Intertwined

A synergistic partnership is growing between the College of Business Administration and its advisory boards. Together, they are cultivating the college’s future and preparing students for theirs.

ALUMNUS CHANNELS HIS PASSION FOR SALES 02
AFTER SIX DECADES INVESTING, DAN FUSS REACHES A PINNACLE 12
ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDENTS TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS 22
To provide a transformative education relevant to today’s ever-shifting marketplace, a business school’s walls must be permeable. Students should flow out into the business community; industry experts should likewise flow in.

It is that sort of meaningful connection that we aim to foster through a Marquette Business education — one that prepares our students to provide value after graduation. One that is based on our Ignatian pedagogy that builds empathic leaders and ethical decision-makers grounded in the tenets of our Catholic, Jesuit mission and values.

In this issue, you’ll read about how resourceful partnerships with advisory boards are elevating the college and our students with real-world connectivity. From helping to shape curricula to providing experiential learning opportunities to building professional networks for our students, the advisory boards of our marquee programs and centers of excellence have proved invaluable.

Building on that, the college announced its first-ever executive-in-residence, 1978 College of Business Administration alumnus Tim Hanley. With the former senior partner with Deloitte physically in the college, faculty will be able to engage him in their classrooms, thereby bridging the gap between students and the C-level corporate world.

You will also learn about our burgeoning Student-run Business Program, which doesn’t merely set students off on entrepreneurial missions, it pairs them with established companies, mentors and industry veterans so that enterprise and laboratory are one and the same.

With our ever-present Catholic, Jesuit foundation, service will remain a cornerstone of how Marquette Business connects with industry.

Students in our Sales program learn from day one that service — that is, adopting an ethical sales process that helps customers without coercion or pressure — should be explicably tied to a profession that has been saddled with negative stereotypes. And a new Milwaukee Urban Business Studies course puts students on the frontline of neighborhood development, partnering them with nonprofits and startups right in the city of Milwaukee.

I hope you enjoy these stories about the profound ways Marquette Business students are engaging with the business community. If you are interested in learning about how you can get involved, I would be pleased to hear from you — drop me a line at joseph.daniels@marquette.edu.
Dan Weinfurter, Bus Ad ’79, Grad ’85, started selling early in life. Growing up in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, in a family of eight kids, he and his siblings received the tacit message from parents Joe, Jour ’47, Law ’49, and Betty (Stanton) Weinfurter, Jour ’44, Grad ’75, to find jobs by age 12. Paper routes were big back then; Weinfurter snapped one up and found that he wasn’t half bad at selling new subscriptions. He later worked in a bookstore, eventually becoming the sales manager. “I liked the whole idea of meeting people, talking to them and helping them get what they really want or need to enjoy or improve in their life,” says Weinfurter, who defines sales as exactly that process.

He kept the retail job throughout his time at Marquette — when the Jesuits, he says, were teaching him to question everything. “I actually took that to heart,” Weinfurter says. “I tell people, for right or for wrong, there are very few things in the world that I’m sure of. And I think that’s not a bad way to go through life: Be curious, be introspective, and seek out new challenges and new learning.”

It’s a philosophy that has helped Weinfurter create a unique and multi-faceted career as a serial entrepreneur, business leader and author who excels at building successful companies and sales organizations.

Based in Chicago, he is currently a director with the business technology services firm Mentor Group UK. After Marquette, he joined General Electric, where the sales training program ignited his passion. After sales management roles at GE, he went on to lead, launch and significantly grow multiple private equity-backed businesses; write the book Second Stage Entrepreneurship: Ten Proven Strategies to Drive Aggressive Growth; and become a frequent speaker and thought leader in the global business world.

Weinfurter has long argued — most notably in an April 2016 article he co-wrote for the Harvard Business Review — that the kind of training he received right out of school is sorely needed at the university level. In it, he noted that more than 50 percent of U.S. college grads, regardless of major, are likely to work in sales at some point — but that less than 100 of our 4,000-plus colleges offered sales programs or even sales courses, even in MBA programs.

That’s a big reason Weinfurter joined the advisory board of the College of Business Administration’s Sales program directed by Dr. Alex Milovic, assistant professor of practice of marketing. The program, launched in 2017, is already showing success (see related story, page 20), reflected in data on graduates’ job offers, job readiness and career satisfaction.

Milovic says he has leveraged Weinfurter’s Harvard Business Review article to help secure corporate partners and adds, “Dan’s involvement has been instrumental in developing the program’s fundraising model, as well as the executive education sales content” for a future corporate training offering for professionals, he says.

Weinfurter prioritizes his advisory board role despite frequent globetrotting for his various ventures. He’s been known to promote an adage often heard in business: Grow or die. “Standing in one place doesn’t really work,” he says. “Not for business, and not for me.”
In Residence
New position leverages alumnus’ global business experience and network.

Viewing it as a unique opportunity “to develop a deeper relationship between the business community and the college as well as a great chance to engage with students in the classroom,” Tim Hanley, a recently retired senior partner at Deloitte, has signed on to be the inaugural executive-in-residence for the College of Business Administration this fall. The two-year rotating position is part of acting dean Joe Daniels’ plan to increase the visibility of the college and its engagement with the business community. “It’s also a chance to have a highly successful business executive working directly within the college,” says Daniels. “We already have strong working relationships with professionals on our advisory boards as well as an executive co-teaching model. I believe this is an exciting and logical next step. It gives the entire college access to someone with rich and dynamic professional experiences,” says John Knapp, director of external relations for the college. By having Hanley, Bus Ad ‘78, physically in the college, faculty will be able to engage him in their classrooms, thereby bridging the gap between students and the C-level corporate world. “I hope he will become an annual event. For the first roundtable, we want to host some of our most distinguished alumni, create a meaningful dialogue and encourage questions from the audience.”

Daniels says that the executive-in-residence also brings his or her network of contacts and circle of influence to the students and college. “This will be invaluable when staffing key advisory boards and getting access to companies that are seeking talent,” he says. “I have been fortunate to serve in very senior roles at Deloitte, both in the U.S. and more recently on a global basis. This has allowed me to spend time with our top clients and their senior management team in most every global market,” says Hanley, a President’s Society member. “These roles have helped me build a significant network, which I plan to share with both faculty and students. I also want to offer a bit of coaching and mentoring and share my global experience with them.”

Leading the Way
Speaker series complements university’s commitment to women in leadership.

“I’ve mentored women all my life, and there continues to be a need,” says Margo Loebl, a C-suite financial executive on the College of Business Administration Leadership Council who is passionate about giving back. Loebl helped the college envision a speaker series to offer the Marquette community the chance to interact with women leaders from the business world. With a $1 million planned gift pledged in March, the program continues this fall. Another gift received in January from the Thomas J. Raffs Family Foundation to support a university-wide Institute for Women’s Leadership paved the way for the college to support the advancement of women in business with the speaker series initiative, according to Loebl. “This is an ongoing need at the university and in our community to support the advancement of women,” says Loebl. “We felt that a women’s speaker series is an ideal first step and is a powerful way for the business college to make an impact on the lives of women in business.” If the name “Loebl” rings a bell, it is because the series is called the June and Herman Loebl Women Business Leaders Speaker Series, after Margo’s parents, one of whom attended and taught at Marquette for 38 years. Herman Loebl, Bus Ad ‘41, served as chair of the Accounting and Finance departments, director of the MBA program, assistant dean and associate dean of the college. “Our mother was an intellectual and Wellesley College graduate, so the strong leadership and accomplishment of women was considered a very logical expectation by our mostly male family,” explains Loebl. When the Loebl siblings considered leaving a legacy in their parents’ memory, support of Marquette women in the business college was an obvious choice. Building on their father’s long affiliation with Marquette, all four of the Loebl sons attended a Jesuit institution and one, Rev. Jeff Loebl, S.J., has been a Jesuit for 49 years. “Our parents were deeply committed to making education available to all. And, because 55 percent of the university’s current student population is women, it’s very exciting to have the broader university-wide institute for developing women leaders and to move forward with the speaker series at this time,” says Loebl. According to Loebl, women executives are eager to give back and help emerging leaders through programs such as this. “Women helping other women is not only the right thing to do but is needed to help women develop and progress,” she explains. The latest speaker, Becky Frankiewicz, president of ManpowerGroup North America, presented “Tomorrow’s Talent Is Here Today: Seizing Opportunity in the Digital Age” this fall.

Tim Hanley, Bus Ad ‘78
Executive-in-residence

BY GUY FIORETA

THE EXECUTIVE-IN-RESIDENCE ALSO BRINGS HIS NETWORK OF CONTACTS AND CIRCLE OF INFLUENCE TO THE STUDENTS AND COLLEGE.

BY LAUREN HERB SCHUDSON, GRAD ’97

A WOMEN’S SPEAKER SERIES IS AN IDEAL FIRST STEP AND IS A POWERFUL WAY FOR THE BUSINESS COLLEGE TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF WOMEN IN BUSINESS.

Margo Loebl

THERE IS AN ONGOING NEED AT THE UNIVERSITY AND IN OUR COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN.
RESPECT
Researcher dives deep into how important “feeling valued” in the workplace is to employees.

When Dr. Kristie Rogers, assistant professor of management, set out to study respect in the workplace — that is, the worth employees feel from colleagues and leaders — she came away with some surprising findings. Rogers, whose Harvard Business Review article about her research in the July-August 2018 issue was read more than 100,000 times, learned from existing research that while respect from their superiors tops employees’ lists of wants, they’re not getting it.

Rogers delved deeper into why employees weren’t feeling respected. While some of it has to do with leaders simply not noticing the importance of respect, much of the problem stems from a lack of understanding about two distinct types — owed respect is given equally to everyone in a group or organization, and earned respect is shown to employees who display the qualities and behaviors valued by their companies. When employees expect a combination of each type and don’t experience it — for example, a workplace where there is owed respect but little to no earned respect — the employees don’t feel motivated to work toward personal achievements because they won’t be valued more for it. Rogers elaborated further on that in a 2017 article in the Journal of Management, where there’s a balance of the two types of respect, it fulfills the “receiver’s needs for belonging and status,” Rogers says.

It was during her search for a dissertation topic that Rogers learned about a progressive Arizona company called Televerde that employs inmates to believing in themselves, “says Dr. Kristie Rogers. “When they celebrated their successes and felt they were contributing to society,” their confidence soared, she says. Her deep dive into the notion of “feeling valued” has expanded to other areas of respect-based research. How respect is given and how it’s received can be in conflict, says Rogers. By investigating groups rarely studied in business research, she’s learned that “I can give a voice to people who don’t have a voice.”

Second Degree
Latest graduate degree options reflect evolving needs of businesses and students.

The Graduate School of Management is building on its long history of academic excellence by unveiling two new flexible graduate programs this fall. The 30-credit Master in Management, or MiM program, combines the best from several disciplines, including human resource management, organizational behavior and development, analytics, leadership, and change management. The program is delivered in a blended format, with each class meeting 50 percent on campus and 50 percent online. The program, which can be completed in as little as 21 months, focuses on aligning business and talent management strategies; driving organizational transformations; assessing professional leadership style and cultivating a personalized set of leadership capabilities; managing workforce talent; and developing skills around negotiating, managing difficult conversations and leading a diverse workforce.

The Master of Science in Accounting Analytics program offers an enhanced focus on the technology skills and business analytics software vital for today’s data-rich environment, while still being grounded in the accounting, auditing, and financial reporting skills necessary to sit for the CPA exam. The program is a STEM-designated program, which means international students are eligible to apply for 36 months of Optional Practical Training, allowing employers to potentially hire international students for up to three years instead of only one. Accountants with analytics expertise are prepared to work with available financial data to inform and guide business decisions and are also prepared to engage in fraud detection and auditing using machine-learning and data-mining techniques when complex, computer-driven financials are the norm.

New Chapters
The College of Business Administration is grateful for the following faculty and staff for their years of service to the university.

Dr. Mike Aker, professor emeritus of accounting, was the Charles T. Horngren Professor of Accounting and previously served as department chair. He taught at Marquette for more than 30 years.

Dr. Doug Fisher served as associate professor of practice of supply chain management and director of the Center for Supply Chain Management. During his tenure from 2008 to 2019, he saw the undergraduate program climb to a No. 13 ranking in U.S. News & World Report.

Dr. Jamshid Hosseini, who retired from his associate professor of management and director of international business studies positions, joined the university in 1987 and was central to developing key partnerships with universities in China.

Dr. Cheryl Maranto, associate professor emerita of management, retired after 20 years with the college. Throughout her tenure, she was chair of the Department of Management, executive associate dean and member of the President’s Task Force on Gender Equity.

Mary Radke, Sp ’80, served as office associate in the Department of Philosophy of Amor for the past 10 years and worked for the university for a total of 20 years.

Rev. Nicholas Santos, S.J., Ord ’06, ’09, who served as assistant professor of revision in the college for seven years, was named the rector of Creighton University’s Jesuit community and also teaches in Creighton’s business college.
Clan Culture
Professor studies how social factors play a role in executive accounting fraud.

Who better to explain how C-suite executives cross the line into major accounting fraud than former corporate officials convicted of such crimes?

And who better to help analyze their downfall than a former 26-year Wall Street trader and adviser who witnessed financial improprieties on the job?

The former trader, Dr. Joseph Wall, is now an assistant professor of accounting at Marquette. He brought that Wall Street experience to a 2018 study published in the *Journal of Business Ethics*, "Boiling the Frog Slowly: The Immersion of C-suite Financial Executives into Fraud."

The study team — which included Drs. John T. Sweeney, Kristina Linke and Ikseon Suh, a former Marquette assistant professor — conducted lengthy in-person interviews with 13 former top corporate finance officials convicted of federal accounting fraud charges. In total, the interviewees were ordered to repay more than $30 million in8 illegal gains and fined nearly $54 million. Eight served time behind bars.

The interviewees were directly involved in issuing false financial statements while serving as chief financial officer, chief accounting officer, controller, director of finance or chief operating officer. The average annual revenue of their corporations was more than $8 billion. Wall, Grad '06, says the authors conducted their research because the problem of corporate fraud "only seems to get worse despite the fact we pass more and more rules, and we study it more and more as academics."

The study found many of the executives did not plan to commit fraud but were led into it by social factors — including a desire to conform, sensitivity to social cues and identification with a core group ("clan culture").

"In other words, our executives’ immersion into accounting fraud did not happen in a vacuum but rather in a village," the authors wrote. "The influence of these factors even crossing the line itself was not apparent to or even well understood by many of our executive participants."
College adds business analytics to its majors offering to fill industry needs.

In response to the business world’s growing need for employees who can interpret the massive and often messy amounts of consumer data many companies have stockpiled, the College of Business Administration recently added a business analytics major to its roster of undergraduate majors. The major was developed in part after surveying more than a dozen companies that revealed the top skill they seek in recent graduates is proficiency in this field. “Companies have realized they have this onslaught of data that can help them make better decisions, but they’re not sure how to do it,” says Scott Rex, instructor of practice of marketing, who helped develop the major. Rex saw that it was important that the program be about more than number crunching and marketing, who helped develop the major. Rex saw that it was important that the program be about more than number crunching and marketing.

Designed to mirror real-world business challenges, students are tasked in their capstone course with analyzing data sets supplied by local business leaders to whom they must ultimately present their recommendations. The students also learn how to create persuasive visual analytics to successfully communicate their findings, and additional course work focuses on developing valuable soft skills, such as presenting to top brass and team building.

Rex is compiling an advisory board made up of directors from area businesses to provide insight from the corporate world and remain up to date on this rapidly changing field’s most pressing issues (see related story on p. 14). The major, which consists of five courses, must be taken as a second major in conjunction with one of the other business majors offered.
Rising Value

Alumnus Dan Fuss reaches a pinnacle achievement after more than six decades in the investment industry.

BY KURT CHANDLER

Illustration by Tony Healey

Recognition may have appeared to come sporadically for Marquette business grad Dan Fuss. He earned high praise 11 years ago, for example, when SmartMoney magazine featured him in an article titled “The World’s Greatest Investors,” grouping him with the likes of Warren Buffett. And he was recognized again in 2013 with the CFA Society of Milwaukee Lifetime Achievement Award.

But he reached the very pinnacle of his career in May, after 61 years in the investment industry, when Morningstar recognized him as the 2019 Outstanding Portfolio Manager.

A month later, the 85-year-old Fuss, Bus Ad ’55, Grad ’66, had little time to think about awards. Midway through a phone interview, on a day when the financial markets pitched downward, a group of his colleagues converged outside his office at Loomis, Sayles & Co. in Boston, seeking his advice. “They’re lining up at my door now,” Fuss said, politely cutting the call short.

His journey into the investment world began in Milwaukee. Raised in a blue-collar neighborhood in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, Fuss enrolled at Marquette in 1961, majoring in finance and naval science. A member of the Navy ROTC, he was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy on graduation and served on active duty with most of his time aboard an aircraft carrier. Returning home three years later, he took a job at Wauwatosa State Bank and then worked at First Wisconsin National Bank in Milwaukee while attending graduate school, eventually earning his MBA at Marquette in 1966.

The balance of his career took him to Chicago and then on to Boston, where he was hired to work at an investment firm owned by Yale to manage Yale University’s endowment. Fuss left the Yale job to join The Boston Company. Four and a half years later, he was hired by a Marquette fraternity brother, Robert Kemp, Bus Ad ’64, at Loomis Sayles to manage the institutional department. “Dan worked like mad,” says Kemp, quietly garnering praise as one of the nation’s top fixed-income managers. “I think Dan is finally getting the recognition that he deserved years ago.”

Fuss has managed the $12 billion Loomis Sayles Bond Fund since 1991. He’s characterized by observers as a “maverick,” “contrarian” and “pioneer” for his “benchmark agnostic” approach. Fuss doesn’t quarrel with the labels.

“It’s what’s known as ‘item selection’, where it’s predominantly bond picking as opposed to outguessing the market,” he says, finally finding time to resume the interview. “We’re not trying to look like anybody’s index. You just use common sense and buy the best values in the market, if there are any. If there aren’t, you don’t.”

In deciding whom to do business with, Fuss draws on the Jesuit values instilled in him at Marquette. “It’s something that drives you,” he says. “Are there certain types of clients we would not take on? Oh yeah. Who are they? We never say, because, number one, our perception could be wrong or unfair. But we are careful with whom we do business.”

Another Marquette graduate was named a finalist for this year’s Morningstar award. Mary Ellen Bolger Stanek, Arts ’78, chief investment officer for the Baird Aggregate Bond Fund, was one of five analysts nominated for Outstanding Portfolio Manager. An ardent financial and community leader in Milwaukee, Stanek became the first woman to chair Marquette’s Board of Trustees (2006–2009) and was Alumna of the Year in 2010.

Based on qualitative evaluations, the Morningstar Award for Investing Excellence recognizes portfolio managers who produce exceptional returns over the long term and differ from the consensus.

“While employing significantly different styles, both Mr. Fuss and Ms. Stanek are intellectually curious, display humility, possess great leadership skills and have an unparalleled ethical commitment to serve their clients,” says Dr. David Krause, director of the college’s Applied Investment Management program, which prepares students for the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) exam. Both Fuss and Stanek have given back to Marquette through the AIM program.

“The college is extremely proud of Dan and Mary Ellen,” says acting Keyes Dean Joseph Daniels. “It is incredibly difficult to stay at the top in the world of highly competitive investment management.”
A synergistic partnership is growing between the College of Business Administration and its advisory boards, cultivating the college’s future and preparing students for theirs.

By Erik Gunn

Illustrations by Anna Godeassi

As an undergraduate in the College of Business Administration, John Mau changed majors “two or three times” before he settled on what he wanted to do. But Mau, a student-athlete on the soccer team, found his niche when an athletics academic adviser steered him toward the Center for Supply Chain Management. Then the director, Dr. Doug Fisher, explained how the program was being upgraded, and Mau’s enthusiasm really took off.

Key to the upgrade was the center’s business advisory board. The cadre of business leaders active in supply chain management was working closely with Fisher and the center’s faculty to revamp course offerings, enhance its hands-on methodology, and forge deeper ties with the profession across a range of industries. The board’s involvement was “a game-changer,” says Mau, Bus Ad ‘14, Grad ‘16, who works for Rockwell Automation and is now himself a member of the center’s advisory board. “The group was not afraid to tackle the tough stuff by revamping curriculum, to challenge the status quo in academia and provide students opportunities to get insights into the real world.”

Full-time and adjunct faculty may be the core of Marquette’s business college. But the role of advisory boards like the one for supply chain management is expanding as they become critical contributors to an increasing number of the college’s specialized business programs. From advising on course offerings and giving feedback about what well-equipped graduates need to know about fundraising, internships for students and jobs for new graduates, “They’re a conduit through which we make our connections externally,” says acting Keyes Dean Joseph Daniels. “They’re invaluable partners in the success of the college overall.”

A ROLE IN FACULTY RECRUITMENT

The concept was slow to develop initially. But in recent years, it’s become second nature. Today, Daniels says, “When we start a new program, like our Sales program, we start an advisory board on day one.”

The college’s oldest advisory board appears to be in the Accounting Department, where Dr. Kevin Rich, chair and associate professor, says records trace the department’s advisory team to 1986. The accounting board plays a key role in fostering networking opportunities,
responds when called upon to assist with faculty recruiting, and sponsors an annual on-campus event to help recruit students to become accounting majors. More recently, the board has taken an active role in strategic planning and has expanded the annual recruiting session to include quick presentations covering the different career paths in accounting, says Rich.

The board also plays a key role in recruiting new faculty to the Accounting Department. “In the last year alone, I’ve had a chance to meet four accounting faculty candidates over dinner,” says advisory board member Daniel Kramer, Bus Ad ’03, assurance office managing partner for BDO’s Wisconsin practice. “Our role on the board has evolved from evaluator to seller. Accounting professors are in extreme demand … I enjoy sharing with candidates the amazing community and culture Marquette has built and the support it receives.”

RAISING PROGRAM PROFILES

At the other end of the timeline, one of the newest advisory boards serves one of the college’s newest programs. Dr. Kent Belasco, director of the Commercial Banking program and assistant professor of practice of finance, says the need for such a group was readily apparent from his program’s launch in 2015.

“As I was developing courses, I needed a sounding board,” he says. “Commercial banking is a very dynamic industry. It has been changing over the past several years.” Regulations tightened up following the 2008 economic crisis; more recently, they’re loosening again under the current administration. Either way, the profession has to keep up.

Evolving technology, from smartphone apps for remote banking to complex software systems taking over more transactional tasks, further rolls the industry. Belasco turns to the advisory board members for help — whether they’re people like John Byrne, Arts ’78, an expert in financial crime and money laundering, or bank CEOs such as Bill Lynch, Arts ’74, with Wintrust Bank, or Douglas Gordon, Grad ’81, with Waterstone Bank.

“I’ll bring them into the classroom and have them do presentations,” Belasco says. “I’ll share the curriculum with them and make sure we’re focusing on the right topics.”

They also raise the program’s profile. Byrne, vice chairman of AML RightSource, which advises financial institutions on how to comply with regulations to curb money laundering and related violations, has done presentations on campus and in Washington, D.C., on combating financial crime. Students profit from the expertise that board members are able to bring to their education.

“When our students enter the job market, I want them to be ahead of the ball game in terms of anybody else,” Belasco says.

INFLUENCING COURSE WORK

The advisory board for the Center for Real Estate is divided into focused committees: alumni, student engagement, industry engagement, and marketing and communication. “Those committees start to dig a little deeper into helping us with some of the big things that we’re dealing with in each of those areas,” says center director Andy Hunt, Bus Ad ’08, Grad ’13.

Individually, though, committee members do much more than show up for twice-yearly meetings or committee conference calls. “They’re setting up site tours for our students. They are helping to hire our students or making connections with other companies that sponsor our events and giving a lot of great feedback about what kind of skills they’re looking for,” says Hunt. By following their lead and refining the curriculum accordingly, “We
make sure what we’re teaching is cutting edge, so that it is exactly what the
industry is looking for in our graduates.”

One example: About three years ago, the
Center for Real Estate board evaluated the
curriculum and suggested that the program
could effectively scale back its teaching on
real estate valuation. Instead, the advisers
urged more in-depth instruction on financial
modeling based on projected rental income,
projected expenses and so on.

Hiring and mentoring are the board’s
most important jobs, in Hunt’s view.
Combined with keeping the faculty on top
of the most critical skills, offering pathways
for students to graduate into a job in the
field “is truly life changing,” says Hunt. “It
just further sets them ahead.”

For real estate board member Michelle
Panovich, executive vice president at
Mid-America Asset Management Inc. in
Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois, being able to
work with students began as a way “to
give back” in return for her own business
success. But there’s also been a more
personal business benefit. “We’re always
seeking out talent to hire,” she says.
Working with students to help them grow
sets the stage “so they can become a
successful part of the business.”

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING LEADS TO JOBS

As with other programs, the Center for
Supply Chain Management also looks to its
advisory board for guidance on curriculum
design. The principal aim, says Fisher, was
to build applied or experiential learning
deeply into the program. Kohler Co., for
example, worked with the center to design
an applied procurement course.

The relationship demonstrates a mutual
desire for the academic program and
the businesses connected with it to stay
connected with each other, says Kohler’s
James Merwin, Bus Ad ‘00, an advisory
board member: “All of us involved want to
have a strong program right in our backyard.”
The course and a growing number
of others in the program are designed
around actual projects presented by
participating companies. Students are
paid for their participation. “We try to
make sure the company approaches it as
a job,” Fisher says. “It’s a very disciplined,
rigorous approach.” So far, participating
companies have documented savings of
more than $10 million, he adds. “There’s a
real-world benefit.”

The experiential learning approach
offers academic credit, but it carries far
greater responsibility and rewards than the
traditional credit-only internship. “One of
the big differences is that students work
much more under the watchful eye of
somebody on our staff, a faculty member
or an adjunct helping them through this,”
says Bill Lee, successor to the recently
retired Fisher at the Center for Supply Chain
Management. “The students learn the
content in the classroom and immediately
get the opportunity to apply it.”

It’s also no accident that Marquette’s
Jesuit values are threaded through the
relationships between the college and their
board advisers. “We have a really powerful
umbrella that we operate under,” says Lee.
In the corporate world, “Values and ethics
are becoming more in demand. That gives
us a unique advantage over many schools.”

Daniels agrees. “We are Marquette. We
don’t forget ethics,” he says. “When I’m
networking with people on our advisory
boards, you find out the issues they have in
their workplace, and we bring those issues
back to the classroom to make sure that
our students, when they go out into the
workplace, are making the right choices.”

For Daniels, experience like that points
to an increasingly important future for
business advisers across the college.
“Experiential learning is very, very
important to us,” he says. “And it’s difficult,
if not impossible, to do that without
partnering with our advisory boards.
They’re the ones who are going to help us
pull that off.”

“I see that expanding,” Daniels adds,
because we’re expanding.”

For information on how to partner
with the college, contact John Knapp,
director of external relations, at
john.m.knapp@marquette.edu
or 414.288.7238.

John Byrne and Douglas Gordon are
President’s Society members.
“At some point, everybody is going to have to sell something — most likely themselves,” says Dr. Alex Milovic, director of Marquette’s Sales program and assistant professor of practice of marketing. Mary Kate Hickey, Comm ’17, a former student of Milovic’s, didn’t want to believe it, she says. It conjured up images of cold-calling and the pushy salesperson who uses high-pressure tactics to make big-dollar deals. “It wasn’t my personality,” she says.

But she respected Milovic as an instructor and decided to enroll in the Sales program. After two courses, her perceptions completely changed. Today, she works as a territory sales representative for Milwaukee Tool. “Now that I’m doing it, I love it,” she says.

Milovic understands the stereotypes that exist — he worked in sales for nearly nine years before coming to Marquette in 2014 to launch the Sales program. Now, five years in, he sees the impact it’s having. About 20 to 30 students a year have taken at least two of the three courses offered — Professional Selling, Advanced Selling, and Sales Management. (In 2020, a fourth course, Selling by the Numbers, will be added.) Of the graduates, 100 percent have gone on to a job, graduate school or the military. Within that group, 65 percent have found roles with a sales focus.

“We’re teaching this to be a service discipline,” Milovic says. “Service is the main component of the sales that we teach.”

Service, in this context, means adopting an ethical sales process that helps customers get what they need without coercion or pressure. Students are taught how to ask good questions, provide relevant information and essentially help solve a problem. It’s an ongoing dialogue between salesperson and customer that could take months or even years. If the sale falls through, Milovic says it could be because the salesperson didn’t ask the right questions or the company doesn’t have good products or services. “If they overpromise and underdeliver consistently, is that a company you want to work for?” asks Milovic. He teaches his students what it means to politely excuse oneself from an unprincipled company.

The program’s course work outlines the methodology behind this approach and then students get to practice it as part of internships at organizations including the Milwaukee Bucks, the software company Flexera, and component and equipment company ITW. Role-playing events, both in the classroom and at conferences, help students hone their skills. In 2018 a two-student team led by the program’s newest faculty member, Dr. Jessica Ogilvie, assistant professor of marketing, placed second nationally at the Collegiate World Cup of Sales competition held in Orlando, Florida. Employers like Jim Ryan, Arts ’89, president and CEO of Flexera and a member of the program’s advisory board, says the combination of course work and practical experience helps reveal the true nature of selling. “The job is 50 percent science and 50 percent art,” he says. “Students who learn how to run sales calls, present information in a logical manner and construct return-on-investment models are already halfway there. The rest is learning how to apply one’s personality to be effective,” he adds.

Jim Ryan is a President’s Society member.
Any time is a good time for coffee! Just ask patrons of Vida, a student-run coffee shop in West Allis, Wisconsin. Vida is one of five companies supported through Marquette’s Student-run Business Program.

Kat Djokic is running late, but she has a good excuse. She’s coming straight from a meeting with the advisory board for a coffee company called Vida, and she’s the company’s president and CEO.

She arrives at a large, brick building in West Allis, Wisconsin, and unlocks the door to a ground-floor retail space where the first Vida café is slated to open in a few weeks. Right now, the space is under construction, but Djokic is calm — the permits are coming along, she says, and all the equipment is ordered. She starts describing how the café will come together, pointing out the window to where a cart will be stationed on the sidewalk facing 70th Street so that commuters can pull up for a cup of coffee or a latte in the morning. She motions to where a new door will be installed so that patrons won’t have to walk through the building’s main entrance to enter the café. She explains how a coffee-serving robot will free up the baristas to focus on providing great customer service.

Djokic is entrenched in every aspect of the business, from clearing the café to hiring baristas and working with developers on the details for all of Vida’s retail locations, which include new cafés opening soon. It’s easy to forget that this isn’t even Djokic’s full-time job — the 21-year-old just started her senior year studying marketing and data analytics at Marquette.

Djokic is one of about 50 students operating real-life businesses through Marquette’s new Student-run Business Program. The program gives students a chance to gain hands-on experience at the helm of companies held by Blue &
Gold Ventures, an independent nonprofit organization affiliated with the program. Aside from Vida, Blue & Gold Ventures owns four other student-run businesses, including a blockchain lab, a property management company, an event production company, and Eagle Incubator, which vets new student-run businesses and provides support to the other companies under the Blue & Gold umbrella.

**“THE NEW FACE OF EDUCATION”**

Marquette’s program is part of a new generation of student-run business programs, explains Owen Raisch, associate director of the new program and CEO of Blue & Gold Ventures. The earliest student-run business dates back to 1994 at Cornell University, where a laundry business offered a way for students to earn cash.

Vida, the student-run business program, explains Owen Raisch, associate director of the new program and CEO of Blue & Gold Ventures. The earliest student-run business dates back to 1994 at Cornell University, where a laundry business offered a way for students to earn cash.

Once a student’s new business is approved, the fledgling company starts an eight-month incubating period with support from Eagle Incubator. Students receive seed funding from Blue & Gold Ventures and work to generate their own revenue as they eventually take their businesses from concept to reality. The goal is to launch between three to seven new ventures each year, Raisch says, and then to eventually sell off successful businesses that no longer offer ideal experiences for students.

To ensure the success of each venture, students work closely with an advisory board made up of local business leaders and Marquette faculty. Alumni, in particular, have come out in force to serve on each business’s advisory board and to mentor students, Raisch says.

Scott Yauk, Eng ’82, Law ’95, a President’s Society member, is the developer of the West Allis business park.

**MORE THAN A PAYCHECK**

All of the students working at Blue & Gold’s companies are paid. And in many ways, students earn much more than a paycheck, Raisch says.

“As students get to work launching and running the day-to-day operations of their businesses, they also take on responsibilities that become really difficult, like talking to advisory board members, managing a team, being not just a boss but a true leader,” Djokic says running Vida has challenged her to become a better public speaker and has made her unafraid to ask questions. Her confidence shows: She explains supply chain sourcing and the challenges of running a brick-and-mortar retail business with the poise of a seasoned serial entrepreneur.

**EARLY SUCCESS STORIES**

Vida has the largest retail footprint of Blue & Gold Ventures’ current businesses, but it isn’t the program’s only success story: The student-run Blockchain Lab...
sold out all 300 seats at its inaugural conference; in 2018 the Eagle Incubator’s Nest Holiday Pop-up Shop opened in Walker’s Point selling gifts and goods from local makers and artists; and 1881 Event Productions made strides after the group partnered with Rugged Races to manage the operations for the 2019 Milwaukee Marathon thanks to support from race owner and alumnus Mike Zimmerman.

“People were really concerned whether the marathon was too much responsibility for students,” Raisch says. “(Under previous ownership), the marathon had a history with prominent failures. . . . We took that on at a time when people didn’t think it would succeed. But our students helped more than double the prior registration records, so we hit just over 7,500 runners.”

Now, other universities are hoping to replicate Marquette’s early success. Raisch says he has heard from schools around the country and the world, from California to Cairo, to inquire about Marquette’s student-run business model.

The team at Vida is also starting to make plans to scale up, even as the first retail location opens its doors. After Vida’s student leaders presented at the Student-run Business Association Conference in March, representatives from universities including Harvard and Stanford took notice. Other student groups are now planning to open their own Vida franchises, which will expand Vida’s footprint from Milwaukee to campuses at both those universities.

Although the program at Marquette is still young — Raisch continues to focus on fundraising so that Blue & Gold can continue launching new ventures — he’s already seeing students thrive, with benefits that extend beyond work experience, networking and leadership opportunities. Some of the most important takeaways for students are the intangible benefits that can’t be measured in LinkedIn connections or bullet points on a résumé.

“People are surprised to see what the students can do, and the students themselves are surprised,” Raisch says. “It’s a transformational experience to go from not really feeling like you have a place in the world, or like the world hasn’t started for you yet, to managing people and engaging people in the community to create substantial change. It’s a big deal.”

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

“People were really concerned whether (the marathon) was too much responsibility for students. . . . We took that on at a time when people didn’t think it would succeed. But our students helped more than double the prior registration records.”

Owen Raisch
Speaking Up

In learning how to question injustice, Edwin Huertas found not only his voice but a way to give voice to others.

BY LORA STRUM
Photography by John Sibilski

Edwin Huertas, Grad ’19 (left)

When Edwin Huertas begins to speak, you listen. He is incisive and inspired, with thoughts that flow without an anxious pause or stuttered “um.” Whatever he has to say, he will say it, and say it well.

Speaking well is a skill that Huertas, Grad ’19, had to develop over the course of his career as a community leader and advocate. “Good communication is about being vulnerable,” Huertas explains. “Only when I learned to share my real thoughts — to find the courage to advocate for myself — could I advocate for others.”

Advocacy is what lured Huertas to Marquette’s Trinity Fellows program, through which he pursued his MBA. The two-year fellowship nurtures individuals committed to excellence, leadership and the well-being of others — particularly in the urban nonprofit space — through a work-study program. For Huertas, his fellowship work with Literacy Services of Wisconsin leveraged his existing communication skills to support improvements in adult literacy, while also allowing him to engage more deeply in community relations, fundraising and management.

“As a Trinity Fellow, I supplemented my soft skills with the harder skills only an MBA can provide, while also learning about Milwaukee at its deepest level,” says Huertas, who completed his fellowship and degree this spring.

A product of Milwaukee’s Riverwest neighborhood, Huertas received his undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. With the exception of a stint with AmeriCorps in Orlando, Florida, he has dedicated his life as a public servant to learning the language of Milwaukee. Having recently been appointed as deputy director of Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers’ Milwaukee office, Huertas is drawing on his community history, including time spent in local politics, to maximize the impact of conversations started at the state level.

“My mission in life is to bring leaders and community organizations to the same table where they can find common ground and resolutions to societal issues,” Huertas says. It’s a mission that began the summer before Huertas turned 12 when, to have something to do, he joined the YMCA Youth Volunteer Corps. Continuing with the organization through high school, Huertas served the hungry, homeless or helpless in communities mere steps from his front door. Seeing 15 to 20 beds lined up in a shelter challenged Huertas’ childhood belief that everyone was equal with equal opportunity. This shift in thinking encouraged Huertas to speak up and ask the questions no one could, or would, answer. He was quickly singled out as a leader, albeit one who relies on trust and honest communication to effect change. “Leadership is about who follows you and respecting them,” Huertas says. “It’s about feedback and talking through failure.”

Already Huertas has supported the state by leading conversations on drug use and abuse, neighborhood issues, disenfranchisement and racism. He even sees a future where he could be a leading voice in political office.

As he explains it all, it’s clear Huertas doesn’t just talk, he knows what he’s saying.
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