

FARMER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

# THE JOURNEY

SUMMER 2017



## PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT:

Jan Taylor

## ABACUS: SMALL ENOUGH TO JAIL

a True David vs. Goliath Story

PURINA PRESIDENT  
NINA LEIGH KRUEGER:

*a passion  
for the journey*

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# – welcome –

***It is an honor and privilege to serve the Farmer School of Business as its interim dean.***

Since most of you do not know me, I would like to introduce myself. I have been a faculty member in the Farmer School since 1990 and the chair of the Department of Accountancy since 2003. I am a proud graduate of Miami as well as a Miami merger. My wife, Julie, also works on campus as the director of the clinical psychology training clinic. I hold graduate degrees from the University of Illinois and the University of Texas and practiced as a CPA in Chicago with an international accounting firm. I held a position at another university before my return to Miami. I am currently President-elect of the American Accounting Association and serve on the Accounting Accreditation Committee of the AACSB.

My journey to Miami as a faculty member very much began when I was a student here. As you may be aware, Miami is a very high-touch university that allows students access and the opportunity to interact with faculty members quite readily. Although I was an accountancy major at Miami, my plan was to become a lawyer. During my coursework, I had the good fortune to enroll in three accountancy courses taught by Professor Harry Lyle, then the chair of the department. During the time I had Professor Lyle as a teacher, I got to know him not only in class, but out of class as well. Those interactions sparked my interest in becoming an accounting professor. The rest, as they say, is history. Few individuals have the wonderful opportunity provided me when I literally got the chance to sit in the chair of my mentor. ***Although this may not be typical, the experience of students and faculty interacting at Miami in such a manner is not unusual. Hence why many of***



***our students keep in continual touch with their favorite faculty members and quite a few even go on to emulate their professors by continuing on to earn doctorates and join the academy.***

This issue of *The Journey* highlights the journeys of many in our community. They may be journeys just beginning or others that have been taking place for some time. These journeys describe many of the opportunities that earn Miami and the Farmer School of Business its national reputation. Articles on student experiences include one on the national champion Lady Redhawk hockey club on which a number of key players are FSB students. We also describe a few of experiential opportunities in which our undergraduates and MBAs are able to participate, including case competitions, the Cradle of Marketers event and the recently started student chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants. We think that you will also find interesting the current journey of one of our outstanding and multi-talented students, Annie Weidner.

The FSB is not only proud of its students and their accomplishments, but faculty, staff and alumni are also key



to our excellence. Toward that end, we include insightful articles on alumni Andrew DeRoberts and Nina Leigh Krueger, both of whom used their Miami experience to follow their passions with great success. We also have a feature on faculty member Jan Taylor, who has been most impactful on the many students that she has engaged during her career. Collaborations between faculty and alumni also enhance the learning experience as described in the article about faculty member Karen Meyers and alumnus Mark Mitten teaming up to teach ethics in a unique way.

*The Journey* can only provide a small sample of the many exciting learning experiences that take place in the Farmer School and of our many alumni successes. ***A critical component of our excellence is the continuing partnership among faculty, staff, students, alumni and professionals to enable our students to have a world-class business education.*** We hope you will engage with the Farmer School of Business so that we may continue to fulfill our mission. Please visit us when you have the opportunity to be in Oxford or at the various alumni meetings around the country.

With kindest regards and For Love and Honor



Marc '75



Courtesy of Miami University





# THE **PUCK** STOPS HERE

*The Lady RedHawks women's club hockey team had a great 2016-2017 season.*

They began 2017 with 14 wins, two losses and two tied games. Once the spring semester began, they continued their streak of domination... one win after the other, all the way to the Central Collegiate Women's Hockey Association (CCWHA) Division 1 Playoff Championship on February 24, 25 and 26—and then beyond that to the American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA) national championship from March 15 to 19, where they also achieved a stunning victory.

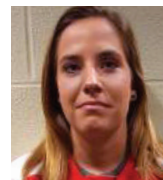
Something that may have sweetened the CCWHA victory: With ten minutes to go, the team found itself on the short end of a 3-0 score—and they turned this into a four-overtime victory over the Michigan State Spartans.

This year's national championship win is their third in the last four years, a testament to the hard work and perseverance of the young women on the team.

## THE FARMER SCHOOL FAB FIVE

One secret to their success? Five FSB students who exemplify the perfect blend of sports and school, athletics and academics. They're not shy about how involved they are—and the five of them are already on their way to success, with some pretty respectable GPAs and future plans.

## LET'S MEET THEM!



### **Carly Noble (#6)**

**Class:** Junior

**GPA:** 3.28

**Major:** Marketing

**Hometown:** Wayzata, Minnesota

**Plans for the future:** Carly locked down a marketing internship with Mattel (that's right, the toy manufacturer) in El Segundo, California, for six weeks in the summer of 2017. She said her original visit to the facility was surreal—with Barbies, Hot Wheels and other various toys lining the walls—and helped solidify her desire to do the internship. She's excited about the prospects in the coming year.





### **Sarah Peterson (#20)**

**Class:** Freshman

**GPA:** 3.63

**Major:** Management and Leadership

**Hometown:** Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

**Plans for the future:** As a freshman, Sarah just started her journey here at Miami, but she already has her sights set on working within sports management. She doesn't know exactly what she wants to do, but she loves sports, so she's going to try to combine her love of sports with her management degree to carve out the perfect career.



### **Michaela Goguen (#5)**

**Class:** Sophomore

**GPA:** 3.43

**Major:** Management and Leadership

**Hometown:** Farmington Hills, Michigan

**Plans for the future:** Like Sarah, Michaela wants to pursue a career in sports management, but her goals are more specifically geared toward the human resources field. She wants to work with people and being on a hockey team is helping her gain experience talking to people and solving problems.



### **Rachael Booth (#10)**

**Class:** Senior

**GPA:** 3.66

**Minor(s):** Supply Chain / Management and Leadership

**Hometown:** Washington, Michigan

#### **2017 ACHA Academic All-American**

**Plans for the future:** In September 2016, Rachael accepted a position with Amazon to be an area manager—managing 50 to 200 people in a fulfillment center. She started in July in Seattle, Washington. At the beginning of the spring semester, Rachael traveled to Almaty, Kazakhstan to be part of the U.S. Women's National University Team, which competed in the 2017 Winter World University Games. This was her second time participating, as she was part of the team in 2015 as well, when the games were held in Granada, Spain. The U.S. team won the bronze medal, defeating national teams from Japan and China.



### **Ellen Chiligiris (#12)**

**Class:** Junior

**GPA:** 3.70

**Minor:** Marketing

**Hometown:** Downers Grove, Illinois

#### **2017 ACHA Academic All-American**

**Plans for the future:** Ellen is a Gerontology major. She wants to combine the knowledge she's getting as a marketing minor with Gerontology and put it to use by working for a company that sells products to older adults or help businesses see the importance of marketing to older adults in the correct way.

## **HOW DO THEY DO IT ALL?**

These young women give their best to everything they do—whether it be school or hockey, there's no such thing as doing something halfway. And because they are essentially holding two full-time “jobs”, they have to have impeccable time management skills.

“We've all always played hockey,” Ellen said. “And we all want to be students and challenge ourselves. Sometimes it's tough, but you just try to balance it the best you can. A lot of us do work in the back of the bus,” she laughed.

In fact, that balance is fairly constructive for their academic and athletic careers. Juggling both allows them to hone their time management skills, which are going to be essential both now in college and when they get out into the working world.

“It helps you prioritize, because you know you're not going to have much time on the weekend, especially if we're playing an away game,” Michaela said. “So during the week, you're much more productive. It kind of helps with your student responsibilities as well.”

“You develop qualities that you need in the real world,” Rachael said, “like leadership and dealing with conflict. I see a lot of what I learn in my management and leadership classes in our interactions as a team.”





Rachael had extra practice with time management during the Spring 2017 semester. The World Games—a two-week affair that involved daily practice and grueling schedules—took place almost immediately as soon as classes began. This, understandably, required some fancy footwork in order to keep up with classes that had started, without her, in a completely different time zone.

“It was tough, because it was the beginning of the semester and professors don’t know what kind of student you are yet,” she said. “It was pretty easy to stay on top of everything, and they were all fine with it. I got it done, but it was difficult, because I was in a time zone 11 hours ahead.”

## FINDING THE CONNECTION

Athletics and academics aren’t necessarily mutually exclusive, either. Ellen noted that since it’s club hockey, they have to do all of their fundraisers and raise money for their events. Even though the group has won three out of the last four national championships, the time they have to get on the ice and practice is limited in favor of the athletics groups that are school-sponsored.

This clearly hasn’t deterred them, however—it’s actually helping them better plan their time. Because if they know they can only practice on certain days at certain times, they know they have to squeeze everything else in—studies, friendships, classes and student groups—in the interim between practices.



This proves to be an effective panacea against procrastination—these young women simply don’t have time to put off their schoolwork when they have a puck to knock around.

***“I wouldn’t be as good of a student without hockey,”*** Rachael stressed. “When hockey is over, I try to get up early, but it’s way harder when you don’t have to be on the ice at six a.m.”

In fact, according to Ellen, as a marketing minor, the fact that they have to raise their own funds gives her real-world experience when it comes to creating hypothetical marketing campaigns in her classes.

“When you think about what these women have accomplished, it is amazing,” said Jim Stearns, professor emeritus of FSB and the assistant coach/academic advisor for the club, about the team members maintaining their GPAs while devoting themselves to the ice rink. “Obviously they have to manage time to do all that, but they also are competitive, understand teams and teamwork, commitment and accountability—all things that will serve them well in the business world.”

“It’s definitely worth the balance to me,” Sarah said.

Congratulations, Lady RedHawks. Your hard work paid off. *Here’s to another great season this year!* 🏒



# a task of **ECONOMIC PROPORTIONS**

Students at FSB have the opportunity for a multitude of out-of-class learning experiences. They can participate in intra- and inter-collegiate case competitions, class projects, attend national conventions, and research, write and present papers at prestigious conferences.

All of these activities give students a chance to learn first-hand the skills they'll be using in their careers. Experiential learning is an integral part of our curriculum—by the time they graduate, our students will have gone outside of the classroom to enhance their ability to think critically, devise creative solutions to common problems and become leaders in their organizations and their communities.

A great example of experiential learning comes from the research our graduate students often get to work on with members of the faculty. The list of research projects conducted by these groups continues to grow, with plenty of opportunities for students to join the conversations circulating around their fields of work.



In the fall of 2016, Ziqiu Tang and Brian Jong, two economics grad students, began working with economics department chair and professor George Davis on an important research project that Dr. Davis had been thinking about for 20 years, after a chance meeting had him wondering about trends in

regional economies; unemployment trends in the Cincinnati area. “It’s useful to know whether Cincinnati is following national trends,” Davis said. ***“This research is one way to inform the discussion about employment inequality in the U.S. and especially in the Cincinnati area.”*** There has been a lot of discussion in recent years about the loss of manufacturing jobs and what that does to the economic region as a whole. Where do the people who have lost their jobs go? What sectors are opening up to accommodate the decrease in employment opportunities in manufacturing?

And then, recently, an economics department alum named Jim Gilligan expressed the desire to support graduate student research—just the opportunity Davis had been looking for to get this idea out of his head and into the real world. He presented the problem to Ziqiu and Brian, who set to work scouring the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the necessary data.

“We studied trends for each subsector for both cross-section level and over time,” Ziqiu said. “Our next step for this research may dig into what caused the employment change and try to find the stories behind the phenomena.”

So, what did they find? Manufacturing jobs actually revived post-recession after the year 2010 in Cincinnati. In addition, the professional business and financial activities sectors are among the areas with the most potential future growth, along with the services industry.

## **WORTH IT IN THE END**

“It was an honor to work with Professor Davis,” Ziqiu said. “He is very thoughtful and patient, and actually gave us lots of ideas when we got stuck.” 🏠



# MUSICAL LIFE STRIKES A CHORD WITH ANDREW DEROBERTS





Like many children, 2008 grad Andrew DeRoberts had dreams of becoming a famous musician. As he grew older, while still playing music and performing with several different bands, he put that dream aside to focus on a more practical goal. He followed the path his father had taken, choosing to major in history and add a minor in economics at Miami.

***His love for music refused to be silenced.*** In his sophomore year, he began to realize a “traditional” career path wasn’t necessarily right for him.

Andrew explained, “I was in Upham Hall and I just happened to walk by the entrepreneurship office one day, and they had the little table out front with a sign that said ‘Sign up to learn more about the entrepreneurship program.’ I was really searching for something in life—I knew that where I was headed at that point was not where I wanted to be. I just signed up to learn more, and I signed up for the intro to entrepreneurship class.

“Brett Smith taught that class, and several other entrepreneurship professors, who were also entrepreneurs, would come in to talk about their classes. They would give a one-day talk about, ‘Hey, I’m Scott Miller, and this is how you make a business plan,’ or, ‘I’m Jay Kayne, and I talk about creativity in entrepreneurship.’ ***I thought all these guys were weirdos and were definitely my people. They gave me the bravery to follow my muse and passion. I thought, ‘Okay, these are people who did what they wanted to do and figured it out, and that’s what I’m going to do with music.’***

“I didn’t really know anybody who did that. I think I spent a lot of time fighting going down this path. I probably spent age 16 to 19 or 20 trying to find something to do besides music, when I should have just been saying, I’m going to



be really good at music and figure it out. In terms of my career arc, that realization and working that first summer in LA were the two most cathartic changes in my path in life.”

The turning point for Andrew occurred after his junior year. “Miami puts a big thing on everybody about how you have to have a good internship that summer because that’s how you set up your job after school. And so I called a couple of music companies not really knowing much about the music business. When I was at Miami, I booked some concerts for the school, but again, that’s really only a small window into the business. I didn’t really know anything, but it did give me enough experience to know a couple of places to call, and one place I called was The Firm, which, at the time, was one of the big management companies.

“What I hoped for was an important gig. I didn’t really grasp the reality until I got out there, and when I got there, it was an awful internship. The first two weeks I was getting coffee for people and reorganizing filing cabinets, because it was 2007 and people still used those. I was just doing crappy intern work. The game changer, though, was early on in my internship when an assistant at The Firm gave me a tour budget to do for a band that had just been dropped from their record label.

“I had no idea how to do that other than a rough idea of how to make a general budget, but I did it anyway and sent it in. The singer of the band and I talked, and he asked, ‘Do you think we should do this tour?’ I said, ‘Honestly, your band is going to go on tour with a cool, alternative rock band. You’re going to play for 200 people a night, live in the van, sleep in Motel 6s and lose \$50,000 over the course





of about three months. If you do that, your band might break up. I don't think you should do that.' That started a great relationship. The band was OneRepublic, and we ended up doing a bunch of other projects together."

Along the way, the band found out Andrew's talents included playing music, and they invited him to play a little on their first record. "So basically, that internship, which was supposed to be me getting coffee and doing grunt work, turned into me getting to see a lot of really intimate details about the music business, and even participate in a lot of the most fun parts.

***"I almost dropped out to work on the road crew with OneRepublic, and my mom freaked out because I only had one year left. She was right to freak out. I went back to Miami for my senior year kind of with that in my back pocket."*** Using his

experience and connection to OneRepublic, he booked the band to play the welcome back show at Miami. "I knew that their first single, 'Apologize,' was going to come out about five days before this show happened. That song was really good. I thought, 'Okay, if this works, the band's going to make more money than they've ever made, Miami will spend less money than they've ever spent, and students are going to lose their minds because these guys could be on the way to being a massively successful band.' And honestly, it totally worked.

"Probably 3,000 kids showed up to that show, which was about 2,500 more than that band had ever played for, and they were singing the words and everything.



***I remember standing side stage and them looking at me and me looking at them like, 'Oh my God.' A month ago we were just slugging it out praying that this would work, and now it looked like it was going to.*** 'Apologize' went on

to become a massive global hit, selling about six million copies worldwide. Knowing I just played a very small role in helping a band change their lives and put out music that changed the lives of a lot of fans gave me a taste of something I didn't want to let go."

After graduation, Andrew accepted a position with The Firm in Los Angeles. "When I went back to The Firm, I realized that management is really fun if the people you're managing are your friends and they love and respect you and you love and respect them. They put me on some other projects where that was not the case, and so I learned that management was maybe not so great. After a short stint there, I started playing guitar on a bunch of stuff for people. Records, tours, everything. I was working on the creative side and sort of backed my way deeper and deeper into the music business.



“This was when Hollywood Records, the Disney record label, was kicking hard, and so I was working on records for younger artists like the Jonas Brothers and Miley Cyrus, and that helped me learn more about being in the studio. I had a big guitar-playing break, where I went on the road with Kris Allen, right after he won *American Idol* in 2009. Kris was an amazing guy to work for, and that gig was also great because that was the most popular season of *American Idol*. We played every fun arena and intimate venue. Every TV show. Every whatever. We went to Asia, Europe, we played Madison Square Garden, we did *The Tonight Show*. All the bucket list sort of stuff that you do from playing on tour I got to do on that gig, and it was really, really fun and Kris was a great guy to work for. That gig also taught me, ‘Oh this is really fun, but maybe not my path.’

About five years ago, Andrew and wife, Claire, a 2008 strategic communications grad he met at Miami, moved to Nashville so he could focus more on writing songs and producing records. And he’s doing it very well. How well? One of his latest writing efforts, a single with Brantley Gilbert called *The Weekend*, peaked at number six on the Billboard Country Airplay chart and was certified Gold by the Recording Industry Association of America. Other collaborators include the Eli Young Band, Justin Moore, Lindsay Ell and James Blunt, plus he continues to work with OneRepublic.



It sounds like Andrew’s leap of faith has landed him in a pretty sweet spot. ***“I’m at a good place in the business; not yet where I want to be, but maybe on the way. I like making good music with people who are talented and who want to be great. And if you are one of the writer/producers who reliably delivers good work, then you get to collaborate with talented artists. That’s all I want to do. I want to make music that affects people because that’s what music did for me.”***

Finding a career path that is also your life’s passion is music to our ears, Andrew. 🏠

## ANDREW DEROBERTS’ WORDS OF WISDOM

“The path you choose has risks and rewards associated with it, and you have to be comfortable with what those are.”

“Being good at what you do is important, and whatever it is that you want to do, try to be really good at that thing. If you are really good, things will work out, whether that thing is writing and producing music like me or being an accountant, or running a hot dog stand. If you’re really good at what you do, people recognize quality and things work out.”

“The fear of failure is big, and it’s debilitating for a lot of people. Understand it, but don’t let it control you.”



# ***LIFTING*** AS WE CLIMB: ***NABA student group inspires***

When Leah Phillips and Esther Ladipo started at Miami University, something was missing.

They were both at the top of their class, and were immensely successful during their first couple of years on campus. By the end of their sophomore years, Esther was in the process of changing her major from accounting to finance and Leah had decided she would do the Masters in Accounting program. They were both active members of the Multicultural Business Association (MBA), which focuses on helping minority students learn important lessons about the business world—like email etiquette, dress codes, interviewing skills and others.

In short, these young women already had a lot of great things on their resumes. But they decided that they wanted something more, something that would distinguish them

to potential employers but that would also be immensely fulfilling—and at the same time, they knew it was within their power to help support the black community on campus. That's why Esther and Leah started a chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants.

## **SOMEWHERE TO USE THEIR SKILLS**

As they formulated their vision for the group, they knew they wanted an opportunity to take everything they had learned in the MBA and expand on that knowledge. Through NABA, they were able to set up interviews, help members with resumes and support for people who face challenges similar to the ones they faced just a few years ago—primarily students of color studying finance, accountancy and economics.



“I’m not so focused on setting a trend but I really wanted to help the students on campus,” Leah noted.

***“I saw that there was a need to have an organization like this at Miami. There is such a high demand for people of color in these fields, and I wanted to increase retention.”***

The motto of NABA is “Lift as you climb.” In everything that they do, Esther and Leah embody these words. Their goal remains supporting and strengthening the professional growth of their members and providing an environment where other students can get critical development opportunities and advice from senior members and outside sources.

Part of the appeal of NABA is the rigorous schedule of workshops and speakers Leah and Esther have brought in. These workshops have been taught by experts from some of the area’s leading employers—including Procter and Gamble, KPMG, Keybank, EY, PricewaterhouseCoopers and JP Morgan. Many companies hear through the grapevine that there is a NABA chapter on campus and reach out without being prompted. The group has even had to turn some companies away because the schedule is just too full with financial literacy workshops, networking events and guest speakers.

## **WE STARTED THE FIRE... AND WE’RE NOT PUTTING IT OUT**

NABA has inspired other student groups on campus, as well. According to Esther, around the same time NABA started, so did another similar group for people of color, and there are even more organizations in the organizational stages. After they started NABA, their friend started the black pre-law group. After that, one of his mentees started the black psychologists group. Even now, the community is looking to start a chapter of the National Black Law Students Association.

“NABA was the flame, the light, that started all this activity within the black community on campus,” Esther said. “It started with us. In the future we want to foster collaboration across the board with these groups. In the real world, you’re going to be on cross-functional teams. I’m looking forward to collaboration with other organizations, and looking forward to NABA growing as an organization.”

Leah and Esther are aware of NABA’s status as a catalyst for these other diverse groups at Miami, and they’re humbled that the group they started has been so influential to the conversation about diversity on campus and helping to provide a critical safe space for people of color to interact and learn how to navigate the business world.

## **MENTORSHIP IS CRITICAL**

Another essential part of the NABA equation is the role of mentorship within—and outside of—the organization. Esther credits Michelle Thomas, Director of Student Organizations and Diversity, for propping her up and pushing her through a variety of challenges during her time at Miami. Michelle serves multiple roles for a lot of the black students on campus—cheerleader, mentor and often critic, to name a few.

***“You need someone who’s going to be real—tell you when you’re slacking, encourage you, and someone to look up to,”*** Esther said, stressing that Michelle was all these things and more. “I was able to follow what I’m passionate about and was encouraged by Michelle to do what I wanted—to make sure I enjoyed my career.”

Now, Esther said, she can take what she learned by watching Michelle and apply it to the interactions she has with her own mentees, the ones in NABA who have come up watching her and Leah navigate their own paths through their undergraduate years.



Esther recently accepted a job with Facebook as an account manager in Austin, Texas. She'll be helping small-to-midsize businesses reach their marketing goals via Facebook ads and campaigns. But this is only the tip of the iceberg for her—she also has her own startup, an app called Ranowo that could potentially help nonprofit organizations increase donor retention by generating reports to show donors where, exactly, their money goes when they give it to the nonprofit. The Facebook offer was one of several she received.

She owes much of her success and drive to the organization that she helped cultivate.

***“I followed my passion and had the confidence to do that because of this organization and all of these mentors over the years,” she said. “Without the community aspect of NABA***

***and these safe places, I don’t think I would have been able to achieve these goals. And now my ‘kids’ see that, my babies.”***

## **CULTIVATING THE COMMUNITY**

In a way, Esther’s legacy of fostering the black community at Miami University translates to her professional life as well. As an account manager for Facebook, she’ll be focused on bringing people together, as the company’s primary directive is to build a global community with the help of its various platforms. Facebook, she said, only considers itself one percent done—and Esther, you get the sense, has the same mindset.

And for Leah, who will be working as a financial analyst at Eli Lilly, primarily in the health care arena—helping people, having an impact on the people in the community. She has



always been interested in providing services to the people around her. NABA helped her to realize those goals.

Israel Campbell, a graduating senior who has been a part of the group for a few semesters now, also cited the community aspect as something that has pushed him to be more involved on campus. During the Fall 2016 semester, Israel served as the secretary for NABA, and in Spring 2017, he returned as a general body member focused on being a part of the team.

The story of how he joined the group is, most likely, similar to many of the stories the members could tell. He met Leah through a friend, and she suggested that he join NABA. From there, it was history. He said that his involvement as a member of the team is productive not only for him but also for the group as a whole. The perception that NABA has had to face, according to Israel, is that accounting is all about the numbers. However, the truth is that accounting is about people and relationships. Since Israel's goal is to work in human resources, this fits into his career goals of being the liaison between different factions.

***“In business, there are two types of people: the people who are good with numbers, and the people who are good with people,”*** he said. “It’s about realizing how you can capitalize on mentorships and build connections. That’s essentially what the whole entire organization stands for. Our slogan is ‘lifting each other as we climb,’ and Leah has done a great job of being someone that has taken the entire campus—as far as the black community—and said, ‘Hey, there are opportunities out there.’”

That bears repeating: Leah and Esther lead by example. That’s what inspired Israel.

“They have really led by inspiring instead of commanding, because you can’t command leadership, you can only inspire it,” he stressed.

Israel himself has moved into a mentorship role as the years have progressed. He will be completing an internship this summer with the Federal Reserve, after which he hopes to join a company like Nielsen or Allstate. He said that through the opportunities NABA provided, he was able to grow comfortable in his own skin and really envision his future as a measurable goal that he can achieve.

## WHERE WE COME FROM... AND WHERE WE’RE GOING

All good things must come to an end, however—and that includes both Esther’s and Leah’s time here at the Farmer School. As Spring 2017 graduates, they are leaving behind a legacy of hard work and determination, and NABA is part of that narrative. 🏠

“I see NABA being not just a safe place and disrupter in the Farmer School, but also a disrupter on campus. One of the things I challenged them to do next year is a multicultural fair, which would be a great opportunity to collaborate with a lot of the black groups on campus.”

—Esther



from the  
*cradle*

to the  
*career*

## Alumni share wisdom at Cradle of Marketers

For the fourth year in a row, FSB hummed with the excitement that is Cradle of Marketers.

This is the magical event that brings successful marketing professionals back to their alma mater to give advice and speak with students about their own experiences—both at the Farmer School and beyond.

During their time on campus, they tried to share all of their years of wisdom with the current FSB students in a mere few hours. There is so much one can learn from these successful businesspeople, but a few lines shone through at the end of the day.

One of the overarching messages that the marketers espoused was that the marketing world is constantly evolving. Students need to maintain flexible career paths in such a volatile industry—but truly, any experience is good experience, because you never know when you might have use of it somewhere down the line. ***In the end, if you are working hard to sharpen skills, gain further knowledge of the industry and discovering your passion, you are on the right path to success.***

They visited classes, spoke with students and participated in roundtable discussions about the future of the industry and how their FSB education has helped them navigate sometimes choppy waters.

### VIEW FROM THE TOP

As the marketers visited classes and hosted panel discussions, one theme stood out above the rest: Marketing is a tough cookie to crack, but our students have a leg up. If the presence of these high-ranking marketers is any indication, Farmer School graduates have the tools and the skills they need to become successful—to tame the unruly beast that is consumer marketing.

The panel was a diverse group of people with diverse life experiences and passions. But they all had one thing in common: impressive careers spurred on by dedication and desire to succeed. ***Building a career isn't about just having a job, the panel agreed. It's about making choices.*** It's about how to decide where to go and create a career.

“Choices aren't easy, but you're getting the foundation [at FSB],” said Doug Ladd, the vice president of commercialization of Johnson Medtech.





Courtesy of Miami University

## PASSING THE TORCH

A few of the alumni spent time in marketing classes speaking one-on-one with the students. Kevin George (CMO/President of Mosaic) and Dave Hutchinson (SVP of Marketing for SAP) joined assistant professor Neil Brigden's MKT 335 class for an open discussion.

"I appreciated how honest and open both men were about their career paths," said junior marketing major Coty Cocallas. "They were genuinely interested in the careers we were pursuing and wanted to give us insight and advice to help us moving forward. They even asked what some of us were doing for work this summer and congratulated us."

Throughout the discussion, the students were reminded that these marketers had once been in their shoes, but they didn't have to be told explicitly. The earnest way Kevin and Dave invested in the students' stories was a clear indication of how much they cared.

"What I appreciated most about their time in our class was that whenever we ran out of questions they would ask, 'What else do you want to know? How else can we help you? What else do you need?'" said junior marketing major Alexandra Cameron. "It was so obvious to me how much they truly cared and wanted to help, even though we had all only been together for an hour."

The Shark Tank experience was even more interesting for the students that participated. Groups from Pete Jack's

marketing capstone course were given the opportunity to present class projects to a panel of alumni that served as the "sharks."

"It was a fantastic experience," said senior marketing major Chris Wirth. "We understood it was a great opportunity to network and get feedback from some incredibly accomplished Miami alums. We were proud that the hard work we had been doing was being recognized, it was definitely a great confidence boost."

## STILL BURNING BRIGHT INTO THE FUTURE

Throughout their interactions with the students, our distinguished marketing alumni imparted some critical insights: ***Learn about big data, make the best choices you can and make sure you stay on brand—your brand, as a person and as a professional.***

Marketing professor Gillian Oakenfull, who helped organize the Cradle of Marketers event, had some insightful advice of her own for the students as she introduced the panelists at Thursday night's discussion:

***"This could be your future if you play your cards right."*** 🏠





NINA LEIGH KRUEGER:

*a passion  
for the journey*





One of the first things you notice when you meet Nina Leigh Krueger, President at Nestlé Purina PetCare, is how comfortable people are around her. From the maintenance staff and employees playing with their dogs in Purina’s “Bark Yard” to meetings with C-Level executives, she seamlessly fits in at the company, which makes some of the most trusted and high-quality pet care brands. She has known many of these co-workers for years, and they have cheered her ascent through the ranks. Her philosophy explains the bond she feels with every Purina employee. “One of the most important things to remember is that it’s not about me. It’s about Purina. It’s about our associates. I’m just the person, the conduit, who makes it happen. I’m the conductor. If they’re not doing well, I’m not signaling correctly. If I want them to succeed, I have to let them. ***It’s beyond the power of one. It’s the power of many. That’s how we get places. It’s a big piece of who I am.***” It may also be the reason employment review website Glassdoor has repeatedly ranked Purina as one of the best places to work, as voted by employee choice.

The 1983 FSB marketing grad is a perfect example of where passion and perseverance can lead you. In 1993 she landed a brand management internship at Purina’s St. Louis headquarters (the only internship Purina offered that

year). In 2015, she was named Chief Marketing Officer. A year ago, she was announced as President, Nestlé Purina, U.S.

Nina Leigh Howard was born in Cleveland, Tennessee, to Kentucky natives. Her dad’s postgraduate studies and career path included several relocations during her early childhood. They were living in New Orleans when, after multiple hurricanes, Nina Leigh’s mother put her foot down and said, “We’re moving back to Kentucky.” They moved to Louisville, where the family matriarch still resides.



*Nina Leigh with her aunt Sharon Hourihan in 1987*

## HOW DID A GIRL FROM KENTUCKY END UP AT MIAMI UNIVERSITY?

“My mom would have loved for me to go to UK. For my parents, it was always a matter of not if you go, but where you go. When you’re one of six, you don’t get your hand held a lot. The belief was that it was our journey and there were base expectations. In my family, every child had a different set of expectations based on what our parents thought you could achieve. ***Their job was to expose you to things that they thought you had interest in, which is what we’ve done with our kids, and then you had to find your own journey and your own path.*** I’m the one who wanted to do the things that I did. My parents didn’t force me to do that. That’s what I do with my kids. ‘It is your journey not mine.’ They didn’t use those words, but that’s firmly the way I believe it is. When I went to college, I believed, ‘I committed to this, so I will follow through with it.’ That was a big lesson we had growing up. You never backed out of a commitment.





You never had to repeat it, but you always had to follow through. They really gave a lot of themselves to help us be what we were and what we are.

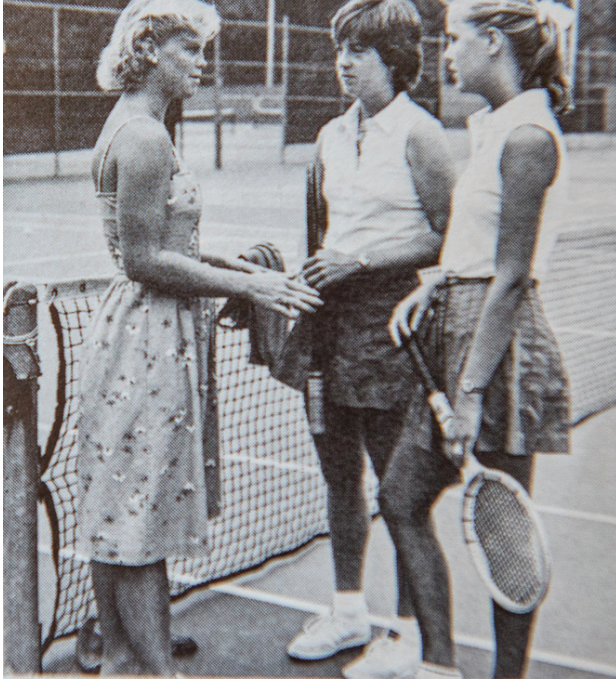
“I looked at a lot of different schools, including Notre Dame and Georgia, and I wanted to play field hockey or tennis. I was playing in a tennis tournament and [then Miami tennis coach] Leann Davidge was in the stands and came up to me after the match. We connected right away. Miami wasn’t on my radar at the time, and she said, ‘Just come see the school.’ The minute I walked on campus, I knew it was home. I thought, ‘This is exactly what I want.’ Miami was just a perfect fit, and visiting the campus, meeting the team and Leann made that so clear.”

## ANYTHING YOU WOULD CHANGE ABOUT YOUR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE?

“Zero. When I got to Miami, I was incredibly shy, didn’t really talk to a lot of people. I knew one person who was going there and that was it. I went through rush and pledged a sorority and played tennis. I thought I wanted to major in special education. I am the third of six children, and my dad said, ‘You have to major in something that you can get a job in, and you have to major in something that you think you’re going to like forever. Take all your electives in special education if that’s really what you want to do, I’m happy for you, but I honestly think you’re more of a business major.’ I had earned a lot of college credit hours while I was in high school, so I could actually start taking economics and other business classes right away. By the end of my freshman year, I’d taken all my electives in special education and realized it wasn’t a great fit for me after all.







It turns out my dad was right. So I changed my major to business, which worked out really well because it matched my interests and allowed me to meet some wonderful people. I also met an amazing group of people in tennis and in my sorority, which was great because it expanded the group of people that I knew. “It made it easier for me to talk to people and get to know people. It was a wonderful experience from that perspective. I don’t think I realized I was balancing a lot until my senior year because it just was the way it was. I had played three sports in high school and worked. Coach Leann made it really, abundantly clear that academics came first, tennis was second and sorority was third. She was also in a sorority in college while she played tennis, so she understood the dynamics of it. She set us all up for success. I also set pretty aggressive goals for myself, and I wasn’t going to let anybody down. Really, it just was a matter of principle that I committed to it, so I was going to do each of them very well.

“Marketing was always my dream. I always wanted to go into brand management, so I loved my finance and statistics classes. There was also a marketing research class, and I remember the project we did to this day. It was the first time I actually got to develop an idea for a product and take it from concept to launch, and that left a mark on me. ***The thing about Miami was it wasn’t just teaching you the book knowledge, it was teaching you the experiences.*** Miami also has high expectations, which is fantastic. When you were an athlete

and you played a sport, they expected you to still be in every single class. They didn’t give you a pass. You had to excel, and you had to do a really good job at everything you did.”

## LIFE AFTER MIAMI

“After a few internships and side jobs after graduation, I decided to move away from home and found myself in Washington, D.C., where I had extended family. When I got to D.C., I took a lot of interviews but had a difficult time finding a job right away. One day my aunt asked me what I thought was going wrong, and I told her, ‘I just can’t talk about myself.’ She said to me, ‘You have so much confidence when you’re on the tennis court. Nobody messes with you.’ To me, that was totally different. I’m playing tennis, I study my opponent. I know their strengths and their weaknesses. I know my strengths and weaknesses. I have a game plan and I go out and I execute it. To that, she said, ‘Well, that kind of sounds like a job interview to me.’ I’ll never forget the advice she gave me. She said to go into my next job interview and study like I was going to play a match—learn everything about that company and the job, and it sounds funny, but to channel my favorite actress, who is Katharine Hepburn. She was a strong, smart and classy woman who exuded such confidence. So I decided to ‘be’ Katharine Hepburn in my next interview, and it worked because it got me the job. To this day, there are times where I channel Katharine Hepburn.

“Out of college, I didn’t want to move to a city where I knew a lot of people because I wanted to come out of my shell. While working at a job in the financial industry in D.C., I got my Series 7 license and sold tax exempt securities and wrote bond offerings. After being there for a few years, I decided I had some legs to stand on. I moved to Chicago and took jobs leasing hospital equipment and working for a startup. I knew I eventually wanted to get into brand management, so at that point I decided I would go back to school to get an MBA. I knew I wanted to stay in the Midwest, and my best friend was at Children’s Hospital doing her residency in St. Louis and suggested I look into Washington University. So I checked it out, thought it was great, and enrolled that August.”

## THE VALUES NINA LEIGH LEARNED FROM HER PARENTS FORMED THE BASIS FOR HOW SHE HAS RAISED HER OWN CHILDREN.

“When I was growing up, my family often opened up the doors of our home to others, no questions asked—whether it was foreign exchange students or friends of mine or my siblings who needed a place to stay for family reasons.

“After I got married, and even after we had our own children, my husband and I welcomed exchange students into our home. We had students from Taiwan, Brazil, Poland and Spain. I believe my kids benefited from that experience. We welcomed people in our house that were from a different culture and didn’t speak our language. My parents always taught us to seek to understand why someone is different. That’s been a big part of who I am. That is such an important lesson to learn in life. You’re going to be put in situations where you don’t feel at home, you don’t understand, and you’ve got to learn to navigate them. Being exposed to that helps.

“The most important thing for me is allowing my kids to discover where their passion really lies and being able to live that passion. ***I’m lucky in that my passion is what I’m doing. I’ve always known I wanted to work in brand management and marketing, and Purina is the perfect place to pair that with my other passion—pets.*** That doesn’t always happen. You have to make those choices. For me, success for them truly is for them to find that. That’s the fun part about being a parent, when you can see their eyes start to light up when they talk about something they really enjoy. To me, that’s what success looks like for them.”



Nina Leigh with her husband Robert and sons Brandt, Dean and Bel

## HER JOURNEY AT PURINA

***“Careers are a journey, not a destination.”*** When I started at Purina, I never thought I would be where I am today. I just never thought about what was next. I just wanted to conquer where I was. Once I’ve conquered where I am, I kind of feel like, ‘Okay, what’s next?’

“I started in marketing and had a couple of different positions, and then Nestlé, which owned the Friskies business, acquired Purina. I was asked to manage the integration between Nestlé pet care marketing and Purina marketing, which was really interesting because it was about learning the strengths of both companies to become better together. Following the integration, I worked in our global business unit and on a few special marketing projects before taking a marketing leadership role in our litter division.”

“I learned a tremendous amount about myself and how to motivate a team around a common goal to win, in what, at the time, was a tough business environment. And we did. I ended up becoming President of the litter division a year and a half later. Following that, I became the Chief Marketing Officer and President of the company, which is where I am today.”



## WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

“I love what I do. Pets are my passion, which is why being at Purina is such a great fit for me. What better place to work than Purina, where we embody the belief that people and pets are better together. So much so that this translates into the causes we support. Last year, we opened the Purina Family Pet Center at St. Louis Children’s Hospital, where patients can be reunited with their family pets in a room specially built for that purpose. How amazing is that?”

“We also have worked with the Urban Resource Institute (URI), a New York-based organization that provides safe shelter for survivors of domestic violence. We know that one of the reasons people don’t leave an abusive situation is because of their pet; they are afraid of what would happen to their pet if they left. We have now sponsored Purina Pet Havens at three of URI’s domestic violence shelters so victims and their pets can heal together.

“To me, those are huge things. It makes me so proud to see everything that we do for pets, from the work we do with pet shelters to ensure the dogs and cats are getting high-quality nutrition while they wait for a loving home, to being very involved in all the communities where we have a presence. We don’t do it to get publicity. We do it because it is the right thing to do. It really is who we are, and I love that.

“I also love how pet-friendly our company is. On any given day, you’ll find up to 80 pets—mostly dogs, but some cats—coming to work with associates. It’s impossible not to smile when you walk past someone’s desk and they have their pet with them, if you greet a pet in our lobby or on one of our walking paths around campus. And aside from just making us smile, we know that there are health benefits. Studies have shown that pets can lower blood pressure and decrease stress, and they just put everyone in a good mood. ***Think about it from an exercise standpoint, too—you’re supposed to get up and***

***walk every couple of hours. If you have your dog here, you are up and moving more, and even socializing with colleagues. It creates a great atmosphere. You come back and you work better and smarter. For me, all of this is perfect. Because Purina’s passions are my passions.”***

## DID YOU ALWAYS HAVE A PASSION FOR PETS?

“We didn’t have pets when I was young. One of my older sisters was allergic to almost all animals. By the time I was around eight, my sister’s allergies had gotten under control, and we happened to get a phone call from a veterinarian friend who said she had a stray dog, and asked if we would be interested in having it. That’s when we got our first dog, Shotzie. After that, my family always had at least one, and sometimes two, dogs at home.

“After we had children, my husband and I knew we wanted to bring a dog into our family. My son Dean’s first word was ‘dog.’ Our first dog was named Bailey, a lab mix. She’s a fantastic dog. But my husband had always wanted a golden retriever. I was coaching a basketball game one morning when he called me in a panic. I was worried something was wrong, but it turns out he had found a golden retriever that was available for adoption, and we needed to act quickly. Lo and behold, later that day, Gus came into our lives.”

## WHAT’S NEXT FOR PURINA?

“Innovating pet care is what we do. We’ve spent the last 90 years as the leading force behind bettering the lives of pets and advancing pet food, and we’ll be doing big things for pets for the next 90 years and beyond. When it comes to innovation, we look for ways to help pets live longer,

healthier, happier lives. Pets bring so much joy into our lives, and we want to be able to spend quality time with them, especially into their later years. Our scientists are always on a quest to advance the well-being of pets, and that helps keep all of us focused on innovation.

“When we’re thinking about innovation, we also recognize that we need to ensure we’re meeting pet owners’ needs and desires, too, and we really seek to understand how we can bring value into their lives. We are in a different environment today. If you think about it, years ago, if you could make it, you had a competitive advantage. Then if you could move it, you had a competitive advantage. Then there was this thing called technology that came in, and it made both of those things more efficient and more effective, but it was really all about big batches and production. Pet owners’ expectations have evolved. They’re demanding more. They’re seeking to understand their pets’ overall health and wellness, taking more of a holistic view. They want speed, personalization and what is good for THEIR pet. They expect more from pet companies. Being only a good provider is no longer an option.

“We believe the company that knows the consumer the best, values two-way conversation and uses that knowledge to provide the best value will win. ***Our world is just changing so quickly. Agility is going to be the key to winning.***

“For me, it’s all about learning. ***If you come to work every day expecting to learn, you will.*** That’s the fun part. I want to continue to learn, and I really want to continue to add value. I’ve only touched on the possibilities of this job. Our industry is changing every single day. I can’t imagine that there will be a lack of challenges for us to conquer, but I do know that our team is strong and well-equipped to face them. I can’t predict exactly what’s next, but that’s what energizes us to bring our best every day and lead the future of pet care.



“And as much as we look forward to the future at Purina, we also embrace our heritage. Our company was founded 120 years ago by William H. Danforth, who always inspired others around him to stand tall in the face of adversity. Our values, which are called the ‘Five Talls,’ are based on this philosophy, and his vision still defines who we are as a company today. The foundation he laid in the early years has helped Purina become the global leader in pet care that we are. We are excited by the opportunities ahead and how we can continue to lead and enrich the lives of pets and the people who love them.”





In 1920, Purina founder William Danforth wrote a motivational book called “I Dare You,” which spelled out his Four Talls: Integrity, Passion, Expertise and Performance. He wrote: “I Dare You to Stand Tall, Think Tall, Smile Tall and Live Tall.” Those principles became the cornerstone of his philosophy—a set of values that has guided Purina for generations. In 2009, a fifth Tall was added, “Create Tall,” to signify the importance of innovation.

## NINA LEIGH KRUEGER’S WORDS OF WISDOM

“Martin Luther King didn’t just have a plan. He had a dream—a vision. Think of your career in the same way. It’s important to put a plan out there, but we always need to remember to be flexible and let the journey happen.”

## YOU RECENTLY RETURNED TO THE FARMER SCHOOL AND SPOKE TO SOME CLASSES. WHAT WAS THAT LIKE?

“It was great being back there. I loved seeing the changes and the new ice arena. Talking with the students was an incredible experience. There’s an energy that students have that really inspires me. They stepped up to the challenge of asking questions, and they asked some fantastic ones. I was very impressed by that. I came away so energized. Being with the students makes me sharper and smarter too.”

## AND WHAT’S NEXT FOR NINA LEIGH?

“I love teaching and coaching. I coached both of my sons’ teams, one in basketball for eight years and one in baseball for five years. I will go back and do that at some point in my life because I believe that sports is a great way to learn some of life’s lessons.”

It’s clear that wherever Nina Leigh’s journey leads her, she will pursue it with passion, integrity and at least a few pets. 🐕

## GREAT INVESTMENT: MBA GROUP WINS ACG CUP

Farmer School students have a great track record at regional and national case competitions. No matter the major or the challenge, the curriculum at the FSB favors the development of critical thinking skills and focuses on putting true-to-life business problems in front of students, so they excel at finding solutions in real-world settings.

Our highly rated, part-time professional MBA program is no different. Case in point: In February 2017, five MBA students competed in the ACG Cup, an annual case competition sponsored by the Association for Corporate Growth, where student teams play the role of investment bankers pitching their recommendations to the board of one of the companies involved in the competition.

Between Miami, Xavier and the University of Cincinnati, Miami was the winner! The year before that, the story was the same. And the year before that, too.

### IN THE REAL WORLD...

Students in the competition were given a true-to-life problem facing a company. Then, they conducted extensive research and presented valuations, capital markets and strategic advice to a panel of judges, which consisted of seasoned professionals from within the ACG network—just like investment bankers would in the real world.

Judges evaluated the teams based on four important criteria: valuation, presentation, strategy and salesmanship/confidence.

“I feel that participating in the competition for three to four weeks, taught me a lot of valuable tools and knowledge,” said James Sheehy, operational excellence and continuous improvement manager at Jurgensen Companies, who will graduate from the MBA program in the spring. “It is a great event to participate in and great practice for the real-world scenarios where you are given minimal information and asked to make a recommendation and/or secure new



business. With the help of the coaches, this competition becomes a tutorial and by the end, you have learned many different perspectives and gain comfort and confidence in making a pitch.”

The team of Cindy DeVelvis, Lisa D’Amore, James Sheehy, Prabu Ravindren and Brad Carmella, brought home the third ACG Cup in a row for Miami.

The whole goal of ACG Cincinnati is to help professionals support corporate growth through workshops, competitions and networking events. The ACG Cup is a way for area MBA students to rub elbows with some of the top industry experts in the area and attain an experience they couldn’t get in the classroom.

“[It] gave me a chance to apply MBA knowledge I have learned to a real-world problem with a real-world deadline,” said Brad Carmella. “It revealed what it is like to prepare a pitch for a potential client. This included countless meetings, conference calls and late night texts to ensure every detail from accounting to presentation was correct. Overall it was great experience and provided a chance to use my MBA skills in a way I had never considered before.”

### CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Bringing home the ACG Cup was the tip of the iceberg for our MBA program this past semester. In March, U.S. News and World Report announced its annual MBA rankings for 2018, placing the Farmer School’s professional MBA program within the top 25 schools in the nation. What’s more, for the sixth year in a row, we have the highest national ranking of any part-time MBA program in Southwest Ohio. That’s huge! 🏆



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

*Annie Weidner*



It isn't every day that you get to appear onstage with a Broadway musical star, but for senior marketing/music/psychology student Annie Weidner, it's all in a day's work.

On Friday, April 28, the Miami Men's Glee Club hosted their end-of-year concert, appropriately titled "Phantom of the Glee Club" in honor of the star guest, Ciaran Sheehan, who has played the title character in the famous musical "Phantom of the Opera" on Broadway and around the world. Ciaran sang a few solos, but the highlight of the night was when he and Annie performed a duet of the song "The Prayer," which was first sung by Celine Dion and Andrea Bocelli in 1999.

How does something like this come about? Marketing instructor Patrick Lindsay, who has known Ciaran for a long time and has followed his performances around the world, met Annie during Miami's trip to the National Women's Case Competition this past April. But the story begins long before that.

"I met Ciaran more than a dozen years ago," Pat recalled. "He was touring the country with a show he created called 'From Galway to Broadway.' I was directing an Irish men's choral group at the time, and we did a joint concert at Memorial Hall in Cincinnati. We hit it off immediately (worked out, dined, toured the city together). I would end up producing a number of additional concerts (as a side job!) for Ciaran in different venues, including when I lived in Los Angeles."

After joining the faculty at the Farmer School, Pat saw an opportunity to help out with the Miami Men's Glee Club and eventually connected them with Ciaran, who came here for a concert in 2016. Then, in 2017, Ciaran was set to perform at Miami in April when Pat went to Texas with Annie for the women's case competition. Once he met Annie, Pat knew that it would be amazing if he could get the two to perform together.

***And the rest was history!***



## MORE THAN MUSIC

But the coolest thing about Annie isn't the fact that she had the opportunity to perform with Ciaran (although it is, admittedly, pretty cool). ***The thing that stands out about Annie is the aplomb with which she approaches her studies and her life at Miami.***

And she has so much going on. She is the music director for the all-women's a cappella group, The Misfitz, the president of the Panhellenic Council, a member of several jazz music groups and a full-time student (with three majors, no less). Asked when she finds time to sleep, she simply laughs—***there's no time for sleep when there are so many amazing experiences to have.***

"I've found that some of the best advice that I've ever gotten is that you always really do have enough time," she said about finding the time for all of the activities on her plate. "You might sometimes wish there were a few more hours in the day, but truthfully we are given enough time. You just have to decide where you want to allocate that time and what means the most to you. I feel like I've invested fully in all the things I've been involved in."



## AMBITIOUS & ACCOMPLISHED

What's more, Annie was recently chosen as one of the winners of the 2018 Provost Student Academic Achievement Award. Even with all of her accomplishments and activities, Annie remains humble, attributing the education and opportunities given to her by professors at Miami as key factors in her success. Her situation offers her a one-of-a-kind perspective on life as a student and as an individual on her way to finding her place in the world.

"[My situation] is definitely unique, and a lot of people say that it probably makes me stand out in the recruiting process.

And that's true," she admitted, ***"but I would say the most rewarding thing has been that I feel very well rounded. And I would totally attribute that to this university***

and how the liberal arts program—them letting you experience different things—is so important. To go to a conservatory or go to a school that only specializes in business I don't think is very valuable in terms of growing you as an individual. Miami does a great job graduating well-rounded people."

She started out as a music and psychology double major, with a management and leadership minor. The addition of the marketing major was something that Annie didn't know would happen until it did. She took a marketing course—taught by Jan Taylor—and immediately fell in love with how interconnected psychology and marketing has to be, especially in today's world of integrated technologies and personal branding. She marched right up to the registration office and said: "If I can add a third major and still make it out of here in four years, sign me up."

Annie isn't only a rockstar in the classroom. As president of the Panhellenic Council, she sees her work and ambitions coming together for something greater than herself. She loves being able to support her fellow students, and is proud to be the leader of something that holds people to a higher standard, and she's glad to be part of a group with such a rich culture and history.

"I am so proud to be a part of the movement that Greek life is headed towards, of being leaders on this campus," she said. "We're already there. And we have room to grow."

## LEAVING A LEGACY

When asked about her role in the narrative of women's empowerment on campus and elsewhere, Annie was honest: She has never felt personally disadvantaged herself, because her family has been supportive of every endeavor she has undertaken. But as an intellectually and emotionally mature individual, she understands that not everyone has her same experience. To that end, she strives to be a role model for the students coming in after her.

"It's about imparting on younger women that are now entering this university that they can be pretty much whatever they want to be at this moment that they're entering college," she stressed. ***"All that really matters is that you have motivation and dedication and that the end of the day, you are able to love other people really well."*** Because this world is all about the relationships and connections you build and the wisdom that you can impart on other people. So if you can love others well, then you've done it right."

Her enthusiasm for music and marketing runs in the family, too. Her brother, Tommy, is starting at the FSB in the fall as a marketing major, and she says there's a possibility he could follow some musical pursuits as well. A dynasty in the making!

"She's so quietly determined and poised," Jan said. "I'm so proud of her."

Indeed, Annie's ambition and poise have left an impact on those around her. After the Glee Club concert, at dinner, Ciaran Sheehan turned to Pat Lindsay and said quite simply:

***"I didn't do her justice."*** 🍷



# Venturing Beyond Oxford

If you had the funds to invest in one startup, what would you invest in? How would you go about assessing the worth of your investment?

That was what a group of Farmer School students had to determine during the 2017 Venture Capital Investment Competition. The VCIC began in 1998 as an educational event for MBA students to dip their toes in the waters of venture funding. The program is now in its 18th year and has continued to grow in influence, attracting teams from 13 countries across three continents from some of the best business schools.

The 2017 VCIC invited 78 business schools from around the world to send teams of budding venture capitalists and analysts to participate in the competition. Teams were given the business plans for three actual startup companies and told to choose which one they, as venture capitalists, would invest in. This happened in three steps:

- 38 hours before the start of the event, the plans were emailed to the teams to conduct research on each business and learn everything they could about the economic need for the startups' products or services.
- Then, once they arrived at the competition location, they listened to startup pitches and had one-on-one interview time with the founders of each business.
- At the end of the event, they chose an organization worthy of their money and presented their proof.

During the regional competition at the beginning of March, the FSB team finished in first place. Then, a few weeks later, they headed to Chapel Hill, North Carolina to participate in the national championship, which took place at the University of North Carolina. The group brought home the second-place plaque and a check for \$1,000.

The kicker? This is the very first time the Farmer School has been invited to participate in the competition.

For the regional tournament, FSB's team was up against groups from the most prestigious business schools in the nation: University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Northwestern University Kellogg School of Business and University of Michigan Ross School of Business were only a few names on the list. ***They took home the first-place check and catapulted into the national spotlight.***

"What an impressive victory," said Patrick Vernon, the director of VCIC, after the team's first-round win. "Miami University's first place finish is a testament to the work Tim and Mary did preparing the team. ***I am particularly impressed that Miami University, as a***





*first-time contender, defeated a couple of schools who have been competing in these events for several years: Michigan and Chicago. That is not easy to do!”*

At the end of March, the national tournament took the top teams from each region, bringing seven teams from the Mid-Atlantic (Georgetown University and University of Maryland), Northeast (Boston University and Cornell University) and Central regions (Miami University, Notre Dame University and University of Chicago).

Again, the Farmer School team shone, tying with Boston University for second place in this global competition.

“This is a significant moment for not only the Institute for Entrepreneurship, but Miami University as a whole,” said Tim Holcomb, the Cintas Chair in Entrepreneurship and associate professor. “The caliber of the competition that the team faced was world class and this achievement speaks volumes about the students’ capabilities and ability to tap into an amazing network of regional support.”

## TEAM COMPOSITION IS KEY

For such an involved competition, every person on the team had a job and contributed to the overall success of the Farmer School. The team was divided into two groups: the presentation squad and the group of analysts that provided support from Oxford. The former traveled first to the University of Chicago, and then to the University of North Carolina, in order to compete against the other schools, while the analysts stayed in Oxford to help research the startups and provide insights into team decisions.

Five students represented the Farmer School in Chicago and Chapel Hill, North Carolina:

- Javier Avila (Senior)
- Shane Hitzler (Senior)
- Jack Kellenberger (Senior)
- Kasey Marengo (Senior)
- Matt Gordon (Senior)

While these four students worked behind the scenes in Oxford and provided analytical support to the team in the field:

- John Condon (Junior)
- Joseph Conjerti (Senior)
- Max Davis (Sophomore)
- Karolina Ulasevich (Senior)

“Recognizing that an understanding of early-stage funding is critical for students looking to start ventures of their own, I began researching ways to address this at the undergraduate level,” said Mary Dieglio, assistant director of the Page Center for Entrepreneurship.

***“Most universities aren’t doing it. Through my research, I discovered VCIC and was so intrigued by its uniqueness and ability to simulate the [venture capital] process in a very real-world way.”***

## GETTING READY FOR THE BIG DAY

In order to get ready for the tournament, the students set up a grueling training schedule with industry experts and professors. Patrick Vernon alluded to the amount of prep work the students had to undertake before the competition—it all paid off. The goal was to get these students thinking like true venture capitalists, and they had a very short time to do it in.

So what was the plan? Tim Holcomb and Mary Dieglio brought in nine institutional investors and analysts from six different firms across Cincinnati and Chicago to help facilitate the training, as well as five founders from startups in both Cincinnati and San Francisco. Each training session was about four hours long, and at first Mary was concerned about having the students make that much of a time commitment, but they surprised her by agreeing without hesitation.


“We truly would not have had the success we had if it weren’t for the support of our external coaches,” Mary said. ***“As an alumna, it gives me a lot of pride to see the support Miami receives from the larger entrepreneurial community.”***

The students contributed to the team using their own unique skills and abilities, which provided them an opportunity to branch out among their own fields of study. For instance, journalism major Karolina Ulasevich was able to put her sleuthing skills to work finding any information she could about the founders of these startups.

“My role was to conduct market research, assist with finding the right syndication strategy and to add some humor when we were all a little too stressed out,” she said. “Essentially, you can call me the stalker of the group—I dig for information that the founders of the startups may not want you to know, AKA being a total journalist!”

## INDICATIVE OF A FLOURISHING STARTUP CULTURE

The startup culture at Miami continues to blossom. From 2006 to 2015, according to data provided by PitchBook, 105 Miami graduates launched 95 funded startups (organizations that raised at least \$250,000 in seed, Series A, Series B and so forth). These startups raised more than \$850 million in venture funding during that period—and that doesn’t even count the last two years, which included Oros, EBTH and CrossChx, among other successful burgeoning businesses.

***“I think we’re only beginning to see the impact of students thinking entrepreneurially across campus,”*** Holcomb said. “The impact of Miami graduates on the entrepreneurial ecosystem is real and far-reaching.” 





# *the end of class is just the beginning*

Her title is Senior Lecturer & Director of FSB Honors and Scholars Program, but to the thousands of students she has taught in her more than 30 years, she's more than that. ***Coach. Confidant. Mentor. Career counselor. Mom. Best friend and worst nightmare, all rolled up in one. She's Jan Taylor, and she's a Farmer School icon.***

Jan came to Miami in 1986 when her husband, Don Norris, joined the FSB as a tenure-track assistant professor in the marketing department. Although she had taught in the past, as an instructor at American University, she had no ambition or intention to teach in Oxford.

*So how and why did she begin teaching marketing at the same time as Don started?*

"When I came to Miami, I figured I was going to be a stay-at-home mom for a bit. But Jim Robeson, the marketing department chair, had other plans. I had no idea how he knew about my teaching at American U, but when we came out, we had dinner with Jim and his wife, Teddi. After dinner Jim said to me, 'Okay, give me two sessions on marketing principles in the fall and then in the spring, you're gonna teach a Marketing 306 class.' I said, 'I'm not looking for a job.' He said, 'I don't care, I need people.' He changed the entire focus of my life, so here I am."

And it's clear that "here" is where Jan belongs. Not satisfied to teach her classes, hold the required number of office hours and then call it a day, Jan continually seeks ways to enhance the educational experience not just for her students, but for other marketing, FSB and Miami students

as well. Five years ago, she recognized that Miami students interested in the advertising and public relations fields could benefit from a “reality check,” so she connected with some of her past students working in those fields and created Chicago Ad Week, a four-day project-based immersive experience that provides students with knowledge, insights and networking opportunities with Miami alumni currently employed in the advertising, public relations and media.

“Nick Brauer, a marketing/analytics double major, graphic design minor, went on the Ad Week trip. He told me afterwards, ‘I have got to do this, I’ve got to do advertising.’ Three weeks ago, he got an offer from Digitas. He framed the offer and gave it to me.”

Jan is also the faculty lead for the Deloitte Consulting-sponsored Battle of Ohio Case Competition. “Six years ago, Deloitte decided to have a case competition and two of my honors kids came back from their Deloitte internships, took offers and came to me and said, ‘Will you help us? We’ve got to do this.’ Same thing with Patrick Schwing down at P&G, who asked, ‘We have this hack-a-thon. Will you put kids together in teams and come on and do it?’”

And ‘do it’ they did. “The project entailed a lot of teamwork and time management, specifically because we only had a few hours to get everything done,” noted Kate Franz, a senior psychology and marketing major who was on the winning team. “We had to think and analyze critically but also quickly. We learned a number of useful tools and learned a lot about developing insights and how to market to millennials. It was a really rewarding experience, and I am very glad I participated.”

The prep, practice and travel takes an enormous amount of Jan’s time. *What makes it worthwhile for her and for the students?*

“Virtually every student who I’ve taken to Deloitte’s Battle of Ohio, has ended up in consulting. It teaches them how to do something that’s pretty labor intensive in a week’s time period. The biggest thing is that they learn how to put the decks together. If we think that students aren’t being



hired for their PowerPoint skills, we’re wrong, because they are. Then I think their presentation skills, probably the most important though, putting them on the spot with questions. I think it’s important for them to have these kinds of experiences. I look back at it, and no way I could do that kind of presentation when I came out of college. I would have been terrified.”

Jan also integrates client projects and presentations into her classroom to ensure that her students get the practice and polish they need to succeed, and that’s a moving target—students have changed a lot over Jan’s Farmer School tenure.

“What I’m seeing now is that they’re overachieving. Math, stats, econ ... one of our Provost Award winners, she’s majoring in music performance, psych and marketing and she’s the president of the Panhellenic Association and a member of the Misfitz (an all-female a cappella group). They just cut a CD. She was nominated for an international award for her arrangement for one of the songs, and she is put together and not harried on any day of the week. It’s incredible.

“Thankfully, they’re receptive to me wanting them to stay here four years, because I don’t like the idea of 20-year-olds out there in the workforce unless there’s some huge





# ***By the Numbers...***

## **30**

WEDDING INVITATIONS

## **12**

YEARS WITH THE BUSINESS  
HONORS & SCHOLARS PROGRAM;  
THREE YEARS AS THE DIRECTOR

## **14**

NOMINATIONS FOR THE  
EFFECTIVE EDUCATOR AWARD

## **12**

NOMINATIONS FOR  
ASG OUTSTANDING PROFESSOR

## **3**

TIMES NAMED THE BETA GAMMA SIGMA  
DISTINGUISHED FACULTY MEMBER



# WINNER

OF THE RICHARD K. SMUCKER TEACHING  
EXCELLENCE AWARD AS THE OUTSTANDING  
CLINICAL FACULTY MEMBER

## 30

INDEPENDENT STUDIES SUPERVISED

## 15

HONORS THESES SUPERVISED

## 6

YEARS IN THE DELOITTE BATTLE OF  
OHIO CASE COMPETITION AND THE  
ABERCROMBIE & FITCH CLIENT PROJECT  
AND COMPETITION (2011–PRESENT)

## 5

YEARS IN CHICAGO AD WEEK  
(2012–PRESENT)

## 3

YEARS IN THE WALL STREET JOURNAL  
COMPETITION (2014–PRESENT)







reason financially they have to. I think that it's part of why we have so many majors and minors going here. I have a student in honors who just came in as a freshman with 86 credit hours. I'm not sure how a student could have had a normal high school experience while accruing that many hours. I saw some of the honors students coming in with marketing principles. This is the first time I've seen that in the last two years.

***“They have it all figured out, they’re absolutely comfortable sitting there talking to an executive. It’s like they’re on the same level, and they didn’t come in that way. I think that the fact that we’re putting them in front of these folks early on, they just get it and they figure it out.*”**

“The other thing that I’m seeing, we have fewer students, the high performers, the finance students looking to I-Banking. They’re looking at other jobs with consulting

companies like McKinsey and Bain. I think that is a lifestyle issue. They decided that 110 hours a week isn’t what they want. Ten, 15 years ago, it was all P&G. Five years ago it was all Nielsen. Now they’re just spreading out. Their values are changing, I think in a good way. ***There’s just a bunch of them who are willing to try different paths and they’re resilient. I admire students who do that because I didn’t have a clue when I was their age.*”**

It’s clear that Jan has a tremendous impact on her students, but what happens once they graduate? Once the red brick of Miami is just a memory, does Jan’s impact fade as well? In a word, no. The relationship may shift from teacher to trusted adviser, but the connection, caring and respect remain.

“That’s the stuff that amazes me. I had three ex-students call me last week, who are thinking about changing careers, thinking about changing jobs and they graduated more than five years ago, but they’re still calling me. I’m not telling them what to do. They’re just running the idea by me. Knowing that they’re succeeding and that they’re happy, whether the first job is the right job or it’s the fourth job, knowing that they’re going out there and they feel so good about themselves. They feel that they can accomplish all these things. That’s the best part.

“A bunch of them I’m connected with on Facebook; I even see their kids now. I’ve been invited to more than two dozen weddings and I’ve lost count of how many students I’ve had who are the children of my former students. It’s pretty amazing.”

*After interacting with several thousand students, do they all start to blend together, or are there some that really stand out?*

“There have been a few that really stand out. They changed paths and found the path that has turned them on and they’ve gone from there. A good example would be Kathy Christie Repp, who’s now my contact at FCB Chicago.

She started out as a history major. She talked her way into my honors class. I should have known from there. She turned up at my office, walked in, and said, 'Hi, I'm Kathy Christie. I'm a history major and you really need to have me in your honors class.' ***She didn't know, but if you got the nerve to say that to me, you're in that class.***

She started out working for E&J Gallo. Lasted maybe six to eight months and then I got "that" call. She went to FCB, switched, went to a smaller firm, then went back to FCB but not doing account management. Talked her way into recruiting because that's what she loves. She's now an SVP."

*Now Jan's two daughters are adults with children of their own. Does she think about calling it quits and heading home to relax and play with her grandchildren?*

"I'm a slug when I'm home. I don't have hobbies. I read, but that's only gonna make my backside larger by sitting on it and doing nothing. I can't imagine it. Quite honestly, as long as I'm still articulate, I don't intend to leave. I can't wait to get here to my students. ***I still love the classroom. I love this place.***" 🏠

"One of the things that sets Jan apart is her engagement with students long after graduation. As I contemplated different career decisions, Jan was always on my short list of people whose opinion I looked for. It is that relationship that makes her such a special part of Miami where her influence is a flywheel getting stronger every year."

—Dave Knox, Former Student  
Managing Director, WPP Ventures  
Chief Marketing Officer, Rockfish Innovation Group

"Jan Taylor is truly one of a kind. She somehow seamlessly blends the ability to inform you, inspire you, be your friend and even kick you in the butt when you need or deserve it. No Miami professor had as much impact on my career, and she is the first one I seek out anytime I'm back 'home' in Oxford!"

—Kyle Schlegel, Former Student  
Global Marketing Director, Racquet Sports, Wilson

"Jan puts her heart and soul into doing the best she can for her students. She puts students in the right position to launch their careers and is a master connector with a huge and ever-growing network. Twenty-five years ago, she introduced me to Leo Burnett. It was my first internship, and it set the course for my career."

—John Birmingham, Former Student  
EVP, Mediavest Spark





## ALUMNUS PROVES MIGHT IS NOT ALWAYS RIGHT IN REAL-LIFE DAVID VS. GOLIATH STORY

Graduating tomorrow's business leaders means more than teaching them skill sets. Organizations and society at large recognize that ethically and socially responsible behavior plays a crucial role in good business practices. This realization has led employers to expect and demand that business schools facilitate the training of students in ethics and social responsibility. Business ethics is again a hot topic as examples of improper business practices that violate commonly accepted ethical norms are brought to our attention. This realization has led employers to expect and demand that business schools facilitate the training of students in ethics and social responsibility. With the increasing number of scandals, business schools find themselves on the defensive in explaining what they are doing to help respond to the call to teach "more" business ethics. (1)

### ***Teaching ethics is a critical part of a Farmer School education.***

So important, that ethics is integrated into all facets of curriculum, activities and student organizations. But finding the right materials is a challenge. Not preachy or pedantic. Engaging, connective and thought provoking. Ideally, with examples that aren't black and white. Dr. Karen Meyers, visiting assistant professor of business legal studies, was searching for an innovative, impactful way to drive home the point and discovered an about-to-be released movie that she believed would do just that. She found the solution with 1980 Farmer School grad Mark Mitten. Mitten's movie, "Abacus: Small Enough to Jail," is the story of Abacus Federal Savings Bank, founded in 1984 by Thomas Sung, a lawyer and a real estate investor,

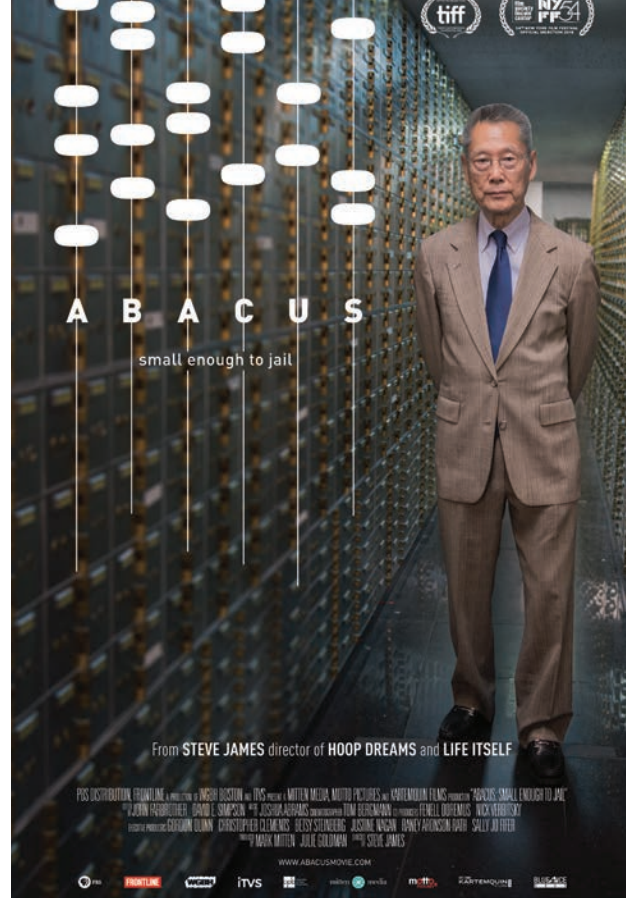
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(1) *Teaching Ethics and Social Responsibility: An Evaluation of Undergraduate Business Education at the Discipline Level*  
Carolyn Y. Nicholson & Michelle DeMoss

who had come from China in his teens. Sung's goal was to provide banking services to immigrants and local residents of lower Manhattan that the big banks ignored. Accused of mortgage fraud by Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., Abacus became the only U.S. bank to face criminal charges in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. The indictment and subsequent trial forced the Sung family members to defend themselves—and their bank's legacy in the Chinatown community—over the course of a five-year legal battle.

As Karen explained, “Students often say that real-life experiences teach them so much about law and ethics. ***Through this invaluable documentary we will be able to connect our students with a more advanced global understanding of culture, values, law, ethics and the incredible effect that ‘doing the right thing’ can have on their own legacies and of which Miami can be forever proud.*** This documentary provides an incredible stage on which to learn the basis of law and its link to power, the opportunity to respond professionally and personally in adverse circumstance, and the result of personal commitment and moral character in a business and legal environment. ‘Abacus Bank’ cases are being developed at the Farmer School to embody learning opportunities on countless topics and the related outcomes BLS 465 seeks to impart. ‘Abacus: Small Enough to Jail,’ the Sung Family and Mark’s contribution will stand out as a springboard for our students to become the professional and personal stellar performers American and global business so needs today.”

In May 2012, New York prosecutors indicted Abacus and 19 of its employees on charges of fraud in relation to hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of mortgages that had been sold to Fannie Mae between 2005 and 2010. The bank was accused of falsifying loan applications so that borrowers would qualify for mortgages. Jill and Vera



Sung, the daughters of Thomas Sung who run the bank, uncovered the improper behavior themselves, reported it to the regulator and fired the employee in question. The bank also said it was not involved with the fraudulent packaging of subprime mortgage securities and had a mortgage default rate of 0.5 percent, a tenth of the national average.

There is a commonly held belief that the big banks are too big to fail. They cannot fail because of the domino effect called “collateral consequences.” The phrase, first coined by Eric Holder when he was in the Clinton White House, refers to the fact that if a bank is indicted, prosecuted and convicted, their charter would be revoked, not just for the offending branch or region, but for the entire bank, causing it to go out of business. Imagine if this happened to Bank of America or Chase. The “collateral consequences” from an employee standpoint, a shareholder standpoint, the community, customers, et cetera, could be monumental. But with an Abacus conviction, the district attorney of Manhattan believed there would be no collateral consequences. That if the bank was successfully prosecuted and went out of business, that it would not affect the New York Chinatown community. This was a surprising perspective, since Abacus was one of the only banks that specifically focused on Chinese-Americans and had been for over 30 years.





The ethical decision points in the story present a tremendous learning opportunity for students. The Farmer School connection makes it even better. Mark met Vera Sung, a director at Abacus and the daughter of Abacus' founder, when working in New York. Mitten explains, ***"I first became friends with Vera and then got to know the rest of her family. They're one of the most upstanding groups of people I know."*** Mr. Sung had come to this country seeking the American dream, was a successful lawyer, and then decided to start a bank to give back to the community and help his fellow Chinese Americans achieve their own success. For them to succeed, owning their own house is considered essential. At the time, there was no traditional American bank serving Chinatown's immigrants. As a matter of fact, Mr. Sung never took a salary while running the bank, because he had done so well in his law practice and in real estate, he really didn't feel it was necessary. He was looking at it as a way of giving back. We didn't include that in the movie, because we thought viewers might find his personal commitment almost too unbelievable.

"One of the other eye-opening parts of the story was what a significant and critically important role community banks play in small towns and with underserved groups like immigrants. Community banks seem to have a more personal perspective on those they serve than a national corporate bank. There can be a personal relationship with your banker at a big bank but it's still a big bank that serves millions of customers. Community banks are dedicated to serving a particular geographic area. As such, they are much more active in the town or city and understand what's going on. They have long-term personal relationships and they can better address local issues and problems. As Mr. Sung would say, when a local restaurant owner comes in and asks for a loan, 'I don't hesitate because I eat at his restaurant and I see how good his business is.'

"It always flabbergasted me that Abacus was the only U.S. bank indicted for mortgage fraud. Out of all the too-big-to-fail banks that had been involved in the 2008 financial meltdown, they were the only one! What was even more surreal was that the mainstream press ignored the story. I just was shocked and surprised that none of the media would want to cover a story that was so contrarian to everything we'd been told. The Chinese press was covering the trial every day. Every day. The New York

Times covered it twice—once when the indictment came out and once when the verdict came in. Other than that, no outlet picked up the story.

“The reason that I think the Manhattan DA went after Abacus is that he wanted to be the first and only prosecutor to successfully convict a U.S. bank, and what better target than the 2,561st largest bank that happens to be in Chinatown? They likely wouldn’t have the resources to defend themselves. And, it’s fairly well known that the Chinese community wants to stay under the radar, so DA Vance likely thought they wouldn’t push back. It would be a hit-and-run case that could easily be prosecuted and won. Boy, was he wrong.”

As the Abacus trial started and still no one else stepped up to tell the story, Mark felt compelled to do it. First, he convinced the Sung family to allow him to make the film about them for the documentary—and with six family members it took a bit of persuasion. Then he got Steve James, the director of *Hoop Dreams*, *The Interrupters* and *Life Itself*, and one of the most respected documentary filmmakers, to come on board. Because the trial was imminent, Mark and Steve quickly put together the rest of the production team. Mark also helped fund the film, providing seed money. Because of his relationship, he was the primary liaison with the Sung family. He also had the mammoth task of coaxing key players to be interviewed, including the Manhattan district attorney, Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.

“In the interview with Vance in the film, he says, ‘We would have handled the bank if we were investigating a bank that serviced the South American community or the Indian community.’ He focused only on ethnic banks, never mentioning the larger banks. He also went on to say, ‘I think every American was upset at the crisis that we went through. There was behavior that was less than ethical,’ which astounded us that he could be so laissez faire about such a devastating chapter in this country’s economy.

“Had Vance won the case, he would have been the only DA to indict and successfully prosecute a bank, a major coup for a DA with potentially higher political aspirations. It also demonstrates the far-reaching prosecutorial power of

a DA. Our research showed that if you’re indicted, you’re basically no longer innocent; you’re actually presumed guilty. Ninety-seven percent of white-collar indictments never go to trial because it’s easier to make a deal than risk the full wrath of prosecution.

Ultimately, it seems like American justice is about how much you can afford. In Abacus’ case, they were fortunate enough to have the resources to legally fight for their reputation. But it took five years and ten million dollars. What about those who are innocent but can’t afford to defend themselves?

### ***“The Sung family wanted their story told because they never want this to happen again,***

regardless of who you are and where you live. They were just excited that somebody wanted to do their film—and incredulous at the same time that it would make a good film. They were nervous about doing it, and then when they saw it at the end they were relieved that it really did capture the essence of who they are, the emotionality of their journey as well as bringing to light the injustice they faced. They said, ‘Yes, we really feel that this does the job. This is us.’ It’s the best verdict you could ask for.

Critics agree, with the film earning a 92 percent Rotten Tomatoes rating and receiving standing ovations from audiences in theaters around the country. Abacus will appear on PBS Frontline September 12. The documentary is being turned into a feature film directed by Justin Lin, best known for *Better Luck Tomorrow*, *The Fast and the Furious* movies (3–6), as well as *Star Trek Beyond*.

“I’m thrilled, and so is the Sung family, that Professor Meyers has embraced ‘Abacus: Small Enough to Jail’ as a platform for Farmer School students to explore and understand business ethics and the real-world consequences of their application. This is a ‘ripped from the headlines’ opportunity for students to ask themselves ‘what should you do?’ versus ‘what would you do?’ and the resolution necessary to follow through. Being a real situation makes that much more compelling and impactful. 🏠



## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

"Abacus: Small Enough to Jail is a compelling non-fiction thriller. It should engross most viewers, even those who've resisted learning what a subprime mortgage is. The film makes a compelling argument that no matter how the trial ends, targeting Abacus was an absurdly inappropriate substitute for prosecuting the behemoths who caused the 2008 debacle. This family was no more likely than George Bailey to peddle synthetic collateralized debt obligations."

—NPR: *'Abacus': The Small Chinatown Bank that Paid a High Price*, 5-18-17 by Mark Jenkins

"A new movie exposes the 'ridiculous' case against the one bank charged after the 2008 crisis."

—BUSINESS INSIDER: 5-19-17 by Jason Guerrasio

"A classic underdog tale..."

—BEN KENIGSBURG, *NYTimes*

"...a compelling non-fiction thriller."

—Mark Jenkins, NPR

"James spins a fascinating and complex web."

—Kristen Yoonsoo Kim, *Village Voice*, *Critic's Pick*

"A stunning David-and-Goliath epic."

—Chris Barsanti, *Film Journal International*

"★★★★ A legal thriller."

—*Time Out New York*

"One of the great documentaries of recent years."

—*Movie City News*

"Terrific... edifying and moving."

—Michael Koresky, *Film Comment*

"A heartfelt portrait of a close-knit family facing overwhelming adversity and an infuriating indictment of our U.S. justice system gone seriously awry."

—Lauren Wissot, *Filmmaker Magazine*

"Both an affirmation and an indictment of the American Dream."

—Stephen Dalton, *The Hollywood Reporter*

"The last movie that made me cry was one about...a bank? Abacus: Small Enough to Jail arrives just in time."

—Alessandra Codinha, *Vogue*

## SEE IT FOR YOURSELF

Watch here: [trailers.apple.com/trailers/independent/abacus-small-enough-to-jail/](https://trailers.apple.com/trailers/independent/abacus-small-enough-to-jail/)

Visit the film's website here: [www.abacusmovie.com](http://www.abacusmovie.com)



Mark's career path started in a somewhat traditional way. After completing his MBA at J.L. Kellogg at Northwestern, he landed a job at mega ad agency J. Walter Thompson. For many, such a feat would mark the high point of their career. For Mark, it was a leaping off point. After leaving the ad business, he co-founded a brand-strategy firm called Envision, long before "branding" was a CEO catchphrase. Six years later, McKinsey & Company bought Envision and brought Mitten on as a direct-elect partner to help run the firm's global branding practice. In 2004, Mark started forging a new path, becoming a producer for the high-rating television series, *The Apprentice* and then as executive producer and co-producer on the Roger Ebert documentary, *Life Itself*. He also served as the Chief Brand Officer for Chicago's 2016 Olympic bid where he oversaw the messaging and marketing of the city and the Bid. He also created more than 30 short films, after which he directed, co-wrote and produced the documentary, *Making Big Plans: The Story of Chicago's Olympic Dream*. He was a core contributor to the bestselling book, *"Blueprint to a Billion: 7 Essentials for Achieving Exponential Growth"* and was featured in the recently published *"Shift & Reset: Strategies for Addressing Serious Issues in a Connected Society."*

# EXCELLENCE IN & BEYOND *the classroom*

RICHARD K. SMUCKER  
TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD  
**Outstanding Professor**  
Gabe Lee  
C. Michael Armstrong Business Chair  
and Professor of Information  
Systems & Analytics



RICHARD K. SMUCKER  
TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD  
**Outstanding Junior Professor**  
Greg Niemesh  
Assistant Professor of Economics



RICHARD K. SMUCKER  
TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD  
**Outstanding Clinical Faculty Member**  
Jan Eighme  
Senior Lecturer of Accountancy



FARMER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
SENIOR FACULTY AWARD  
**Research Excellence**  
Xiaowen Huang  
Professor of Management



JAMES ROBESON JUNIOR  
FACULTY AWARD  
**Research Excellence**  
Scott Friend  
Assistant Professor of Marketing



FARMER SCHOOL  
**Faculty Service Excellence**  
Tim Krehbiel  
Professor of Management





## NAMED PROFESSORS & ENDOWED CHAIRS

DR. BRIAN BALLOU  
*EY Professor of Accountancy*

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