Impact magazine

MICHIGAN TECH
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
AND ECONOMICS

WINTER 2015–2016 | VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 1

Making connections all around the globe

> "TRAVEL MAKES ONE MODEST. YOU SEE WHAT A TINY PLACE YOU OCCUPY IN THE WORLD."
>
> – *Gustave Flaubert*

Michigan Tech is not the biggest school around. Houghton is not a major city. And the Academic Office Building is not a sprawling structure. But size isn't what you need to make the biggest impact.

In this issue we see the benefits of being hands-on in education and having professors and students who work side-by-side. The world of business is about relationships, and we work hard in the School of Business and Economics to demonstrate that to our students every day.

Students present and future can look at alumni Jillian Rothe and David Kneisler and see where their hard work has taken them. Jillian's career with Caterpillar has her calling Singapore home, while David has, as an executive and corporate leader, climbed the ladder of success at Dana Holding Corporation. For both, it's the combination of a STEM education with a solid foundation of business fundamentals and principles—formed in classrooms and boardrooms—that has them spanning the globe.

Kwang Suthijindawong and Ben Stelzer, two of our student-athletes, demonstrate the value of staying balanced and engaged in the experiential opportunities provided by the School. Roger Woods, senior lecturer in operations management, takes us on the business tour he provides students, from the heart of Silicon Valley to the hardwood of the NCAA Tournament floo . In addition, Dallas Bond shows us some of his travels, a bit of the world he occupied while studying abroad.

In our previous issue, we quoted JFK's law of life…that change is inevitable and while it's important to look back, it is vital to always look to the future. And so it is in the School of Business and Economics. In January 2016, I will retire as Dean. It has been both an honor and a privilege to be in this position, and I will be forever appreciative for the opportunity.

We've worked very hard to develop a transition plan that will effectively manage this change. In this regard the provost, after an internal review process, appointed Dean Johnson, the James and Dolores Trethewey APMP Professor of Finance, and current assistant dean, to be interim dean upon my retirement. I know the important work faculty and students are doing in the School will continue to expand and strengthen under Dean's leadership—please reach out to him with your assistance and good wishes.

Like you, I will look forward to seeing the many innovative and positive ways the School and its students will impact the future.

Sincerely,

R. Eugene Klippel

About

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Photo | Sarah Bird

Front and back covers

Dean R. Eugene Klippel, Assistant Professor Latika Lagalo, Alumnus David Kneisler, recent graduate Helen Richards, senior Charles Meyers, Caterpillar Worldwide employee Jillian Rothe, Senior Lecturer Roger Woods, IMPACT scholarship winner Nicholas Jozefczyk, student Dallas Bond, student-athlete Ben Stelzer, Alumnus Mike Petroskey, student Rachel Chard, Outstanding Man and Woman in Business winners Heath Johnson and Rebeka Horsch, and Professor Dana Johnson are making global connections toward making a better world.

on the TABLE

The Guestbook

Impact talked to our guests about the Engineering Management major

Charles Meyers

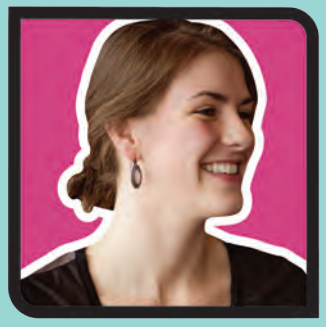
Getting his hands dirty and taking on challenges doesn't scare Charles Meyers. So when he found that his degree in marketing logistics from Grand Valley State University was leading him into a world of sales—a not-so-interesting field for this hands-on guy—he decided to go back to school.

"I enjoy hands-on work, which is why I like the engineering management major," he says. "I'll be making business decisions as well as overseeing the work in action." Charles will graduate in December and is pursuing internship opportunities to gain even more knowledge and experience.

Dana Johnson

Whether you're talking about accounting, teaching, consulting, investing, or engineering, you're in Dana Johnson's wheelhouse. When she joined Michigan Tech 30 years ago, Dana played a key role in introducing the engineering management program to campus. Now Tech's Bachelor of Science in Engineering Management (BSEM) is only growing in popularity.

"It's an exciting time right now for the program. We have the largest number of students of engineering management majors in our history." says Dana. "This shows there's a demand for the major and that we're growing." She says engineering management majors are in high demand thanks to the strong interpersonal skills that complement their knowledge of science, engineering, and math. "Opportunities for internships and cooperative education round out the academic experience. Students get real-world, hands-on learning that prepares them for leadership roles in a thriving industry."



Helen Richards

With a hunger for work she can be passionate about and a strong interest in manufacturing, Helen Richards takes advantage of every opportunity to discover exactly what it is she wants to do. "The BSEM degree brings together the technological problem-solving and decision-making skills of engineering, and that, to me, is a winning combination," she says. **"Having this education has opened up many doors for me and allowed me to pursue my passion in the manufacturing sector."**

Helen secured an internship at a metal-manufacturing foundry, putting her skills to the test while gaining real-world business management experience. Graduating in May 2015, Helen moved to Holland, MI, working as quality engineer with Porter Corp., a manufacturer of structural insulated building panels.

on the TABLE

A person who is outgoing and still interested in calculations can find success in this major.

About two-thirds of BSEM students are female.

Michigan Tech's Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Engineering Management (BSEM) graduates are triple-threats: they've learned technical thinking, communication, and management. This is why engineering management has so many students, combining a comprehensive business curriculum with courses in science, engineering, and math. Students also gain problem-solving skills.

"As more companies visit our career fairs and learn more about this major, I anticipate even more opportunities for internships and career positions for our students," says Dana. "The major continues to grow in popularity among students, especially with our female population. About two-thirds of the students are female, and enrollment numbers for 2015-2016 school year show even stronger growth."

"This major operates like a two-way street by combining engineering and business management," Helen adds. "Personally, I'm taking it from the business side, but I also have the technical skills to apply. This enables me to communicate technically, but also to work in the management side of a business. It's a great combination."

Unique majors and curriculums like BSEM are products of innovative thinking based on industry needs. Of the 28 BSEM programs/majors in the country, only two are offered in the state at Michigan Tech and Western Michigan University.

"We designed the curriculum with the idea that engineering students would be able to get a bachelor's degree, but a number of first- and second-year students ask about studying engineering management on their own," says Dana. "Our goal is to be the largest major in the School of Business and Economics, and we're moving in that direction."

The major operates like a two-way street, by combining engineering and business management.

The walls of The Library have been standing since before the turn of the 20th Century. In 1967, Jon Davis, a creative, energetic Michigan Tech student, saw an opportunity to purchase the building and turn it into an interesting, innovative bar restaurant. Through hard work and ingenuity, Jon and his wife Marcia created "The Library." The present owner, Jim Cortright, has sought to uphold the tradition.

To many students and alumni, The Library Restaurant is iconic to their Michigan Tech experience, where the food and drinks bring comfort.


“Take classes from the professors you like, and continue building on your relationships with them. Let them mentor you.”

Academic Recipe for Career Success

EQUAL PARTS

Business & Engineering

If you ask Mike Petroskey what best prepared him for his position at Dell Inc., he'll tell you it was a passion for business, the drive to succeed, and the guidance of faculty and staff at Michigan Tech.

The low student-to-faculty ratio in the School of Business and Economics is ideal for fostering strong professional bonds between professors, researchers, and students. "My professors did a fantastic job teaching critical thinking, ultimately giving me the ability to work on the fly," Petroskey says. "In the technology industry, everything moves fast. Critical thinking allows me to adapt to customers, partners and my everyday business."

Graduating in 2009 with a degree in business administration, Petroskey took advantage of the unique blend of business with science, engineering, and technology at Tech. "I had the opportunity to combine engineering and technology into one career," he remembers. "It allowed me to work in both fields and provided the experience to communicate effectively in the business."

In Petroskey's position as a sales representative, he works side-by-side with an engineering team to best match his company's expertise and products with customer needs. "Dell engineers know our products inside and out," he says. "My job is to translate technical specifications into solutions for our clients and keep Dell competitive."

When asked what words of advice he'd give to future students, Petroskey recommends taking full advantage of the learning experiences and resources in the School of Business and Economics.

"Take classes from the professors you like, and continue building on your relationships with them. Let them mentor you," he says. "You get to work with some of the smartest people in the field, so use that to your advantage."

In the business of changing lives

Kristina Marshall's commitment to helping others and passion for business is changing lives. Since Michigan Tech alumna Kristina (Sibczynski) Marshall '98 was last profiled by Impact in 2010, her non-profit, Winning Futures—an innovative business-education partnership that teaches young people life skills through mentoring and scholarship programs—has blossomed, more than doubling its budget and increasing the number of children served to more than 1,800.

The success of Winning Futures is due in large part to Marshall's commitment to helping others. "My mom and dad were always volunteering. To me, it was normal to jump in and help," she says. During Marshall's senior year of high school, she met Sam Cupp, the founder of Winning Futures. He was a successful entrepreneur, yet found time to create a non-profit and mentor high school students. This further supported her dream of making a living helping others.

"The lessons I learned about business at Tech helped lay the foundation for how I operate Winning Futures," Marshall says. Michigan Tech provided the practical business knowledge to be successful. "In my organizational behavior class, the lesson on understanding and respecting the role of a company gatekeeper has helped me to succeed in fundraising," she adds.

Marshall's many honors include the 2015 Women's Leadership in Action award from Linwick and Associates, and the 2012 Michigan Tech Outstanding Young Alumna of the Year. She was also accepted into the Entrepreneurs' Organization, a global network of more than 10,000 business owners. Marshall is the only head of a non-profit represented. This year, she became the Detroit chapter's president.

Marshall loves being an entrepreneur leading an organization doing such positive work. "Since 1994, we have positively impacted 40,000 students by empowering them to change the trajectories of their lives," she says. "I cannot imagine finding another career this awe-inspiring."

“Show up, work hard, and be sincere. Success will follow.”

LIVING IN SINGAPORE

Photo | Danny Santos II

WORKING IN 9 TIME ZONES

Jillian Rothe has mastered the balance of life overseas.

How do you juggle working in nine time zones, keeping up with family, and caring for a newborn, all while living in a foreign country? For alumna Jillian Rothe, it's all in a day's work.

Rothe works for Caterpillar Inc. in Singapore. Her self-described "needlessly long" title is Energy and Transportation Business Development Manager—Asia Pacific Region for Cat Financial Insurance Services. In a nutshell, Rothe develops and markets extended-warranty insurance products for Caterpillar's engines, generators, and other applications.

When she graduated from Michigan Tech, Rothe was armed with dual-degrees in mechanical engineering and business administration, also earning a certificate in international business. She turned her unique college experience into a successful career at Caterpillar. Rothe recalls, "Our Husky roots allowed me to approach and speak honestly about what kind of job I was really interested in."

Since Rothe started with Caterpillar in 2006, she has lived in five cities and three countries. Rothe traces her success back to her experiences at Tech, where she learned that relationships open doors. "Many times opportunities come from who you know more than what you know," she says. "The small campus allows people to forge relationships in school, which is great practice for the real-world version of life. Show up, work hard, and be sincere. Success will follow."

What time is it?

Although life in Singapore is exciting, it also comes with a few interesting challenges, like multitasking across multiple time zones. Rothe explains, "I can cover India to New Zealand in one workday and it's not uncommon to start at 10 in the evening."

Grandma's or Thailand this weekend?

Rothe and her fiancé, Steve (also a Michigan Tech grad) make staying connected to family a priority. Through Skype and Facetime, family has watched their daughter grow. After all, a weekend in Thailand is easier to plan than a trip to Grandma's house in Oshkosh, WI.

May I call you Jillian?

Naturally Rothe's greatest challenge was understanding, practicing and learning to respect the traditions and behaviors across multiple cultures that extend from Malaysia to Japan and Indonesia. Fortunately, Rothe embraces new challenges. While everything from food to tradition, is new to her, Rothe has found acceptance. "On the personal side, it's comforting to understand that getting invited to a Chinese New Year Reunion Dinner means we're true friends. On the professional side, being told I can call you by your first name means you trust me, which goes a long way in business here."

Follow the MONEY

Latika Lagalo keeps economics interesting and applicable in the classroom

From New Delhi to Houghton, Latika Lagalo has come a long way, pursuing her passion for economics, her love of research, and her commitment to the education of the next generation of business professionals.

Originally from India, Lagalo earned a Master of Arts degree in Economics from Jamia Millia Islamia University in New Delhi and moved to the United States in 2006. She earned a PhD in Economics from Wayne State University and in 2014 joined the School of Business and Economics as an assistant professor specializing in energy economics and the macroeconomy.

Lagalo currently teaches three courses: principals of economics, econometrics, and energy economics. Principals of economics is an introductory course that may influence students to consider a major or minor in economics.

"It's a very important course, and it's my responsibility to introduce students to this field—regardless of their major—and teach them as much as I can," Lagalo believes. "It's an opportunity to generate interest in Economics and perhaps entice them to consider a degree in this field."

For the love of econometrics

Her econometrics course incorporates math, statistics, and economics.

"Students have the chance to work hands-on and analyze real-life data," Lagalo explains. "They are inspired to take what they learned one step further, either through a directed study, research, or journal research. It's both challenging and exciting for students to do undergraduate research and see results."

Greener economics

The third course, energy economics, is highly interdisciplinary in nature, studying the role of energy in society from an economic perspective. It's also the course closest to Lagalo's heart since it relates directly to her research on demand- and supply-side effects of oil markets and how they're affecting oil prices, and what the growing interest in renewable energy is doing to the American economy.

"I look at the effect oil prices have on the economy and in various industry sectors; for example, industrial production in chemical and petroleum sectors," she says. "I've also looked at the effect on other countries as well. If oil prices increase or decrease in China or India, how does that impact us?"

Lagalo's research has produced some surprising conclusions. Not long ago, economists assumed political events in the Middle East were a main cause of oil-price fluctuations. However, data shows demand as having just as much effect on oil prices.

Lagalo says economics and engineering interconnect well. Students benefit from Tech's unique cross-disciplinary collaboration to acquire the skills they need for future careers. She says many people think economics is dry and has no bearing on their lives, when in fact it's just the opposite. Instead of lecturing straight from a textbook, Lagalo turns to current events to help students see that business and economic factors are already at play in their daily lives.

"I use real-world examples for students in the classroom so they can make those direct connections between economics and the real world," she says. "I use social media, television, and examples in entertainment to make it fun to learn about economics and how it applies to so many aspects of our lives. I've used reruns of *Friends*, *The Office*, and other sitcoms to challenge students to find examples related to economics in the episodes."

With economics majors in high demand in the educational, energy, environmental, financial, insurance, government, and retail sectors, an exciting array of career possibilities exist for graduates of Tech's School of Business and Economics.

impact scholarship WINNERS

NICHOLAS JOZEFCZYK

As this year's Impact full-tuition scholar in Michigan Tech's School of Business and Economics, incoming first-year finance major Nicholas Jozefcyzk is eager to learn more about the stock market on a much larger scale.

"The Applied Portfolio Management Program will give me the first-hand experience I need to improve my investing and presentation skills," he said. "I can learn more about the stock market with real money, and take these skills into the real world."

Nicholas discovered his interest in finance in high school. He served as vice president of the Stock Market Club and competed in the Fed Challenge at the Federal Reserve in Detroit. Nicholas said Michigan Tech's crazy-smart education and smaller, more personal campus atmosphere will provide him the tools he needs to enter the world and make a positive difference, while making lasting connections with classmates.

"I'm looking forward to working toward a career in business and am extremely motivated to learn as much as I can," he said. "There are numerous opportunities, experiences, and connections to be made at Michigan Tech. I'm very thankful for this opportunity."

NICHOLAS JOZEFCZYK IS THE 2015 RECIPIENT OF THE 2015 FULL-TUITION SCHOLARSHIP.

THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS RECEIVED PARTIAL TUITION AWARDS AS PART OF THE IMPACT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Anna Koerber has her eyes on the prize: a top-ranking university education with scholarship funds to help with tuition. Business is Anna's passion, and something she's eager to build her future on. The Impact Scholarship reaffirms her belief in herself to strive for her dreams of becoming an international business woman.

Sarah Koerber understands the importance of maintaining a strong work ethic, especially coming from a large family. Pursuing a college degree means paying her own way. For that reason, she never sells herself short on opportunities, like the Impact Scholarship, that come her way. With the weight of financial debt lifted, Sarah is eager to build a career in management information systems.

The School of Business and Economics (SBE) Impact Scholarship was established to recognize Michigan high-school seniors who have demonstrated leadership experience and academic success both in and out of the classroom, and are planning to major in accounting, economics, engineering management, finance, management, management information systems, or marketing.

During the college search, **Erin Lipp** was most impressed by Tech's SBE because the accounting curriculum is supported by internship opportunities and the Enterprise Program. It was the challenge she was looking for in developing theoretical and practical knowledge, leadership and communication skills. Erin looks forward to getting involved with the enthusiastic and motivated team of students and faculty in the School.

Being selected amongst her peers for the Impact Scholarship proves **Aelish Shay** is on the right track and can accomplish anything she puts her mind to. Aelish said, "It's not so much about what you've done, it's about what you're going to do about having a positive impact on your community."

Connor Green never shies away from a challenge, especially if it involves thinking outside the box. Michigan Tech's Impact Scholarship program falls right in line with his work ethic and academic philosophy: if you work hard and take every opportunity to challenge yourself along the way, great things can happen. That's exactly the opportunity he's most excited about studying in the SBE.

Morgan Kramer believes anyone can be a positive influence in their community, all you have to do is set your mind to it. That's exactly what she intends to do while taking full advantage of Tech's experienced-based learning opportunities to become a leader in global business and innovation.

Taylor Hedmark has been intrigued by Michigan Tech's SBE program since the day faculty visited his school in Marquette. Landing at Tech and studying management information systems, Taylor is excited about the opportunities ahead in his professional future.

It didn't take **Elyott Hedmark** long to decide that a degree in management information systems best suits his academic interests and paves the way to a bright future. Elyott is looking forward to taking his education to the next level at Michigan Tech where he has the opportunity to learn by doing, which is directly aligned with the school's mission of linking business with technology and advancing knowledge through research.

For more information about the Impact Scholarship, visit mtu.edu/admissions/impact

David Kneisler

For Dana Holding Corporation's VP of Global Quality, the only thing typical about his workweek is something different every day. New challenges bring new travel destinations, and he wouldn't want it any other way.

THE COMPASSIONATE PROBLEM SOLVER

Michigan Tech alumnus David Kneisler understands that when you slip behind the wheel of your car, you are trusting that the auto manufacturer has gone above and beyond to ensure your safety. He knows that even the smallest problems can have dramatic cost and customer satisfaction implications. For this reason, potential product safety issues must be dealt with swiftly and accurately. As vice president of global quality at Dana Holding Corporation, Kneisler does just that while overseeing the company's incredibly capable quality systems and technical problem-solving divisions.

Headquartered in Maumee, OH, Dana is a global leader in supplying technologies that improve efficiency and performance of conventional and alternative-energy vehicle powertrains. The company employs 23,000 people in 25 countries on six continents, generating total sales of $6.6 billion in 2014.

Recently passing the 20-year mark with Dana, Kneisler said he's proud of the progress the company has made in product safety and quality, "both of which are absolute requirements in the automotive industry."

"Our overall quality, as measured by defective parts per million pieces shipped, is now at world-class levels," he says. "We have accomplished this by developing a strong continuous improvement culture, backed up by one of the best technical solving teams and education programs in the country. Our strong reputation for our technical problem-solving capabilities has led to our customers approaching us to help solve some of their technical challenges."

Kneisler earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Michigan Tech in 1983, followed by a Master of Science in Business Administration from the University of Michigan–Flint in 1987.

In addition to overseeing the quality systems and technical problem-solving divisions at Dana, he is the co-chair of the company's product safety committee, and serves as board chairman of the Automotive Industry Action Group (AIAG), an organization focused on continuous improvement and risk mitigation in quality, supply chain and corporate responsibility.

Every day brings a new challenge and, sometimes, a new travel destination.

"I learned early on that quality cannot be led or managed from an office. You have to go and see," he says. "Consequently, I travel a lot."

A large, and very rewarding aspect of his job involves mentoring and problem solving at Dana plants around the world. A considerable amount of time is also spent visiting customers, assisting with issue resolution face-to-face.

"I've developed strong business relationships and many wonderful friendships all over the world," he says. "My best friends list extends to China, Thailand, Australia, Brazil, Italy, Germany, Spain, and the UK."

A non-traditional route

As with many incoming first-year students, zeroing in on a major was Kneisler's biggest challenge. He enrolled in chemical engineering, and by his second year, transferred to the School of Business and Economics to follow his passion for business and computers. It was one of the best decisions he ever made.

"The management science program allowed me to study topics that really mattered to me, including programming, computer simulation, statistics, operations management and economics," he says. "In retrospect, it should have been easy to predict that I would find a path that would include both business and computers. Anything computer-related always had my attention. Importantly, with the shift to subjects that were relevant to me, 'work' became 'fun.' Not surprisingly, this was reflected in my GPA."

Photos | Soonkwan Hong

> “I learned early on that quality cannot be led or managed from an office. You have to go and see.”

High school laid the groundwork for college success

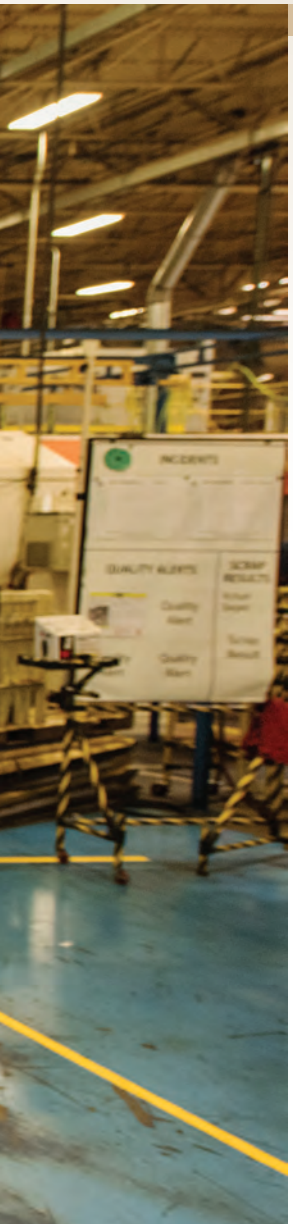
As a child, Kneisler grew up in Beverly Hills, MI, and attended Birmingham Brother Rice High School. It was there he received an outstanding college preparatory education that placed strong emphasis in math, science and English. His father, who graduated from Michigan Tech in 1951 with a mechanical engineering degree, was his greatest influence and the reason Kneisler kept Tech on his short list.

"My dad has always spoken fondly of his days there, and it was easy to see that he received a top-notch education," he says.

Kneisler signed up for a civil engineering experience in Michigan Tech's Summer Youth Program. It was his first real taste of campus life, and he was hooked.

"Honestly, that program had a significant influence in my final decision to attend Michigan Tech," he says. "I loved the campus, and thoroughly enjoyed the program."

Photos | Soonkwan Hong



Working his way up the proverbial corporate ladder

Kneisler's career in the automotive industry began at General Motors, holding positions in information systems, finance, marketing, and strategic planning. Afterward, he spent seven years with TRW Vehicle Safety Systems Inc., working in technical sales and program management. At Echlin, he was hired in as director of program management leading significant company growth. It wasn't long before his problem-solving skills were put to the test.

"We faced difficult operational challenges, one of which was poor product quality. I remember approaching the group president with my concerns, as our customers were clearly not satisfied with our performance," he says. "A few days later, he asked me to take on the quality role for one business, which eventually led to a group quality role."

Dana acquired Echlin in the late 90s, and Kneisler quickly moved up the corporate ladder to become group quality director for Dana's engine and fluid management group. He was promoted to lead the quality function for Dana's automotive systems group, then again to his current position.

Mentoring the next generation of quality leaders

For Kneisler, there is nothing more rewarding than the "aha" moment when teaching a new skill or a nuance on how to approach a particularly challenging situation. He credits Michigan Tech for establishing his ever-growing problem-solving and communication skills. While Michigan Tech was tough and required buckling down, hard work is what builds both skills and character.

"I cannot overemphasize this point: When we hire, we are looking for people who are problem-solvers," he says. "My experience is that people with strong communication and problem-solving skills go on to provide incredible value to their organizations."

Speaking from experience, Kneisler advises students to not only study a topic they are passionate about, but to work hard and make time to have some fun along the way. Students who love what they do have the basis for both a great career and fulfilling life.

"A solid work ethic is critical for both personal and professional success," he said. "When you find a way to keep those priorities in order and still keep the boss happy, you'll be in a good place. Be intentional, and schedule a break now and then."

> "I cannot overemphasize this point: When we hire, we are looking for people who are problem-solvers... people with strong communication and problem-solving skills go on to provide incredible value to their organizations."

BEN

Preseason GLIAC Player of the Year

GLIAC scoring leader at 22.1 points per game

Season point total: 552

Career point total: 1,689, the program's seventh highest

Leads the nation in 3-point field goals per game

Holds the Huskies career record for 3-pointers

Has a 3.69 cumulative grade point average in finance

MEANS BUSINESS

Both on and off the court

Competitive. Driven. Dedicated. They all describe Michigan Tech All-American basketball player Ben Stelzer. Whether he's on the court scoring more than 20 points per game, or in the classroom earning a 3.69 grade point average, Ben knows how to get things done. He's won awards, broken school records, led the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference in stats for nearly every category, and on top of all that, he's smart, focused, and recently graduated with a major in finance and a minor in economics.

Student athletes are faced with the difficult task of managing both academics and athletics on a daily basis. The pressure starts before the academic school year, continues through holiday breaks, and consumes nearly every weekend. Include daily practice, travel, and a full academic schedule, and what you have is the equivalent of a full-time job.

Stelzer just takes it in stride.

"The nice part about having basketball and school is your schedule is busy. You don't have as much free time, so your chances to procrastinate are limited," Ben says. "When school gets busy and practice takes a few hours out of the day, it's a struggle to juggle everything. The biggest challenge is when you have road trips and you miss class. It's hard, but I'm committed to both playing ball and achieving my degree."

So what's his secret? Ben says a strong work ethic and serious organizational skills are critical. But it's more than just those skills. Ben attributes his success during his collegiate career to his coaches and the athletic department for stressing the importance of achievement both on and off the court. Coaches provide information about support resources such as tutoring and mentoring, and help students work with professors to make up assignments or reschedule deadlines.

"I always wanted to do something in business," he continues. "The competitiveness of investing and working with the stock market lured me into the finance field. I guess my competitiveness comes through off the court as well."

As for Ben's immediate future, his dream of playing basketball professionally has come true. In July, he signed with Leyma Basquet Coruna in Spain. His season began in October.

Ben's also thinking he may someday return to Michigan Tech and pursue a second degree in sports and fitness management. Whenever he makes it back to Houghton, he knows what the reception will be.

"One aspect of Tech that's so special is the community feeling—not only in the student body and faculty—but also in the support the whole community shows for Tech athletics. I am definitely proud to be part of the Husky community!"

PHOTO | SARAH BIRD

TOP OF HER GAME

Kwang takes the challenge of being a student athlete head on.

When you get to the top of the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, you have to work even harder to stay there. But for GLIAC Women's Tennis Player of the Year Kwang Suthijindawong, staying at number one is a challenge she eagerly embraces. Kwang has been undefeated in the GLIAC for three consecutive years with a career record of 36-0. But her success story doesn't stop there. In the classroom, Kwang has something else to be proud of: a 3.57 grade point average while double-majoring in Management Information Systems and Operation and System Management.

So what does it take to earn this kind of success? "It's about understanding your responsibility," Kwang says. "I apply the same drive that I use on the tennis court to academics and in my personal life."

Kwang, originally from Bangkok, went to Duluth as an exchange student during her senior year of high school. Her sister, Ploy, played tennis for Michigan Tech. It was through this connection that Kwang made contact with Kevin Kalinec, head coach of men's and women's tennis. This led to a tennis scholarship, and she enrolled at Tech the following year.

"Ever since I was young, I was really interested in technology, computers, and business, but I didn't want to do coding and programming," she says. "The combination of Management Information Systems and Operation and System Management allows me to combine computers and business, and that is very exciting to me."

Student athletes like Kwang face grueling athletic schedules that include practice, travel, and a full academic workload. But Kwang says there are many ways the University provides support to student athletes in order to help them achieve success. "Michigan Tech fully supports student athletes. I used private tutoring in many of my classes, and my professors provided private lessons," she says. "Traveling to tournaments kept me out of the classroom for weeks at a time, but with the support of my professors and the athletics office, I was fully able to get caught up and understand the lesson material."

In addition, a selection of class schedules lets Kwang adjust her class times to accommodate practices and matches. "I avoid Friday classes during my season because of away meets," she said. "I usually take classes that occur Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday. It's nice to have the flexibility."

Kwang feels her work on and off the court has prepared her for what comes next. "My goal is to work for a company where I can use my experience to improve our society," she says. "Ideally, I would like to work in the United States and gain experience before I return to Thailand. And, of course, I'll play tennis as a recreational activity."

When asked what advice she would have for other students interested in pursuing both athletics and academics, Kwang's advice was simple: practice hard, but study even harder!

"This experience has taught me how to manage my time efficiently, stay healthy and fit, as well as providing me with the knowledge to be successful in my future job. I'm proud to represent Michigan Tech!"

Completed three perfect seasons in GLIAC singles, finishing with 36-0 record

A three-time All-GLIAC First Team honoree

Selected as the GLIAC Women's Tennis Player of the Year

All District First Team Honors from the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA)

One of 13 female Division II student-athletes from the Midwest Region in the at-large category

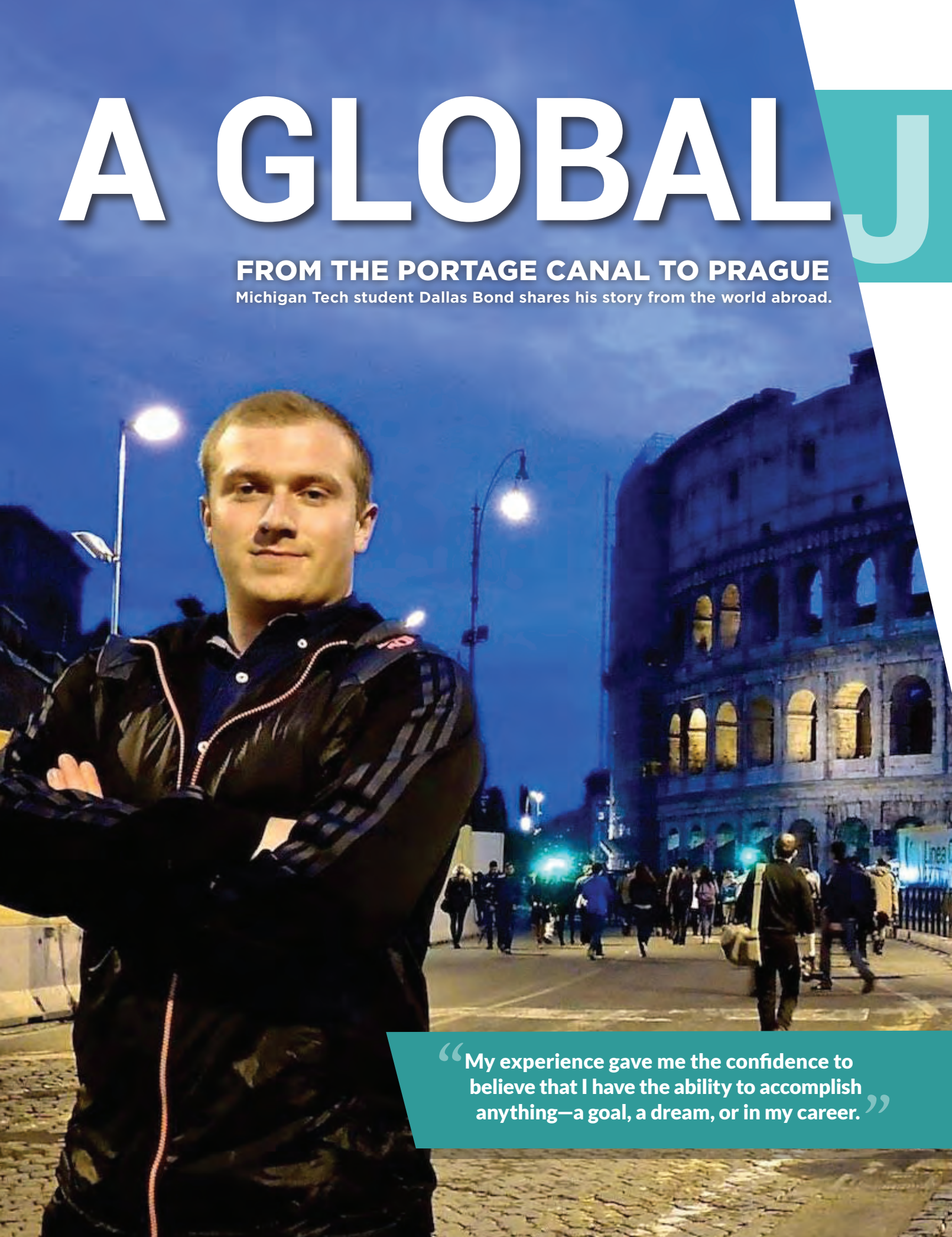
Tech's No. 1 singles player


“I apply the same drive that I use on the tennis court to academics and in my personal life.”

A GLOBAL J

FROM THE PORTAGE CANAL TO PRAGUE

Michigan Tech student Dallas Bond shares his story from the world abroad.



> "My experience gave me the confidence to believe that I have the ability to accomplish anything—a goal, a dream, or in my career."

OURNEY

He grew up with Michigan Tech practically in his backyard and with two older sisters enrolled, it made sense for Dallas Bond to study finance and global business at the School of Business and Economics. Yet he never imagined the school in his backyard would lead to an international adventure.

Dallas seized an opportunity to study abroad in the Czech Republic where his family has roots—he hadn't had the opportunity to travel growing up, so the idea of studying at the University of Economics in Prague left him feeling both nervous and excited.

Surrounded by warmth and welcomed everywhere he visited, Dallas immediately felt at home. He took advantage of the fact that he was right in the middle of Europe and made time to explore other nearby countries, including Italy and Austria.

Dallas is grateful for the opportunity to immerse himself in a different culture, learn a new language, and have the chance to see how other people live. "Studying abroad gave me a perspective in life that I don't think I would have gained otherwise," he says. "The whole experience helped me grow and mature."

Darnishia Slade, director of international programs and services, believes studying abroad provides skills employers are looking for. "Students return from their experiences with improved communication skills, problem-solving, thinking quickly on their feet, and adapting and being flexible," she says. "Studying abroad is a beneficial experience for any student, regardless of their area."

Dallas sees this growth in himself after his time in Prague. "My experience gave me the confidence to believe that I have the ability to accomplish anything—a goal, a dream, or in my career," he says.

Traditional Study Abroad

The Traditional Study Abroad program is facilitated through a third-party partnership with Michigan Tech, and offers a variety of country options.

Exchange Program

These are direct-exchange programs, built on relationships Michigan Tech has with countries around the world. Michigan Tech looks for institutions with similar academic curriculums to help students transition smoothly.

Faculty-Led Exchange

Faculty-led programs typically occur during the summer months. Programs are led by Michigan Tech faculty and include only Michigan Tech students.

mtu.edu/international

We asked four students the question: "Why business at a tech school?"

Skyler Cavitt

"Technical classes and hands-on learning experiences, either with computers or working with real companies as part of a project, greatly developed my business and technical skills. I was able to take and use skills I gained in database and coding classes in my last internship. It also helps to engage with engineers to bounce questions off of and hear their perspectives. This all goes hand-in-hand with all of the core business classes we are required to take."

Rachel Chard

"Companies that recruit from here appreciate the quality of a Michigan Tech education. Through collaboration with engineering students and applied classroom experience, Michigan Tech and the School of Business and Economics provides the perfect opportunity to combine my business mentality with a technical approach, opening doors for career prospects across countless industries."

Nathan Hood

"In business, especially for supply chain professionals, communicating with engineers and others in technical disciplines is a daily occurrence. It's extremely beneficial for those of us going into the field to interact with technical students in engineering and engineering technology programs now. It helps us become more well-rounded communicators and better prepares us for the real world."

Kirsten Dulbandzhyan

"The curriculum is technology-based, so it gives you the ability to be technologically focused. Campus programs, like Enterprise, provide opportunities to work on real client projects and engage with engineering students. A number of professors on campus transferred from industry to academia, and bring their real-life experiences into the classroom. Rather than building class instruction from a textbook, professors develop their own teaching materials from real career experience, which I find really helpful.

Join the conversation by visiting the Impact website at www.mtu.edu/business/alumni/impact.

Photos | Sarah Bird

From Classroom Theory to the NBA

Roger Woods exposes his Operations Management students to real-world, real-time manufacturing challenges.

Students in Roger Woods's operations management course were stunned when they realized they were standing on an actual hardwood basketball court for the 2015 NBA All-Star Game, at Horner Sports Flooring. Woods, senior lecturer in operations management, told his students, "In two weeks you're going to turn on the TV and see this exact floor, made here in Dollar Bay, just miles from campus."

The students were visiting Horner as part of an educational initiative Woods developed to connect real-world experience with business-school concepts. During the school year, he showed his students business in action at three unique companies in the Upper Peninsula. In addition to Horner Flooring, they visited Keweenaw Brewing Company (KBC) and U.P. Health System–Portage Rehab and Sports Medicine.

The field trips were part of a curriculum Woods calls Observations and Operations Management. Students were instructed to write about how those visits exemplified six elements of operations management they'd read about in the news or experienced in the past, and then relate those observations to broader classroom concepts. Woods knows that personal experiences have the most impact. "Operations management covers a broad spectrum, everything from strategy to scheduling to capacity planning. From my own experience, I knew it would help if they could see these concepts in action."

At Horner Flooring, Vice President Mark Young offered a lesson in overcoming challenges in supply-chain management. He explained how a tsunami in the Philippines affected the shipment of a floor bound for Asia. The company had to re-route the shipment so it would depart from the East Coast of the U.S. and travel through the Panama Canal, not its normal route. It was an example of environmental scanning: observing what's happening in the environment for things that can affect business decisions. "It was an eye-opener for them and gave them a lot to think about," Woods says. "Students made connections from their Horner Flooring visit when they discussed other topics."

In mid-March, the students visited KBC's brewing plant. Before the tour, Woods shared research conducted by graduate students concerning process flow and manufacturing bottlenecks at a brewery in Arizona. When the students arrived at KBC, they were ready to ask the right questions. "We had also talked about inventory," Woods says. "When we got to KBC, they were at the tail end of their inventory process, so the timing was perfect. The students saw so many things that tied into what they're learning."

The final trip gave students a completely different perspective. Woods wanted them to experience the challenges of running a business where people are the product. At Portage Rehab and Sports Medicine, scheduling staff is a significant problem. The students saw how the facility has to adjust scheduling to accommodate the patients they serve. "You always have to account for variable change and the unexpected," Woods explained to students. "Not all things can be scheduled, and flexibility is critical." A walk-in clinic might have a first-come, first-serve policy, he explains, but an emergency room prioritizes based on the severity of a patient's condition.

"This course taught me to look at how each department interacts with and impacts the other," accounting and finance major Nyomie Olson says. "It was important to see all the stages of a product or service to understand how each department interacts. I learned to see the big picture."

Woods will continue to reach out to local businesses. "I like to cultivate real-world, hands-on learning opportunities for the students. I want professionals to invite students into their everyday environment and describe their real-world experience. This is all about learning by seeing."

"The field trips were more beneficial than a lecture-style course," Olson explains. "By combining field trips with the lectures, we were able to do group work, solve problems, conduct research, and relate real-world examples to our learning. It was completely hands-on."

Woods' initiative ties into Tech's interest in promoting entrepreneurism. "The places we visited were real businesses," he says. "The students got to witness the reality of being an entrepreneur in a small business, with all the challenges and benefits. And they did it right here in Houghton."

> **"I saw the light bulbs going on. The students realized that what they were seeing connected directly to the concepts they were learning."**

NEWS AND NOTES

Photos | Sarah Bird

A long-standing tradition for Michigan Tech's School of Business and Economics is to select two deserving candidates for the Sam Tidwell Outstanding Man and Woman in Business. For the first time in history, this year's candidates have much more in common than academic accolades.

The 2015 Outstanding Man in Business, Heath Johnson, and Outstanding Woman in Business, Rebeka Horsch, grew up together in Houghton, living directly across the street from one another. Both graduated from Houghton High School, one year apart.

Heath and Rebeka from Prince and Princess in 1998 to Man and Woman of the Year 2015

The Sam Tidwell Outstanding Man and Woman in Business awards are given annually to students – one female and one male – who exemplify the mission of the School of Business and Economics. Candidates are chosen by the Undergraduate Scholarship Committee and undergo an intensive interview process for the award.

Rebeka, Beka for short, is always on the go, volunteering on and off campus. She keeps busy as an Alpha Gamma Delta sorority sister, secretary of Michigan Tech's Panhellenic Council and member of the Order of Omega leadership honor society. She coaches youth participants of the Copper Country Skating Academy, and is a member of Michigan Tech's Figure Skating Club. She is a participant of LeaderShape and served as orientation team leader. Rebeka graduates in December with a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Business Management, minor in Psychology and a concentration in Entrepreneurship. Her career goal is a human resources position in industrial organizational psychology. Achieving a master's degree is at the top of her bucket list. "I never expected that I'd step outside my comfort zone as much as I have in these last four years," she said. "Receiving this award is really amazing."

Heath Johnson takes full advantage of the academic opportunities at Michigan Tech. The fourth-year finance major graduates in December, and will then pursue a master's in accounting. Heath has made signifi ant contributions to campus organizations, serving as president of the Finance Club and participating in the Applied Portfolio Management Program (APMP). Along with peers, he traveled to the Federal Reserve and leading investment firms in and around Chicago. He also participated in Michigan Tech's SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship) program. Heath said he's honored to be selected as Outstanding Man in Business, noting "there are a lot of really strong candidates so this is really special."

Students make a splash at THE Project 2015 competition for improving affordability of higher education project

For the fourth consecutive year, School of Business and Economics students celebrated a second-place win at THE Project's 2015 competition in Grand Rapids in April. This year's competition challenged students to create deliverables that reduce the cost of higher education in Michigan. With guidance from Dana Johnson, professor of operations and supply chain management, students spend two semesters preparing final presentations while gaining a deeper knowledge of the principals of project management. THE Project offers students practical exposure while sharpening their public speaking, teamwork, leadership, and communication skills.

Robert S. Tripp joins the Dean's Advisory Council

Robert S. Tripp, a 1966 and 1967 alumnus in business administration and metallurgical engineering, joined the Dean's Advisory Council. Robert is senior research analyst for RAND Corporation and a retired U.S. Air Force Colonel with 35-plus years of experience in military logistics systems, design, development, management, and evaluation. Robert leads projects that evaluate how support policy, practice, and technology options impact the effectiveness of Air and Space Expeditionary Forces. He was the first recipient of the RAND Project Air Force Research Excellence Award and held several high-level logistics positions before retiring as Colonel.

Robert has long been a friend and supporter of Michigan Tech, where he is a trustee for the Michigan Tech Fund and holds a seat on the Michigan Tech President's Council for Advancement.

VITA shines at Michigan Tech's Student Leadership Awards Ceremony for organization's continued success

Michigan Tech's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program received top honors at the 21st annual Student Leadership Awards ceremony in April. Powered by faculty and accounting majors in the School of Business and Economics, VITA was designated Exceptional Program of the Year. VITA provides professional income-tax preparation assistance for students and low-income families in the community, free of charge. Co-sponsored by the Internal Revenue Service and Michigan Tech, VITA has been a valuable academic experience on campus for more than 20 years.

APMP gives students a $1.5M lesson in real financial investing

It's been an exciting year for Applied Portfolio Management Program (APMP) seniors Joel Florek, Yi Yuan, and Yinan Chen. In March, the group traveled to Detroit for the ENGAGE International Investment Education Symposium. ENGAGE draws as many as 2,000 professional investors, college professors, and students. Top financial organizations like Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta President and CEO Dennis P. Lockhart and Charles Schwab and Co. Chief Global Strategist Jeffrey Kleintop hosted a series of Q&A discussions.

ENGAGE helps students apply classroom curriculum with real-world career experiences. For the second year in a row, the School of Business and Economics' APMP team won the Global Asset Management Education (GAME) Forum V in New York City. Three APMP students—Cory Sullivan, Heath Johnson, and Derek Menard—were up against 1,200-plus students from around the world. Sullivan participated in a NASDAQ closing, and along with his team, was treated to advice from some of the industry's most successful professionals.

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