Wisdom" for a featured deal.

The 11th annual National Indie competition was open to recent English language books in print from small, medium, university and independent publishers, as well as self-published authors. Winners and finalists were selected based on overall excellence of presentation.

Learn more at indieexcellence.com and openroadpress.com. ■

Patriotic business support

New website offers resources for U.S. veterans



VETERANS WILL find it easier to start or grow a small business thanks to a website created by MBS Professor Nory Jones. The MBS Veteran Entrepreneur Project — www.mbs.maine.edu/vep — contains local, state and national resources for veteran-owned businesses as well as a wealth of information about how to create a business plan, obtain funding, choose a location, design a website and use social media and information systems. Included on the website are YouTube videos featuring a representative from the U.S. Small Business Administration explaining how to access SBA resources and conduct business with the government. The website also contains information on businesses within different industries as well as how to determine the legal structure of one's business, handle accounting and taxes and obtain business licenses and permits. Finally, there are links to MBS Veteran Entrepreneur Project LinkedIn and Facebook groups, since networking is one of the most essential skills for businesspeople.

Funded through an \$8,000 grant from the University of Maine Research Office, the website contains information that can potentially help veterans become successful entrepreneurs, says Jones, who teaches management information systems and marketing at MBS.

“The different opportunities that are available to help veterans launch businesses tend to be fragmented and difficult to find, so this portal attempts to consolidate many resources into a single virtual space,” she says.

Co-chair of the UMaine Student Veteran Advisory Committee, Jones came up with the idea for the website after learning that many veterans were returning home with PTSD and traumatic brain injury and were having difficulty reintegrating back into society.

“The opportunity to provide help for anyone interested in starting their own business seemed like a good way to help,” she says.

Jones enlisted the help of Veterans Education and Transition Services coordinator and Student Veteran Advisory Committee co-chair Tony Llerena and UMaine student veteran Tyler Emery '18 to assist her in the three-month project, which they completed in summer 2016.

Veterans have the “qualities and characteristics that make up successful entrepreneurs,” says Llerena.

In fact, veterans are 45 percent more likely to start businesses than non-veterans, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration. They tend to be the ideal entrepreneur because their military training has helped them develop organizational, risk management and teamwork skills and given them the confidence, self-motivation, discipline and determination that all serve as a competitive advantage in the business world.

Llerena, who knows a number of veterans who have used the information on the VEP website, says, “The beauty of the project is that it's open to veterans throughout the community.

“The reward for me is seeing UMaine veteran alumni connect back with us with stories of how we were able to help them on their journey.” ■

Maine as a second home

MBS senior from Haiti thrives at UMaine



MBS SENIOR Marie-France Georges was born and raised in Haiti, but has come to consider Maine her second home.

Entering her senior year with a double major in finance and marketing and a concentration in international business, Georges says the University of Maine was a good fit from the beginning.

She has thrived academically and socially during the last three years, consistently making the Dean's List, joining the Honors College, spending a semester at the University of Birmingham in the UK, and co-founding UMaine's Caribbean Club to share her culture, celebrate diversity, and connect with others.

Georges' uncle, a doctor in southern Maine, encouraged both her and her older sister, Marie-Laurence '17, to come to Orono.

After spending her senior year in high school at Mt. Joseph Academy in Rutland, Vermont as part of an exchange program through the U.S. Embassy in Haiti, Georges followed Marie-Laurence, who told her UMaine had a strong international community and offered a quality education.

Planning to work in Haiti's finance industry and help her native country modernize its economy and develop a thriving financial market, Georges says her MBS classes have given her a solid foundation in business fundamentals and enabled her to develop her analytic, problem solving and communication skills.

She has established close relationships with faculty members, including finance professors Pank Agrawal and Sebastian Lobe. "They have been very welcoming and understand that I am coming from a different background," she says.

Georges says the decision to major in finance was easy. "As a child, I always liked numbers and I was inspired by a financial advisor who came to my school in Haiti to speak to students as part of career day," says Georges, who added a marketing major so she would be better able to promote herself and her ideas.

Among the highlights of her time at UMaine was participating in a six-day residential undergraduate student leadership training program in summer 2016. Sponsored by UMaine's Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, the Maine NEW (National Education for Women) Leadership Institute is aimed at students who want to learn about the importance of women's participation in public life and develop their own leadership skills.

"It was one of the best experiences I've ever

had," says Georges, who particularly enjoyed the presentations from politically active women throughout Maine. She participated in a mock trial in which she and others advocated for environmental causes and visited the State House in Augusta to meet legislators and learn how laws are made.

"It was wonderful to connect with women leaders," Georges says. "We saw that there is a variety of ways in which women can get involved and really make a difference."

Also complementing her academic studies was her work as a financial assistant at the Maine EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) Office, which oversees and implements the state's National Science Foundation EPSCoR programs. There, she obtained valuable practical experience analyzing monthly budgeting and accounting reports, submitting recommendations for funding requests, and managing projects. She has also worked as a resident assistant.

Georges, a recipient of the UMaine Black Bear Scholarship, the Joseph S. Keating Sr. '12 Scholarship and the International Student Scholarship, spent the summer back home in Haiti doing research for her Honors thesis, "Imperfections of the Financial Market in Haiti." ■



Participants at the National Education for Women (NEW) Leadership Institute sponsored by the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center.



Developing leader

Burns participates in Unum leadership training program

MBS ALUMNUS Nathan Burns '16 is pursuing career paths at Unum through a four-year rotational leadership training development program at the supplemental insurance company's Portland, Maine, office.

"Unum's professional development program is an incredible opportunity that enables me to obtain hands-on experience in a variety of jobs throughout the company, develop my understanding of its operations, and become an effective leader," says the Whitefield, Maine, native who majored in finance and financial economics.

Now in his first rotation in Unum's financial planning and analysis area, Burns says his responsibilities involve financial forecasting and planning, budgeting, project management and financial reporting.

"Knowing my work is reviewed by senior management and used to drive strategic decisions is one of the best things about my job," he says.

Burns, who lives in Yarmouth, credits MBS class-

es, membership in the Student Portfolio Investment Fund (SPIFFY), and his experience as co-chair of the UMaine Business Challenge with preparing him for his job.

Through his business classes he developed his research, technical writing and presentation skills. During SPIFFY meetings, he was able to apply the theories and concepts he learned in class to the real world as he researched stocks and advised members which to buy and sell. Helping oversee the UMaine Business Challenge enabled him to polish his planning, teamwork, communication and leadership skills.

"The project management experience and general business acumen I gained as I worked with the founders of the business competition were crucial to growing and developing as a professional," Burns says.

The decision to attend UMaine was easy, according to Burns, whose parents are both alumni. His mother, Dorothy (Howell) Burns '87, was also an MBS graduate.

"I wanted to go to school in Maine and hoped

to stay here after graduation," he says. "I chose MBS because I realize that the core aspects of a business education and the hard and soft skills you acquire can open many professional opportunities."

Another boon to his MBS education was an internship at Unum, which he obtained with help from UMaine alumni.

"The internship helped me realize that I enjoyed the corporate world and that business was the right course of study for me," he says. The experience also helped him foster relationships that ultimately led to his acceptance into the company's professional development program.

Burns, who began the program in 2016 right after graduating from MBS, was among 10 new participants who each will experience three rotations over four years. The rotations vary according to the participant's experience, interests and strengths.

"After graduating from the program, I'll be able to take on a director's role and help lead Unum forward," Burns says. ■



There's no bad news in Coffee News. We're only about fun and entertainment.”



Photo by Michael Mardosa

Power publisher

Coffee News franchise owner is MBS alumnus

FOR MORE than two decades, MBS alumnus William Buckley '65, '84 (MBA) has been rescuing people from boredom.

He is president and CEO of Coffee News, the largest weekly restaurant publication and one of the top rated franchise opportunities in the world. Forbes named Coffee News one of its “top franchises to start” and Entrepreneur ranks Coffee News as the number one advertising services franchise.

Coffee News is a free, one-page publication covered on each side with short stories, interesting quotes, jokes, trivia, a horoscope and snippets of fun and quirky news surrounded by advertisements from local businesses. Aimed at entertaining customers in restaurants, coffee shops and cafeterias while they wait for their food, the distinctive light-brown colored broadsheet also is found in laundromats, hotel lobbies, waiting rooms and hospitals — anywhere people need a quick read to while away the time.

Coffee News writers create new content every eight weeks and post it to the webpage for franchisees to download. Franchisees customize the publication by selling and designing ads, doing the layout, overseeing the publishing, setting up distribution points and managing deliveries. They learn the ropes during a three-day training session in Bangor.

With more than 800 franchises in 44 states — including 16 in Maine — and 12 countries, Coffee News has approximately five million readers every week.

“There's no bad news in Coffee News. We're only about fun and entertainment,” says Buckley who runs the company from his Bangor office. “Coffee News has a simple, friendly, homespun format that people of all ages love.”

In July, Coffee News celebrated its 22nd anniversary in the U.S. with a party for Maine franchisees. Buckley, who started out as a Coffee News franchisee himself, says the company's business model is perfect for motivated entrepreneurs looking for a flexible schedule and community involvement. The company will reach another milestone in October 2018 when it celebrates 30 years as a worldwide franchise.

Advertising in Coffee News enables small and medium-sized businesses to get the most bang for their advertising buck, according to Buckley. “We make it possible for them to target the locality where they have 80 percent of their customers. Radio, TV and newsprint have a huge circulation so if you're a small business that wants to advertise in the Bangor market, you're forced to pay for all of this distribution that you can't use.”

A former retail banker and reserve officer in the Maine Air National Guard, Buckley grew up in Bridgewater, Maine, earning a bachelor's degree in business from MBS in 1965 and an MBA in 1984. He learned about Coffee News in 1995 when he was working in New Brunswick, Canada, as a sales and marketing executive for an injury prevention consulting company.

“I knew right away that it would be good for Bangor,” he says.

He contacted Jean Daum, the founder of Coffee News in Winnipeg, Canada, to acquire the franchise rights for Bangor and became the first U.S. franchisee for Coffee News in 1995, managing four franchises in Bangor and one in Midcoast Maine. Meanwhile, he and Daum established a close and successful partnership. In 1996 she asked him to become a franchisor for the U.S. After Daum died in 2007, Buckley purchased the rights to the company and now owns all the Coffee News franchises worldwide.

Not one to rest on his laurels, Buckley says there is room for growth. While he is always working to innovate and come up with ideas about how to sell more franchises, he won't tinker with the Coffee News format.

“The world is changing, but we're a unique publication that will stay the same.” ■



Photo by Dana Bement

Running the numbers

Alumna is Unum's IT auditor

A lumna KRISTEN MacBride '16 (MBA) is an IT auditor at Unum, where she has worked since before graduating from MBS.

Celebrating her one-year anniversary at Unum in January 2017, she is hitting her stride and enjoying getting a big-picture view of the inner workings of the Portland, Maine company.

"As an IT auditor, I get to work with business partners from throughout the company and learn not only about each area, but about how they all work together to provide financial protection for what matters the most to our clients," says MacBride, who earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from UMaine in 2014.

"I can be auditing supply management at one point and auditing underwriting at another — or I may be auditing them at the same time," she says.

"Being exposed to new things each day is exciting as well as challenging, and knowing that at the end of an audit we have helped an area improve operations is extremely rewarding."

Prior to her current position, she held two internships in Unum's finance department; one in an IT position in which she worked extensively

with Unum's long-term care data, and another in the actuarial department, where she worked with Unum's data to create a tool for underwriters.

MacBride started at Unum four months before graduation. With only her capstone class left to complete at MBS, she grabbed the opportunity to add to her professional experience. It meant commuting from Portland to UMaine every Thursday night during her last semester.

"It was worth it," says MacBride, who is grateful that the MBA program allowed her the flexibility to pursue her career at Unum.

"The opportunity to have the internship count as credit toward my MBA was invaluable because it allowed me to enhance my business background," she says.

Her MBS education also helped her feel well prepared and confident as she entered the work force. In her role as IT auditor, she constantly uses the consulting skills she got from Management Information Systems Professor Nory Jones' course, "Creating and Capturing Value in a Digital Economy," as well as the communication, teamwork and leadership skills she honed in her other MBS classes.

MBS helped broaden her horizons, says MacBride, who was born and raised in the small, rural town of Hartford, Maine, where she graduated with a high school class of 35.

"The world seemed like such a big place back then," she says. "Through MBS I had the opportunity to work with a diverse group of students and travel to Vietnam for the International Field Study course. I was exposed to other cultures and new ideas.

Today, I am more open minded and eager to learn more. Suddenly, through common understanding, the world seems a little smaller."

MacBride says management professor John Mahon's capstone strategy course is among her fondest memories of MBS.

"I learned a new way of thinking and was able to connect all the knowledge I had gained throughout my MBA," she says. "I also had the opportunity to write about Tesla Motors as part of a "teaching case" — a report that provides background to help a business strategize or set long-term goals — and then present at the annual meeting of the Decision Sciences Institute in Austin, Texas, in 2016." ■

Putting down roots

MBS lecturer prepares students to be leaders in MIS



MIS PROFESSIONALS pick up where computer scientists leave off, says Management Information Systems lecturer Joe Clark.

“They are able to take new technologies invented by computer scientists and create innovative applications and business models,” he says. “That’s why MBS graduates with information systems training can be a real asset to Maine’s businesses and organizations which use lots of data but don’t have the personnel or expertise to extract and analyze it.”

Clark is helping to prepare those MIS professionals. Starting his second year at MBS, he teaches introduction to MIS as well as introduction to business.

A native of Rangeley, Maine, he has lived all over the country and in several places abroad, but now is happy to be back where he started. “Like the state itself, UMaine is a place where I feel like I can put down roots and be part of a community,” he says.

Clark, who earned a bachelor’s degree in communication from the University of Southern California in 1999, was one of the first generation of web developers, beginning as a hobbyist in 1995. During the dot-com boom of 1997–2001 he worked as a web developer at NBC and Disney, where he helped develop the first movie tickets sold online.

He was motivated to pursue a business degree after noticing the “absurd business models” used by the online companies. “I could tell they didn’t make sense but I didn’t know how it could be done better; so I decided I needed to go to business school.”

Since earning his MBA at Tulane University in 2004 he has had one foot in technology and one in business. He got his Ph.D. in information systems at the University of Southern California in 2012 and then did a one-year post-doctoral program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He taught information systems and business data analytics for three years at Arizona State University’s Carey School of Business before coming to MBS in 2016.

How are you enjoying MBS?

I feel very happy with where I’ve found myself. The MBS faculty is intellectually diverse and yet socially congenial — a rare and special combination. I feel a real sense of mission that we’re working to serve the students and the larger community rather than being focused on our own narrow departments.

What was your career path?

When the dot-com bubble burst in 2001 I went to Taiwan to teach English to pre-

school children. I learned basic Mandarin and have kept up an interest in China. Over the next few years I interned at a management consulting firm in Beijing, sold Canadian land banking investments in Hong Kong and did various tech support and English teaching jobs as a temp.

My first university teaching job was at an English-language business program at China Agricultural University in Beijing, where I met my wife, Xiaofang.

What are some of your MIS interests and research topics?

I’ve been studying a lesser known specialty in the growing field of data analytics called data engineering. A lot of attention has been paid to “data scientists” who come up with creative new ways to use statistics and computer science to analyze business data.

Data engineers are the people who build the infrastructure to make that possible — the plumbers of the data pipelines.

I’ve recently started a new project on “good jobs” and the part that technology plays in work enrichment. People are concerned that good jobs are disappearing, but before we can do something about it, we need to know which are “good” and what makes them that way. ■

PORTER PRESENTS PAPER ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR of Management Terry Porter presented a paper, "A Complexity Perspective on CSR and Sustainability: Theory and a Longitudinal Case Study," at the Wessex Institute Complex Systems Conference in New Forest, UK, in May.

In her paper, which will be published in *The International Journal of Design & Nature and Ecodynamics* this year, Porter examines the social patterns and processes that occur among employees and managers when a company decides to adopt a plan for Corporate Social Responsibility.

In 2014 and 2015, through the Fulbright Scholar Program, she studied a nonprofit in Wales that aims to improve women's access to the workplace and increase their presence in organizational and community life.

As part of its "social sustainability" mission, the company adopted an internal plan to improve well-being for employees. Among other things, the plan focused on increased employee participation, flexible work schedules, reduced supervision and revised incentive systems linked to creativity and productivity.

After surveying employees, she ended up with some unexpected data. "Most studies say that if a company adopts a plan to improve employee well-being, everyone's attitude improves," she says. "And immediately after the program was implemented, workers' attitudes did in fact improve. They were more productive, creative and satisfied with their jobs. However one year later, it appears that their



feelings had regressed back down to where they started."

Porter emphasizes that these are preliminary findings and that it doesn't mean that CSR doesn't work or isn't worth pursuing.

"It's important to look deeper to understand CSR theory and practice," she says. "It turns out that CSR is more complicated than originally thought and that the approaches we have been using to analyze it have not been capturing the whole picture. More research is needed to provide a complete understanding."

Porter says she plans to examine additional interviews, recordings and observations obtained during her Fulbright study.

"Well-being within an organization is an important component of CSR," she says, "so the question that perhaps we should ask is, 'how can CSR companies improve employee well-being and realize their sustainability mission at the same time?'" ■

WELCOMER IS PUBLISHED IN MAINE POLICY REVIEW

AN ARTICLE co-authored by MBS management Professor Stephanie Welcomer about her research on artisanal cheese making in Maine has been published in the latest issue of the *Maine Policy Review*, (digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mpr/vol26/iss1/8.)

"Maine's Artisan Cheesemakers: The Opportunities and Challenges of Being an Artist, Scientist, Agriculturist, Alchemist, and Entrepreneur," is based on a report drawn from Welcomer's

interviews with 30 artisan cheesemakers about their operations and their perceptions of their economic, social and environmental sustainability.

The report, which she wrote with Jean MacRae, Brady Davis and Jacob Searles, was presented to the Maine Cheese Guild in 2016.

The *Maine Policy Review* is published twice a year by the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center at the University of Maine. ■

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Educational technology

Professor inspires, mentors MBS students

IT'S A brave new world for Maine's small businesses, says MBS Professor of Management Information Systems Nory Jones.

Thanks to affordable and user-friendly technology and software, small businesses have an arsenal of tools to make their organization profitable and sustainable.

"Information systems and technologies have leveled the playing field," Jones says. "Small businesses today are able to compete in ways they never could have imagined."

For Jones, each student is a potential entrepreneur and business leader who should be aware of the information systems and technologies that can help small companies streamline operations, collect data, interact with customers, increase revenue and plan for future growth.

"Businesses that embrace innovation are the ones that thrive," she tells her students. "You have to keep up and learn and adapt to stay competitive."

In addition to MIS, she teaches e-commerce, knowledge management and marketing using a variety of creative assignments. Her upbeat attitude keeps students motivated and ensures a welcoming and open learning environment.

"Dr. Jones exudes passion and excitement for her subjects and challenges students to put forth their best efforts," says MBS alumnus Derek Bowen '12, '14 (MBA).

"She is such a positive person and is truly rooting for the success of her students," says MBS alumna Shaunna Peard '15.

Jones serves as faculty advisor to MBS Corps, the business school's outreach organization she created in 2005, prompted by her passion for giving back as an active volunteer with various organizations including the "Troop Greeters." She has committed herself to a variety of causes at UMa-



Businesses that embrace innovation are the ones that thrive. **You have to keep up and learn and adapt to stay competitive.**"

graduate business programs from 2007–12.

She earned a Ph.D. in information technology at the University of Missouri, Columbia, and master's degrees in marketing and finance at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and in toxicology at the University of Idaho, Moscow. She holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

She has taught at the University of Missouri School of Business and Public Administration, at the Mercer University Stetson School of Business in Macon, Georgia, and at the Valdosta State University Department of Marketing and Management in Valdosta, Georgia.

In 2015 Jones was given the annual Steve Gould Award, presented to members of the UMaine community who have demonstrated unselfishness and compassion in the course of serving the university and its ideals. She received graduate mentor awards from the University of Maine Graduate School in 2009 and 2012, and was recognized by U.S. Senator Susan Collins '11 Hon for community service in 2011.

ine including Habitat for Humanity for which she served as faculty advisor from 2008–2011.

Admired and respected in the Maine Business School, Jones — with her husband Gaylen, an adjunct faculty member at the University of Maine's Hutchinson Center in Belfast — regularly host parties and get-togethers.

"Dr. Nory Jones makes the Maine Business School a better place," says Dean Ivan Manev. "In addition to her stellar teaching and innovative research, she lends a unique warmth and vitality to the MBS community. Known for welcoming students, staff and faculty to her home and spreading good will through her work with MBS Corps, Nory exemplifies the spirit of MBS and the University of Maine."

A native of Yonkers, New York, Jones joined the MBS faculty in 2001. She served as director of



Chit-chat presenting format

She has been a mentor and friend to countless students, providing moral and emotional support while sharing her professional knowledge and expertise.

“She taught me kindness and compassion,” says MBS alumna Anna Assenmacher ’11, ’13 (MBA). “She showed me that life isn’t measured by the paycheck you receive but rather the experiences and people you meet along the way.”

MBS graduate Katie Hathaway ’15 says Jones was “always there if you needed advice or just someone to talk to. I don’t think my time at MBS or my transition into the work world would have been the same without her guidance.”

Information systems used to be expensive and complicated — unfeasible for small businesses with limited funds and access to IT specialists, according to Jones. But web developers realized the need for user-friendly business technologies. And costs have been dramatically reduced thanks to the advent of cloud-based systems that enable companies to purchase only the software they need and pay a provider to take care of the computer infrastructure.

Aiming to help small businesses and provide students with real-world experience assessing which technologies and systems are best for a particular business, Jones annually assigns a semester-long project in which students serve as “consultants” to organizations across the state.

“This was a fantastic way to apply the business theories we learned in class,” says alumna Kristin Hall, who earned an MBA in 2017.

Jones’ advocacy for small businesses doesn’t stop at the classroom. In 2012 as part of a research project with students, she created the website Undiscovered Maine www.mbs.maine.edu/undiscoveredmaine/, which provides information about small businesses in the state.

Her research spans a variety of topics, including the role of the internet and social media on small business competitiveness and how new artificial intelligent digital assistants (like Siri) can be used in the classroom. She recently co-authored her first book, “Knowledge Transfer and Innovation,” with MBS management professor John Mahon. ■

MBS STUDENTS in lecturer Betty Woodman’s class learned the art of concise presentations last spring when they used a simple, fast-paced format called “PechaKucha” to describe a marketing campaign.

Divided into teams, the 52 sophomores spent the semester developing a product or service and coming up with a plan to promote their “business.” Then, in class, the “inventors” described their marketing campaign using a PechaKucha — a short, snappy four-minute presentation consisting of 12 slides, each automatically advancing every 20 seconds.

In their presentations, students included mission statements; target markets; concept development; branding, advertising, pricing and sales strategies; sustainability plans; and ethical principles and values.

A Japanese phrase meaning “chit-chat,” PechaKucha originated in Tokyo in 2003. The format is designed to help speakers avoid lengthy, boring presentations. A traditional PechaKucha is about six minutes long and uses little to no text, relying instead on images, photos and graphics to advance the story and emphasize points.

The students came up with a wide range of innovative products and services: Apple Clothes — apparel emblazoned with the well-known Apple, Inc., logo; Planet Fitness Café — an eatery that offers prepared healthy food at Planet Fitness locations; Molap — a wireless laptop charging case; Heelys — a new division of the well-known roller shoe; Google Rides — an app that provides access to a variety of transportation companies; Broga Pants — yoga pants designed for young men; Better Stay — an app for the Hotel of the Future; and Green Bull — a healthy energy drink.

Woodman praised the students for the quality and diversity of their business ideas and for delivering PechaKuchas that kept the audience engaged and entertained. Students said the PechaKucha style energized their storytelling and helped them connect with their audience. They enjoyed the challenge of streamlining their presentations and being brief and to the point.

Jessica Kimball ’19, a finance and marketing major from South Berwick, Maine, said she previously had not heard of the PechaKucha form of presentation.

“I thought it was interesting and it definitely widened my knowledge of a unique style that I will be able to use in the future,” she said.

Tyler Bateman ’19, a finance major from Poland, Maine, enjoyed working as part of a team.

“It simulated real-world business projects where we all had to manage time and cooperate to get the job done,” he said. ■



Spreading artisan cheese research worldwide

MBS MANAGEMENT Professor Stephanie Welcomer spent spring semester in Singapore, where she discovered new ideas to research and new ways to engage students.

As part of a yearlong sabbatical that began in fall 2016, she accompanied her husband, Mark Haggerty, University of Maine Honors College Preceptor for Civic Engagement, to the National University of Singapore where he was a visiting professor.

Always looking for opportunities to learn and grow, Welcomer quickly became involved in a number of exciting academic projects.

As a source of personal satisfaction, she was able to promote her recently completed research on the social, economic and environmental practices and sustainability of artisanal cheese making in Maine. She led a workshop presentation, “Assessing the Promise of the 21st Century Artisan Cheesemaker: Small-scale Enterprise Valuing Environment and Community, and Making a Living,” for faculty and students in the NUS Science, Technology and Society Department. For the presentation, she drew on a qualitative study in which she interviewed 30 Maine Cheese Guild cheesemakers to assess their operations and gauge perceptions of their sustainability.

“My research drew much interest from NUS faculty and students,” Welcomer says. “They had questions about cheesemaker scale, commitment to artisanal production, consumer demand, goat and sheep farms, and the range of cheese varieties produced.”

““

My research drew much interest from NUS faculty and students. **It was gratifying experience to discuss Maine artisan cheese** with a global and engaged group.”

MBS CO-SPONSORS EVENT FEATURING ALUMNA MELISSA SMITH '91, CEO OF WEX, INC

THE MAINE Business School co-sponsored a business event in Portland last June featuring a Q & A with MBS alumna Melissa Smith '91, president and CEO of WEX Inc., a global payment processing and information management company.

The breakfast event was part of "Like A Boss," a new series presented by the Portland Press Herald in which CEO and publisher Lisa DeSisto interviews local business leaders for a behind-the-scenes look at their career paths and the realities of running a company.

Smith, who graduated from MBS in 1991, was born and raised in Maine. She began her career with WEX in 1997 as a senior financial analyst and has held various positions with increasing responsibilities across all facets of the company. Headquartered in South Portland, WEX has 2,700 employees and is located in 11 countries.

Portland area business people — including members of the MBS Advisory Board — attended the gathering held at the Portland House of Music and Events. ■

MBS ALUMNUS OPENS SECOND CAFE

MBS ALUMNUS Jeremy Ashlock '16 (MBA) has expanded the Hallowell-based juice and smoothie cafe he co-founded in 2014.

Juiced (juicednatural.com) now has a second location at 561 Forest Avenue in Portland.

The cafe, which specializes in organic, local and fair trade products, offers lunch, snacks and protein shakes in addition to gluten-free baked goods. The menu boasts fresh ingredients with full transparency and zero use of concentrates or artificial sweeteners.

The original cafe is located on Water Street in Hallowell.

Ashlock earned an MBA from the Maine Business School in 2016 and a bachelor's degree in financial economics from UMaine in 2014. ■



"It was a gratifying experience to discuss Maine artisan cheese with a global and engaged group."

Another highlight of her time at NUS was attending a conference, "Living in an Age of Precarity: Living and Lives in 21st Century Asia," which focused on ways to eliminate "precarity" in southeast Asia.

Precarity is a condition in which people live without predictability or security with no access to healthcare, steady jobs, or education. Workers who are precarious tend to have limited education and work as laborers and housekeepers, holding low-appeal jobs, and continuously drifting between cities and countries to find temporary employment.

"Precarity is a special case of poverty," Welcomer says. "It's being poor and adrift, with little access to social safety nets."

The conference was attended by a diverse mix of scholars, researchers, economists, political scientists and agricultural and health experts who discussed the legislative, cultural and economic policies that could help this population.

"It's a timely topic that affects the U.S. too," says Welcomer. "Marketing and management scholars are beginning to study the issue."

Welcomer says she plans to incorporate the notion of precarity in future research. The subject ties in with studies she has done on fair trade and currently is doing on small farmers in Maine who "also suffer from some elements of precarity and vulnerability."

Also during her time at NUS she was invited to facilitate a five-week seminar aimed at helping third-year students engage in self-reflection and non-judgmental communication

"I was honored to be part of this," Welcomer says. "These were high achieving young men and women who were questioning the paths their lives were taking. The seminar gave them a safe environment in which to reflect on their past, discuss challenges and struggles, and realize they aren't alone."

Welcomer says all students would benefit from this type of learning experience and is contemplating the idea of replicating it at MBS. ■

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