

# THE JOURNEY

SPRING 2016

## INTEGRITY AND HONOR:

Bill Isaac's Words to Live By

## ENHANCING BQ:

Why "Business Quotient" is Integral to Our New Un-Common Core

# what DRIVES

UBER'S RYAN GRAVES '06?





**THE  
FARMER  
SCHOOL OF  
BUSINESS**



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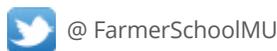
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**TRADITION. INNOVATION. EXCELLENCE.**

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# – welcome –

Springtime in Oxford is often long in coming, but it is always worth the wait, especially for those students preparing to walk across the commencement stage each May. This year, the Farmer School of Business graduated more than 900 students, who will now travel to the four corners of the world to begin new lives and new careers. We could not be more proud of our graduates and while it is always a little melancholy to see them go, we know they will carry the Farmer School banner proudly for decades to come, representing their school with pride and purpose.

While we're on the topic of pride, I am sometimes humbled by the accomplishments of our alumni, current students and guests. This issue of *Journey* includes several examples. Former FDIC Chairman Bill Isaac recently returned to campus for the dedication of the new Isaac-Oxley Center for Business Leadership. Uber's Senior VP of Global Operations, Ryan Graves, talked with us about the importance of risk-taking. Michael Best, a current student, reminded us of the meaning of "service," and a six-year-old taught us about being creative.

This past academic year has been a busy one, not only for our students but for the Farmer School faculty and staff as well. In February we were visited by the re-accreditation review team from our accrediting body, the Association for the Advancement of Colleges & Schools of Business (AACSB). Eighteen months of preparation and years of excellent teaching and research by our faculty made indelible impressions on the team, and in April, we learned that the Farmer School passed this test with flying colors, being re-accredited for another five years.

Our diversity initiative has brought many new students and potential Redhawks from a wide variety of backgrounds to campus. We welcomed six new academic advisors to the Farmer School, strengthening our commitment to the student experience. And, as you will read in this edition of

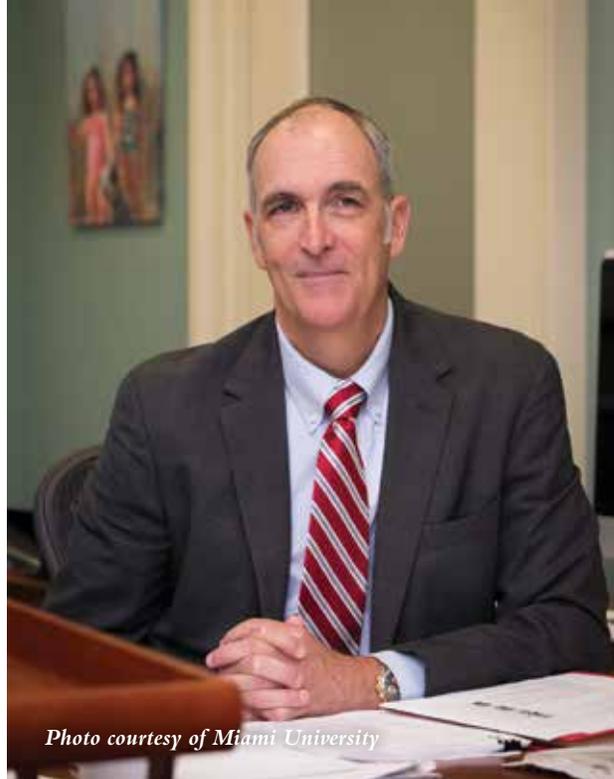


Photo courtesy of Miami University

*Journey*, we just put the finishing touches on our revised core curriculum, BQ, a truly innovative approach to business education that will further differentiate the Farmer School and prepare our students for the new digital economy.

Summer is a relatively quiet time at Miami, but it never lasts long and we are already preparing for the fall semester and the return of our students. This year's freshman class at the Farmer School consists of more than 900 of the best and brightest students we have seen on campus and I look forward to meeting them all in August.

***In the meantime, thank you to all our alumni and friends who continue to support the FSB, our traditions and our growth. You have good reason to be proud of the Farmer School. Our future couldn't be brighter.***

Kind regards,

Matthew B. Myers

Dean and Mitchell P. Rales Chair of Business Leadership



*Student-supplied photo*

## Mini-MBA

# MAXIMUM REWARDS

Based on the popularity and success of our employer-specific post-graduate educational offerings, Brad Bays, Senior Director of MBA Programs, created a non-degree, 14-week program designed to meet the needs of working professionals who would like to enhance their business acumen but might not be ready or able to enroll in a traditional MBA program. Should a mini-MBA graduate decide to enroll in our Miami MBA program within five years of completing the mini-MBA, all of their mini-MBA investment is applied to the cost of their MBA tuition.

Classes meet one evening a week in downtown Cincinnati. The program is open to any working professional regardless of previous education. The curriculum includes all the basic business areas, from accounting and strategy to supply chain and big data.

“I’m more business savvy than I have been in the past,”

remarked recent ‘graduate’ Malinda McReynolds, M.Ed. “I thank Miami University’s Farmer School of Business for the opportunity to meet and greet some amazing professors and business people in the city.”

The first cohort of 23 students was predominantly female (74%) and was equally split between business and non-business graduates with an average of 14 years of work experience. There were ten Miami alumni in the program along with graduates from Harvard, Xavier and University of Dayton.

The capstone event of the program was a case competition among four student teams with Farmer School Dean, Matt Myers, and Cincinnati Chamber COO, Brendon Cull, serving on the judges’ panel. Was the program a success? As one student noted, “The mini-MBA Program left me feeling like a business rock star in my company.”

POSITIONING OUR STUDENTS  
**FOR SUCCESS:**  
*new un-common core  
will yield un-common  
advantages*



Integral to the Farmer School mission is: “To provide a premier business educational experience that prepares responsible and innovative leaders.” But how do you prepare students to excel in fields that do not yet exist? That’s the question we posed to our curriculum committee. Their response formed the foundation for the Farmer School’s groundbreaking new Common Core Curriculum.

Tim Greenlee, Senior Associate Dean and Professor of Marketing, explains, “We benchmarked the top 50 business schools in the Bloomberg Businessweek list to see what they were doing. We wanted to compare and contrast our core curriculum with theirs. No one in the top 50 has an integrated core curriculum in the first year.

We also looked at both academic and practitioner literature. We talked with PricewaterhouseCoopers and Nielsen and asked what employers need to be hiring today. What we found was not surprising. ***Business is calling for a worker who needs to know how to think critically. Creatively.*** Someone who can think conceptually and who knows something about computational work and can work in a department that’s constantly changing under their feet.”

Gillian Oakenfull, Professor of Marketing, noted, “It started with looking at what recruiters are saying is deficient in our

students. Not only thinking about what they are deficient in now, but what are they going to need for 2020. ***Only 11% of business leaders believe graduating students have the skills and competencies their business needs.*** A 2014 Chronicle of Higher Education Survey found employers complain that colleges aren’t adequately preparing students in:

- decision-making
- analytical and research skills
- written and oral communication
- adaptability
- working with diverse groups

***We’re focusing far more on skills than on knowledge, because the reality is that knowledge is going to change.*** We don’t even know what they’re going to need in 2020. We do know they’re still going to need to be critical and creative thinkers. They are going to have to collaborate. They’re going to have to communicate. But the way they have to do it, and the environment in which they’re going to have to do it, is going to change.”

The result of their work is the Farmer School’s revolutionary “Un-Common Core” an eight-hour, integrated core for first year students. It’s built around the art and science of business.

It focuses on teaching critical business decision-making and execution skills; critical thinking, creative thinking, communication and collaboration. Around that, we wrap globalization, diversity and technology. The four courses all first year students will be required to take, starting fall 2016, are:

- BUS 101: Introduction to the BQ Model of Business Decision-Making and Execution
- BUS 102: Foundations of Business Communication
- BUS 103: Innovation & Creativity in Business
- BUS 104: Introduction to Computational Thinking in Business

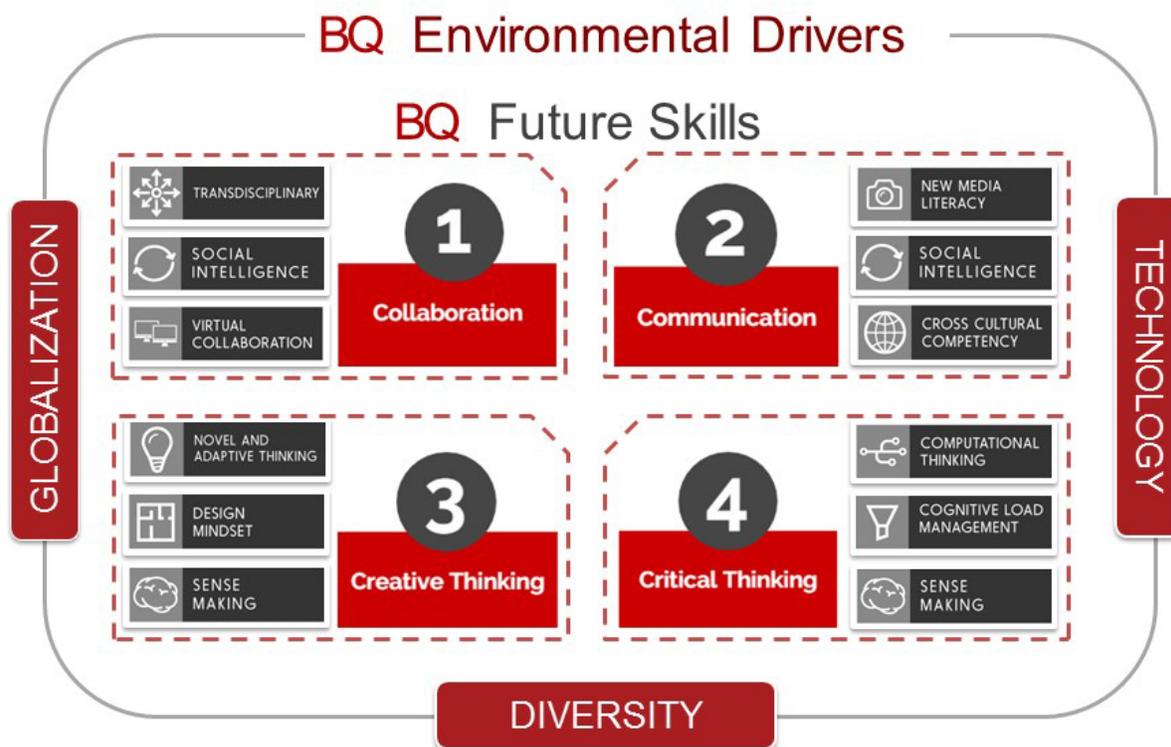
Oakenfull elaborated, “We’re going to get them right as they come in the door. This is their introduction to business school. They’ll take this as a cohort so one half will take it their first semester and the other half will take it the second

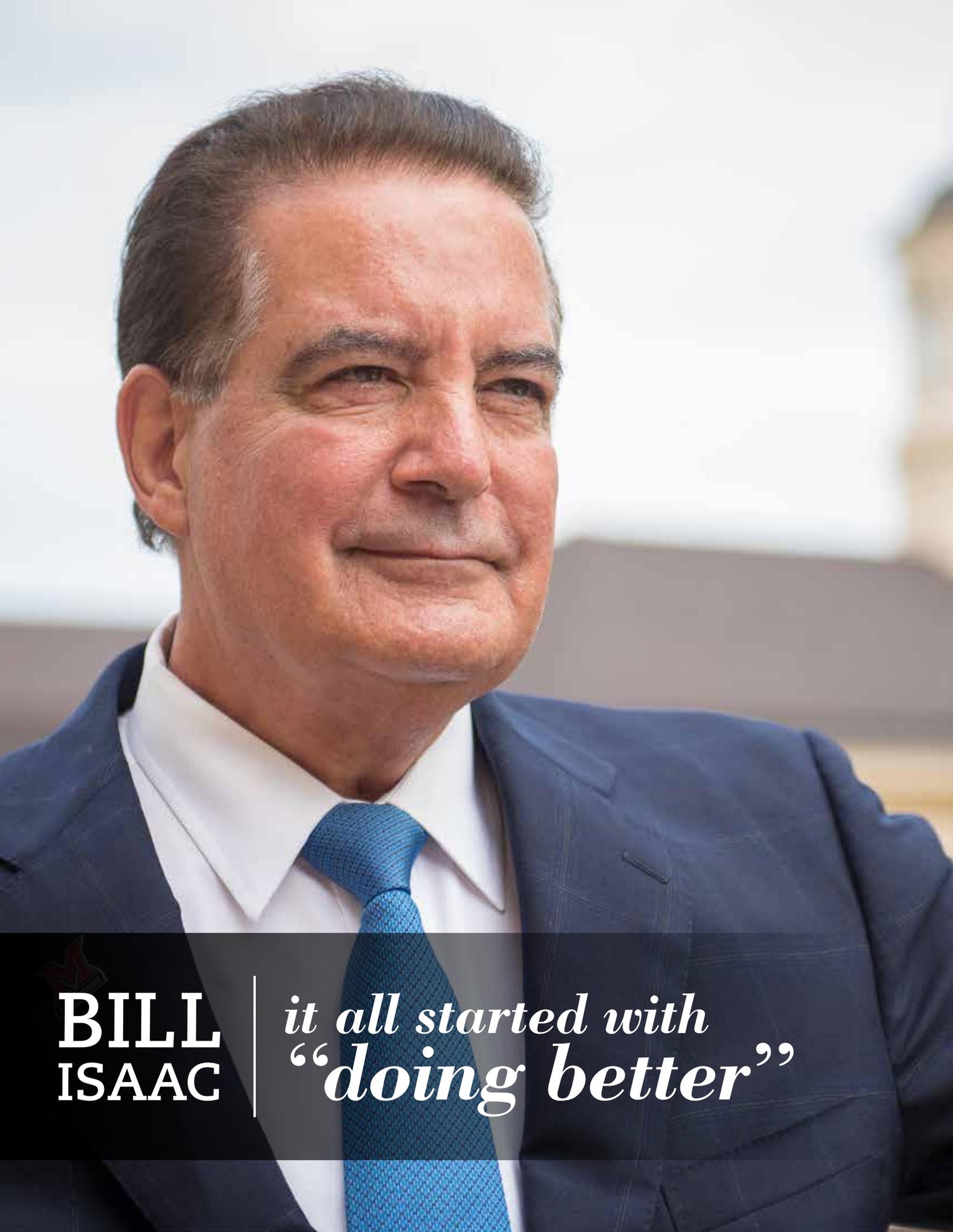
semester. We’ve named it the Business Quotient (BQ) model and the idea is to create a way of measuring that across different dimensions as the students go through the business school. It will measure their collaboration, creative thinking, critical thinking and communication skills. And then it will also quantify their knowledge of the global environment, technological environment, ethical environment and the extent to which they can think in a trans-disciplinary way.”

Greenlee concluded, ***“Five years from now, I would expect that we’ll see other business schools starting to look at something like this.”*** 🏠



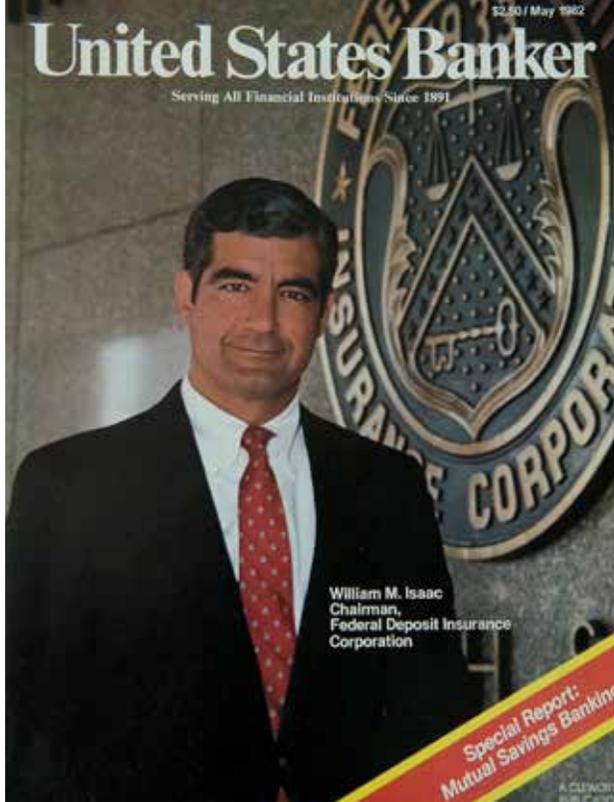
FARMER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
INTEGRATED CORE [with future work skills]





**BILL  
ISAAC**

*it all started with  
“doing better”*



In financial circles, his name and accomplishments are legendary; youngest board member and Chairman of the FDIC ever, no-nonsense, straight-talking, led the FDIC during the banking and S&L crises of the 1980s. What most would never guess is that the man who so expertly and calmly guided the FDIC through the tumultuous 1980s, entered the financial world by default, guided by his formative years in Ohio and at Miami University.

Growing up in Bryan, a northwest Ohio town of less than 9,000, Bill was a student athlete with hopes of attending Dartmouth, Northwestern or Miami, then returning home to join his family's business. Following his older brother, he chose Miami, and while Oxford bills itself as a "small college town," to a boy from rural Ohio, the opportunities it offered were huge and the experiences, life-changing. To this day, Bill speaks fondly of the Miami professors who had a profound impact in shaping the small-town youth. Two in particular stand out: English Professor Milton White, who taught Bill how to write clearly and succinctly and Economics Professor Paul Vail, who challenged Bill to think outside the box.

Isaac got off to a slow start academically at Miami, although he quickly became a "big man on campus," being elected class Treasurer, member of the Student Senate his freshman year and organizing campus socials. "I didn't do very well academically the first year. I was having a lot of fun, but the

*Historical photos courtesy of Bill Isaac*

first year I had just under a 2.0 grade average. When my grades were mailed to the house, they sat on my dad's desk for a couple of weeks. He never said a word. Eventually, I couldn't help but ask if he'd seen them and he said, 'Yes' and, when pressed, went on to say, 'I think you could have done better.' ***That was it—just seven words. I felt ashamed. There was nothing he could have said that would have impacted me more deeply.*** During my last four semesters at Miami, I averaged something like a 3.95."



This might have been the end of the story, if Bill's childhood wish had been fulfilled. "All I ever wanted to do was to go back to the family business, but the family couldn't fit me in. It was very disappointing, but it inspired me to work even harder."

Bill entered law school at The Ohio State University. "I decided that with a law degree and my business degree from Miami, I could do almost anything."

After graduating summa cum laude from Ohio State College of Law, Bill accepted a position with the Foley & Lardner law firm in Milwaukee. "Almost no one in my dad's generation went to college, much less graduated. To have me graduate



from college and law school and then join a prestigious law firm was all my family or I could have hoped for.”

More examples of the role serendipity played in Isaac’s life are illustrated as he describes his beginnings at Foley & Lardner. “I was interested in labor law. Foley & Lardner was organized by teams and I was told they didn’t have any room on the labor law team but needed me on the corporate & banking team. Having no interest in the banking aspect, I was placed on the corporate side, becoming a general corporate lawyer. After about two years, though, I was asked to switch to the banking side of the team to fill a need. And that’s how I wound up in banking!”

After five years at Foley & Lardner, Bill’s opinion of banking shifted and he chose to join First Kentucky National Corporation, which owned the largest bank and the largest trust company in Kentucky, as Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary. “I felt I’d really have the opportunity to spread my wings.” And, he continued with a smile, “It wasn’t all that far from Bryan.”

Fate again intervened, about three years later. “A friend from Wisconsin asked if I would be interested in trying for a position on the FDIC board. Jimmy Carter had been elected, causing a Republican opening on the bi-partisan FDIC board, and Carter needed to fill it with another Republican. At the age of 33, I didn’t believe I’d get the position, but thought it couldn’t hurt to put my name in the hat.” Isaac laughs as he goes on, “Much to my surprise,

three months or so later, they offered me the position! Over the objections of my Aunt Rosa, who was concerned about the effects that Washington corruption might have on me, I decided to do it and it was an experience I will cherish forever—it was a great opportunity to serve.”

Bill’s transition was baptism by fire—and under fire. “The morning after my going away dinner at First Kentucky, I met the FDIC’s corporate secretary at a local hotel. He swore me in as a director of the FDIC in the lobby, and we took a cab to the airport to fly to Puerto Rico, where one of the island’s largest banks was failing. That was my first day on the job. I was actually the senior FDIC person in Puerto Rico in terms of title and probably the most junior in terms of age.”

Arriving in Washington wasn’t much more comfortable. **“I felt awkward. Everybody around me was older—in many cases, much older.”** Fate didn’t allow Bill to feel awkward for long. One year after joining the FDIC, Paul Volcker was appointed as Chairman of the Fed in Washington with marching orders from Carter to break the back of inflation. Volcker raised interest rates to 21.5%. It was a death knell for thousands of savings and loans and the savings banks. They were mostly invested in long term, fixed rate mortgages. Generally the rates on their loans were somewhere around six or seven percent. The cost of their liabilities, their deposits, shot up to 20 percent. They hemorrhaged red ink.



Isaac describes the scene as only one who lived it could. “The entire banking system was on the verge of collapse. There were 13,000 banks when I joined the FDIC—approximately 3,000 banks and S&Ls failed during the 1980s. The problems began with the thrifts and quickly spread as we faced depression-like conditions in agriculture, a collapse in the energy industry and a deep recession in real estate. Nine out of the ten largest banks in Texas failed. Continental Illinois—the sixth largest bank in the country—failed. First Pennsylvania, the largest bank in Pennsylvania; Seattle First, the largest bank in the Northwest; Southeast Bank Corp., the largest bank in Florida; Bank of New England, the largest bank in New England—ALL of them failed. The worst fear we had was that most of the money-center banks were loaded with LDC loans [to Lesser Developed Countries] and would not survive if various countries defaulted and renounced their debts. The Treasury, Fed, and FDIC developed a secret, standby plan to nationalize the major U.S. banks had the LDC loans gone into default.”

Early on in this highly charged and volatile atmosphere, the then-Chairman of the FDIC asked Isaac to initiate and chair an FDIC task force to deal with the likely outcomes rising interest rates would have on the savings bank industry. Isaac elaborates, “Virtually all of them would fail if interest rates kept on going up and remained high. We identified all of the potential problems and had a timeline for how long they could last if interest rates stayed up.” Bill’s eyes fall on a picture in his office of him and Paul Volcker at Bill’s FDIC

retirement party. ***“Somewhere along the line I lost my sensitivity about being too young for the job.”***

President Reagan won election and Bill was appointed Chairman of the FDIC in 1981. Isaac adds, “When you’re in this kind of situation, you’re either going to fall flat on your face and go out in disgrace or you’re going to toughen up. I developed and followed my beliefs.”

A pivotal moment in Bill’s career was the debate with Paul Volcker and the Fed over allowing the failure of Penn Square Bank in Oklahoma, a relatively small bank in Oklahoma that had originated and sold more than \$3 billion in energy loans to major banks, including Continental Illinois and Chase Manhattan. As Isaac tells it, “Paul didn’t believe the system could handle the failure and liquidation of Penn Square and we would likely have a major panic on our hands that we couldn’t control. In times past, the FDIC had always deferred to the Fed and Treasury. I felt the FDIC needed to have a voice in these decisions. Paul and I turned to Don Regan, who was Secretary of the Treasury, to get his counsel. After a couple of hours of laying out and debating the facts, Regan stunned me when he said, ‘It’s time to make a decision, and I don’t have a vote here.’—a comment that would never have been uttered by a Secretary of the Treasury any time in the previous 50 year history of the FDIC. He went on to say ‘This is the FDIC’s decision. Bill, do what you think is best, and let the chips fall where they

may.” Isaac says, “I’ll never forget coming back to the FDIC after that meeting at Treasury on the eve of the Fourth of July, 1982. ***I had read a lot of books about the Great Depression and I thought, ‘What have I done? The banking system might be stronger in the long run, but at what price? Will I go down in history as the guy who created the Great Depression of the 1980s?’*** We let Penn Square fail and for a while it looked like the world WAS going to come to an end. But it didn’t, and the FDIC came of age because of that decision that day.”



*Valerie & David Hodge, Pat Oxley and Bill & Christine Isaac formally dedicate the Center for Business Leadership*

More stress rapidly came in the form of the Continental Illinois failure. Isaac says, “With the Penn Square decision, I was alone. I was leading the charge. When Continental Illinois failed a couple of years later, it was actually a much bigger deal in economic terms but a bit easier from a personal standpoint as Paul Volcker and I were on the same page.” Bill remained at the helm of the FDIC until the end of 1985, moving on to consulting and various business ventures.

More than 30 years later, Bill is still following his beliefs. He partnered with fellow business school alumnus Michael Oxley\* to establish the William Isaac & Michael Oxley Center for Business Leadership. The two had met their freshman year at Miami, and their paths crossed throughout the course of their lives and careers. Oxley and Isaac were on the campus together and served together in the Student Senate. Oxley was from Findlay, Ohio, not very far Isaac’s home town. Then they went off to Ohio State Law School at the same time. They knew and liked each other and had a lot in common. They both wound up in Washington and played significant roles in the financial system. Bill ran the FDIC during an extremely tumultuous period for banks and thrifts, while Mike headed the House Financial Services Committee during the market scandals of the early 2000s—e.g., Enron and WorldCom.

Bill points out the profound effect that his Miami University and Ohio roots played in his life. “Miami’s a great school, and I have very good memories. There were outstanding professors at Miami who spent a lot of time helping me learn how to better reason and express myself. ***It was at Miami that I began to think that I had some innate talent and began to envision a future beyond my family’s business.*** I came to Miami as an un-honed, raw product that Miami helped form—getting me ready for law school and all that followed. Of course, I can’t discount what my parents and the rest of my family instilled in me. They were about doing all the right things and living their lives with integrity. Striving to do the right things in the right way is what drives me and was completely reinforced at Miami.”

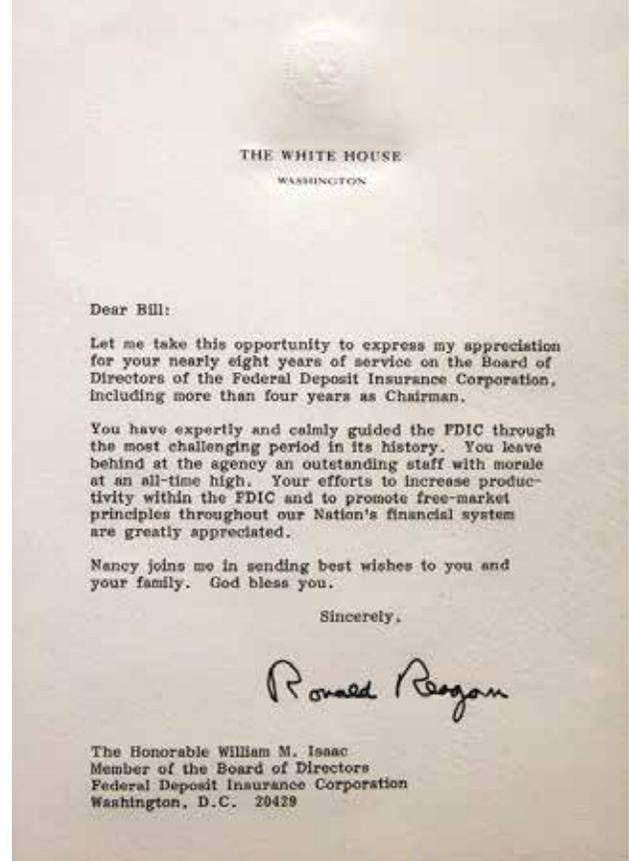
Turning to the Center for Leadership, Isaac elaborates, “I’ve studied and handled thousands of troubled and failed banks. In virtually every case, failures result from weak, ineffective management and poor board decision-making and oversight. The negative impact on the economy and

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\*Michael Oxley passed away on January 2, 2016 after a long battle with cancer.

the lives of hundreds of millions of innocent people has been enormous. The Center for Leadership will select the brightest Farmer School of Business students and teach them about ethics, leadership, values, decision making and proper behavior in business. That's what really appeals to me about Mike Oxley's idea of a Center for Leadership for the top students in the business school. ***If we don't instill in students a strong sense of integrity, we're not giving them the most important tool they need.***"

Thank you, Bill. We don't think you could have done better. 🏠



## ABOUT BILL ISAAC:

Bill Isaac has been deeply involved in the financial services industry for nearly 50 years. He is the author of *Senseless Panic: How Washington Failed America* (forward by Paul Volcker), a comparison of the handling of the financial crisis of the 1980s to the financial crisis of 2008–2009. Isaac has written hundreds of articles for leading publications, appears on numerous TV and radio shows, testifies regularly before Congress and delivers countless speeches to banking and civic groups. He founded and led a consulting firm to advise financial institutions on risk management, strategy, and regulatory compliance. He sold his firm after 25 years and currently serves as Senior Managing Director & Global Head of Financial Institutions for FTI Consulting. Isaac has served on a number of boards of directors, including Chairman of Fifth Third Bancorp and he currently serves on the board of TSYS, a leading global payments system processor. Isaac was awarded an honorary degree from Miami University in 1985, a distinguished achievement medal from Miami in 1995 and served on the board of the Miami University Foundation in the 1990s. Visit his website at [www.williamisaac.com](http://www.williamisaac.com).

# MAYHEM

## *in the classroom*

What can a six-year-old teach a group of college students? Plenty. iGoodea Creatives' faculty advisor Jim Friedman explains, "A foundational principle of creativity is that we are all born creative and that creativity is 'taught' out of us. ***Young children are, by nature, non-judgmental risk-takers and experts at play.***"

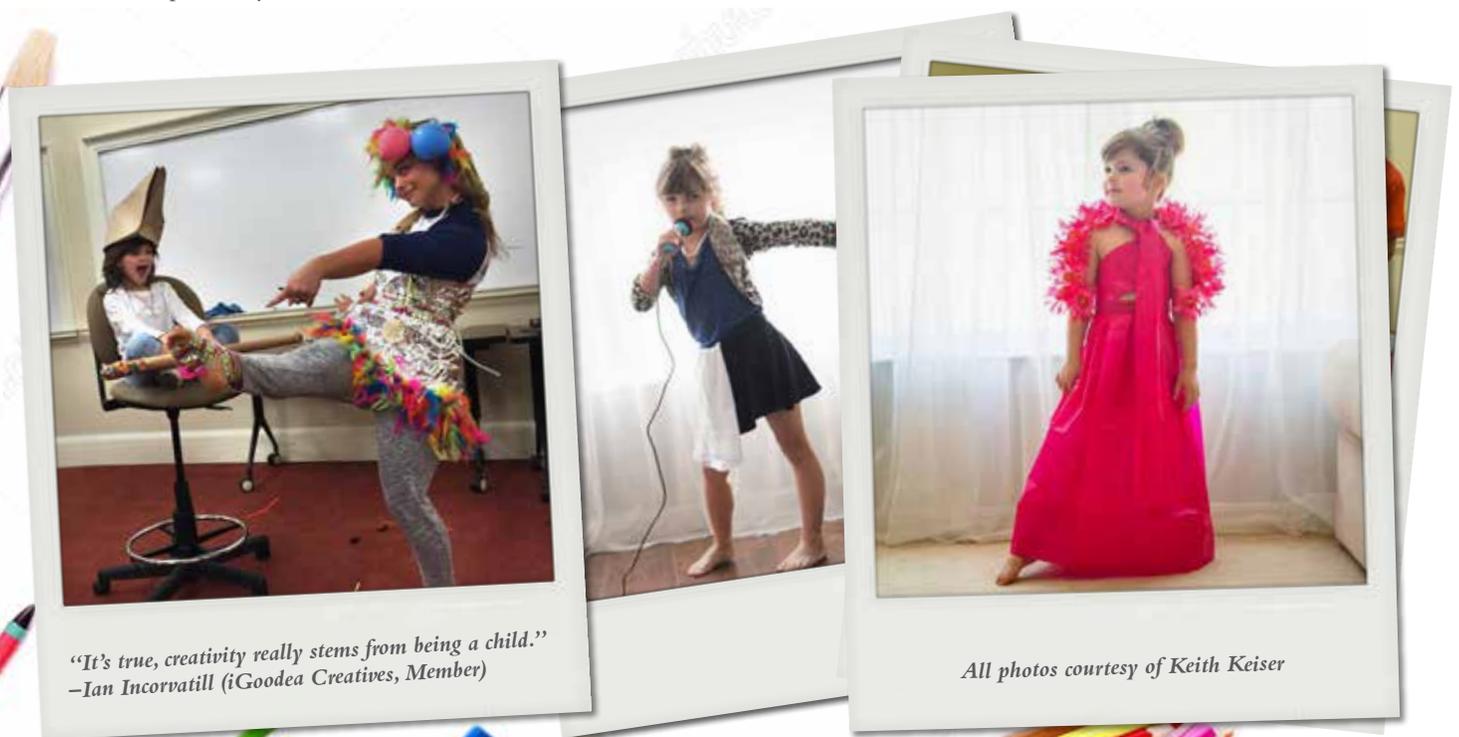
So it made perfect sense for the Farmer School creativity club, iGoodea Creatives, to tap into the expertise of six-year-old fashion prodigy Sydney "Mayhem" Keiser. And Mayhem isn't just your average six-year-old making dolls' clothing.

When Mayhem was four, Instagram posts of her fashion creations, posted by her mother, went viral and attracted the

attention of both the fashion and business worlds. Features in *Forbes*, *the Huffington Post*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vogue*, *Glamour*, *Today*, *BuzzFeed*, *E!Online*, *Yahoo*, *Vogue UK*, *USA Today*, *People*, *Elle*, *Parents* and *Redbook* followed, as did a deal with *J.Crew* to help create a new line of clothing for kids.

As noted by the *New York Post* in a May 1, 2015, article, "Mayhem—whose real name is Sydney Keiser—has been tapped as the youngest designer in J.Crew history. She became a bona fide Internet sensation in 2014 for her handmade paper gowns on her blog, *Fashion by Mayhem*." Her Instagram account has more than 491,000 followers.

Now, two years later, Mayhem is still creating magic. And the iGoodea members were all in. 🏠



"It's true, creativity really stems from being a child."  
—Ian Incurvatill (iGoodea Creatives, Member)

All photos courtesy of Keith Keiser



“Watching Mayhem capture and inspire a group of college students was amazing! She truly embodies what it means to be creative.”  
 –Amber Hallmann (iGoodea Creatives, Chief Creative Officer)



“I had so much fun creating with someone so innocent, sweet, and enthusiastic! Mayhem was a joy to play with!”  
 –Sara Kassiech (iGoodea Creatives, Member)



“No better way to release your inner child than by working with an expert!”  
 –Cody Cowgill (iGoodea Creatives, Director of Marketing)

# GETTING AN EDUCATION

*while giving*

# HOPE

The overwhelming majority of alumni agree that their Miami years were some of the best of their lives, but most students devote a great deal of time and energy to figuring out the fastest way to go from incoming freshman to graduating senior. Not so with Management and Leadership major Michael Best '17.

A family vacation in Kenya in 2007 set 12-year-old Michael on a course he plans to follow the rest of his life. The sole purpose of the trip was to see the animals in their natural habitats. However, the trip turned into more than just a family vacation.

Michael recalls, "We spent some time in a rural Samburu village learning about their traditions and culture. ***We saw how they lived day-to-day: lack of food, education and medicine. I also saw kids of all ages playing soccer with rolled up garbage being held together with twine.***

I looked up at my mom and asked her if we could come back and help them. When we got home, I started collecting soccer balls and soccer jerseys from friends and money to buy them food.

Due to violence in Kenya, it was not safe for us to return until 2010. In 2010, I went again with my mom and aunt for three weeks, and we spent most of our time in the same Samburu village. A little bit goes a long way in Kenya. They are so appreciative of the help I provide. I knew after the 2010 trip that it would not be my last."

What Michael saw as a 12-year-old boy, and again as a 15-year-old, was a group of people who needed his help. And his vow to make a difference to the people of Samburu, Kenya and Africa as a whole is a promise he has kept for the past nine years.

Michael's passion to help the impoverished in Kenya and other parts of Africa has only grown stronger over the years. His list of accomplishments is as impressive as Michael is unassuming.



“I do it because I know by providing income-generating projects, education and malaria nets they will live a better life. I also do it because they are truly thankful for the help that I can provide. I do it because of the joy that comes out of it, for them and me.”

—Michael Best



## 2010

### **Samburu Village:**

- Sponsored a soccer tournament with hundreds of donated soccer jerseys and balls.
- Purchased food for the entire village.
- Purchased 40 goats for the village.

### **Kibera Slum:**

- Taught math to eighth-grade students preparing for their high school entrance exam.

### **Nairobi:**

- Worked with three elementary schools teaching English.
- Provided educational materials to the schools.

### **Bisil (Working with the Ed Colina Foundation):**

- Spent time working with the students at two early child development) schools that Ed created and supports.
- Funded a preschool in Bisil and named it “St. Henry Kenya” after my high school, which raised the money to build it. We now have three classrooms and continue to provide money for the annual expenses.

## 2011

Brought three high school friends with me to help build and paint.

### **Samburu Village:**

- Physically built a classroom for the kids. They conduct class in the open heat under branches for shade.
- Purchased more goats to provide milk and food.
- Brought more soccer jerseys and balls.
- Introduced the village to volleyball. Brought volleyball jerseys, balls and a net.
- Bought basic medical supplies.
- Purchased food for the village.

### **Widows group (Ed Colina Foundation):**

- Physically built a chicken coop for a group of widows. They can sell the eggs or chickens for income and provide meals for themselves and their children.

### **Bisil (Ed Colina Foundation):**

- Painted the St. Henry Kenya classroom.
- Planted trees around the school for shade.
- Purchased two cows for milk. The mothers of the students milk the cows and sell the milk at the local dairy to help fund the school.



- Women create beadwork jewelry for Ed to sell. This money pays for school fees for their children.
- Provided food for the breakfast and lunch feeding program.

## 2015

### **Samburu Village:**

- Provided more than 100 mosquito nets to help prevent malaria.
- Sourced and delivered donated body soap to everyone in the village.
- Purchased food for the entire village.

### **Kitui:**

- Spent a little over a month teaching high school seniors, who were part of the polytechnic school (metal working, woodworking, hair dressing, and fashion design). It was an orphanage of more than 1000 children ranging in age from 2–23. This orphanage is for children who are either HIV positive or have been affected by AIDS in their life (losing a family member or sibling to AIDS).
- I taught them a lot of what I learned in my MGT 291 class about the importance of the work environment, business ethics, motivation, the difference between

being in a group, and being a team, and being a good leader vs. poor leader. Almost all of this class applies to the work in Africa. Business ethics is a major issue in Kenya (as well as most developing countries) since they will do nearly anything they can to make slightly more money. This is one of the major topics that I covered in the class that I taught as well as while working with many of the villagers; how important ethics are to keep a strong relationship with the consumer.

- I taught them a mixture of basic economics and accounting learned in my economics 201, economics 202 and accounting 221 and 222, since all 21 of them wanted to start their own business upon graduation. None of them had previously had any type of business classes, as they spent the past four years perfecting their trade in the polytechnic school. When it comes time to graduate they propose their business plan to the accountant of the orphanage hoping to receive a loan to start their business.
- I coached the boys' basketball team in practice three days a week.
- I rebuilt a small playground for the preschool children.

### **Nairobi (Ed Colina Foundation):**

Assisted project manager on many projects:

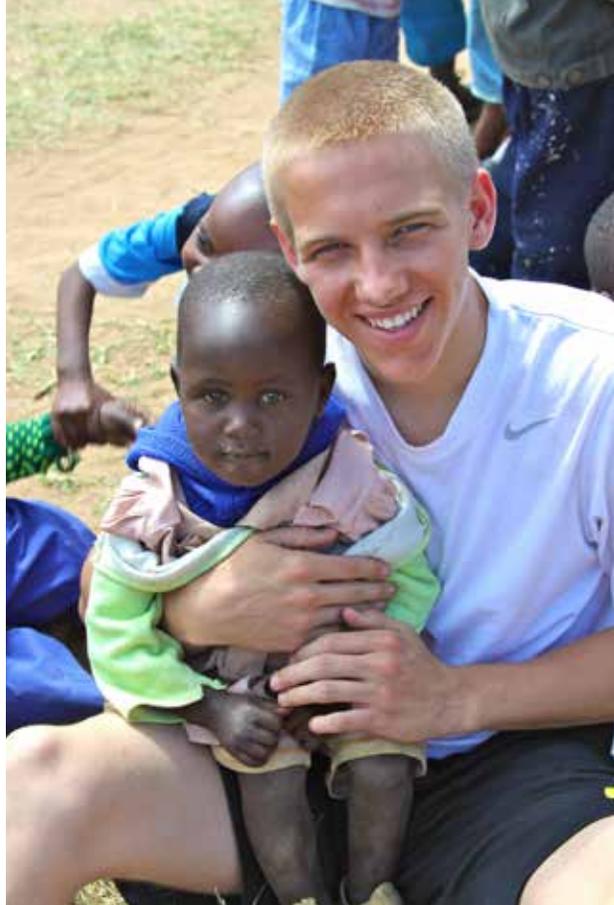
- Purchased 400 chickens and vaccines.
- Dug a well to provide year-round water for the small sustainable farm that would grow much of the ingredients for the chicken feed.
- Organized and funded the opening of a new primary school in the Kibera Slum.
- Funded the first portion of rent on the building, paid teacher fees, uniforms, desks, chalkboards, chairs, notebooks and finally supplied food for the first few months once the school opened.
- Toured many of the prior projects that we have funded/supported over the past six years and gave small talks to many of the local children's parents about the importance of education for the kids.

Now, back in Oxford as a full-time Farmer School student, Michael has his mind on his studies, but he hasn't forgotten his promise to the children of Kenya. He is still finding ways to help. His goal is to raise enough money here in the U.S. through his partnership with the Ed Colina Foundation to be able to continue his work when he graduates.



## WHAT CONTINUES TO FUEL HIS PASSION?

“I do it because I know by providing income-generating projects, education and malaria nets they will live a better life. I also do it because they are truly thankful for the help that I can provide. I do it because of the joy that comes out of it, for them and me. When I was passing out 100+ mosquito nets and 200+ containers of soap, there were women and children that walked more than ten miles solely to get one mosquito net (\$12) and two sleeves of soap (\$2). After each woman received their net and soap, they gave me a hug and many of them gave me a gift (mostly beaded bracelets and necklaces that they made) to show their appreciation. ***I know I am making a difference in their lives and enjoy seeing the difference I can make.***” 🏠



Kenya photos courtesy of Michael Best



# “honorable” mention

Nine Farmer School students were recognized by the faculty and staff of the Farmer School for upholding the values of the FSB Honor Code: Integrity, Respect and Responsibility.

**Senior Alex Ji** was nominated by Mike Curme because “he personifies each of the pillars of the FSB honor code and represents the highest ideals for student behavior as expressed in our Miami values statement and in the Code of Love and Honor.”

**Junior Chi Le** was also nominated by Mike Curme, who remarked, “Chi is a model student. She has advised me closely on matters related to Miami students and in particular matters of importance to international students.”

**Senior Samantha Paul** was recommended by Bruce Hearn. “Her honesty and wholeness as a student have been and are evident. Respect for Ms. Paul is a good as it comes.”

**Junior Josephine Nachemson-Ekwall** was nominated by Emily Akil because “she shows passion in all that she does—passion for her classes, her job, her student organizations, and for the FSB. She truly embodies the qualities of an exemplary role model for incoming students. She is patient, kind, and makes herself available to the students in our class. She is great at connecting with incoming students and getting them excited about the FSB.”

**Senior Shisheng Liang** was celebrated by Chai Sambhara, who noted, “Shisheng has strong work ethics and helps other students in class when working on class exercises. He never looks for shortcuts.”

**Senior Colin Murphy** was also nominated by Chai Sambhara because “he is always prepared to learn. He often

asks questions that help other students in class as well. He leads his project group and tries to maximize the learning outcomes for all. Colin's professional conduct and humble demeanor with teachers and peers make him a strong ambassador for the values of Miami University.”

**Senior Kelsey O'Flaherty** was recommended by Chuck Moul, who remarked, “Kelsey is the most mature and responsible undergraduate that I have known in 16 years of teaching. I would hold him up as a role model except that students would find him so out of the norm as to be unbelievable. In his role as my UA for the past three years, Kelsey has routinely been cited by my students as the UA who is most capable and simultaneously generous in his understanding of the students' position vis-a-vis the material.”

**Senior Ben Arwine** was praised by Patrick Lindsay, who noted, “Ben embodies and lives each day, without compromise, the Pillars of the FSB. Ben led PSE to another national championship, was awarded the top student executive as well as leading the team to the top management and top chapter awards. Ben has also mentored underclasspersons in a very admirable way.”

**Sophomore Marilyn Zubak** was also nominated by Patrick Lindsay because “Marilyn demonstrates respect, integrity and responsibility in her leadership role(s) at PSE. She is exceptionally impressive with the way she treats upper and underclassmen alike. Marilyn demonstrates Servant Leadership.”

The Farmer School believes these qualities are a critical facet in preparing our students to become the leaders of tomorrow. 🏛️

*Student-supplied photo*



# C4

## *the creative explosion*

*by Jim Friedman, Ph.D. Miami University*

Creatives are the newest business rock stars. It wasn't always that way. Creativity used to be synonymous with art-making. You were creative if you could paint, write, draw, sing or dance. Creativity wasn't a skill set you would put on your resume. It's different now.

A few years ago, IBM asked more than 1,500 CEOs what they believed was the single most important factor they wanted in a new hire. Their answer? Creativity... creative business thinkers. The world is changing quickly. The future is unsure. So creativity may be the single most important skill we can teach our students to prepare them for the world after graduation.

But, do we teach creativity? Do our teachers value it? Do they know how to foster it or even identify it? Do business executives? Do you? Sir Ken Robinson, Miami University's 2016 commencement speaker, believes that creativity is as important as literacy, and we should give it the same status.

### **ARE YOU CREATIVE?**

Ask people if they are creative, and many are uncomfortable answering with a resounding "yes." Part of the hesitation is the art-making definition above. If you accept my definition of creativity, "finding a second right answer," then in business and in life we are required to be creative all the time. All of us who lead a team, support someone, write emails, communicate with others—which is all of us, we are required to be creative.

The question I hear most often from students and professionals is, "Can you really teach creativity?"

The short answer is yes... at least, that's what I have convinced Miami University. I have the greatest job in the world ... I teach creativity in the Farmer School of Business. It's kind of like kindergarten for college students. It's fun. It's also serious business. There is an "awakening" during each semester that is a wonder to behold.

We are all born creative. It's true. What is also true is that creativity has been taught, scared and trained out of us. It happens gradually, but relentlessly. Think about it—the voices of judgment from parents and teachers and friends and strangers. It's been part of your daily encounters since you could remember. “No. Stop. Don't touch that. Get your feet off the furniture. Use your inside voice. You're not going out dressed like that. You're not going to go out with him. It's not how we do that here. That will take too much time ... money ... effort. That's a stupid idea.”

## THE VOICE OF JUDGMENT: VOJ

All of those external voices of judgment become our internal voice of judgment. That cacophony of confidence-killing comments destroys our creative confidence.

I begin each semester helping my students recognize and silence their VOJs. After that, we begin working with tools. There are many creativity tools. There are creative tools for problem definition, idea generation and multiple other tasks that require us to think differently. I have a list of 192 different creativity tools.

I have one creativity tool called The C4. It's my own personal concoction, my four-step process that ignites more creative directions ... better answers ... answers others never consider. The C4 is a tool I hope students will take with them into the business world to create their Creative Explosions. The C4 is also a tool I hope you can use in every facet of your life.

## STEP 1 IN THE C4: QUESTIONING

We practice several questioning heuristics. We ask “why.” We practice asking dumb questions. We change the question and clarify the question. ***The secret to finding more creative answers is asking better questions.*** Questioning is the spark. We find the question no one else is asking. For C4, the important series of questions are “what if” and “how about.” The purpose of C4 questioning is to generate lots of ideas, lots of options.

## STEP 2: SILENCING THE VOJ

At some point during the C4 questioning we hear that VOJ ... that inner critic. You know it. It says, “That's stupid. We can't do that. They're gonna turn you down and laugh at you. Stick with something you can actually accomplish.” This is an important moment in the creative explosion. You need to shut up that voice. You need to challenge it. You need to silence it. Silencing your VOJ supplies the heat to push beyond your inner idea killer.

## STEP 3: TAKING RISKS

When you silence that inner voice of judgment, you will naturally take the risk. More risk, more possibility. The greater the risk, the greater the reward.

## STEP 4: CELEBRATE FAILURE

More risk ... more risk of failure. In the search for the creative direction, failure is good. I am not talking about the driving north on southbound I-75 kind of failure. I am not suggesting failing exams or losing money for your organization. I am talking about those little failures. Failures that lead to learning. ***Failure is the key to success. Failure gives the opportunity to ask more, better, different questions. Failure is the flash. Failure begins the C4 process again.***

Failure sends you back through new “what if” questioning, through silencing your VOJ again, through another/better risk and to another failure opportunity.

It sounds easy, but C4 takes work and courage. All creativity takes work and courage. Do you have the courage to not choose the first right idea? We are in such a hurry to move projects forward ... too afraid to make mistakes that we do what is easy, what is proven. In other words, we make choices that won't get us fired instead of choices that may change the playing field.

## MIAMI UNIVERSITY'S CREATIVE DNA

Miami University is in the midst of the “Year of Creativity and Innovation.” University President Hodge declared it so. Thousands have celebrated, investigated, contemplated and explored how the spirit of creativity and innovation has been a part of the Miami DNA. Many are continuing the work to make sure it stays there.

So what is your answer? ***It is an easy question. Are you creative? No matter which way you answer, you are right.*** The harder questions to answer ... Are you prepared to make creative explosions in your life and everything you do? Are you seeking and empowering everyone around you who do?

I challenge you to take a baby step and for just one day, recognize that VOJ inside your head for the creativity killer that it is. Step outside your comfort zone. Risk better. What you will find may surprise you, in a very positive way. 🏛️

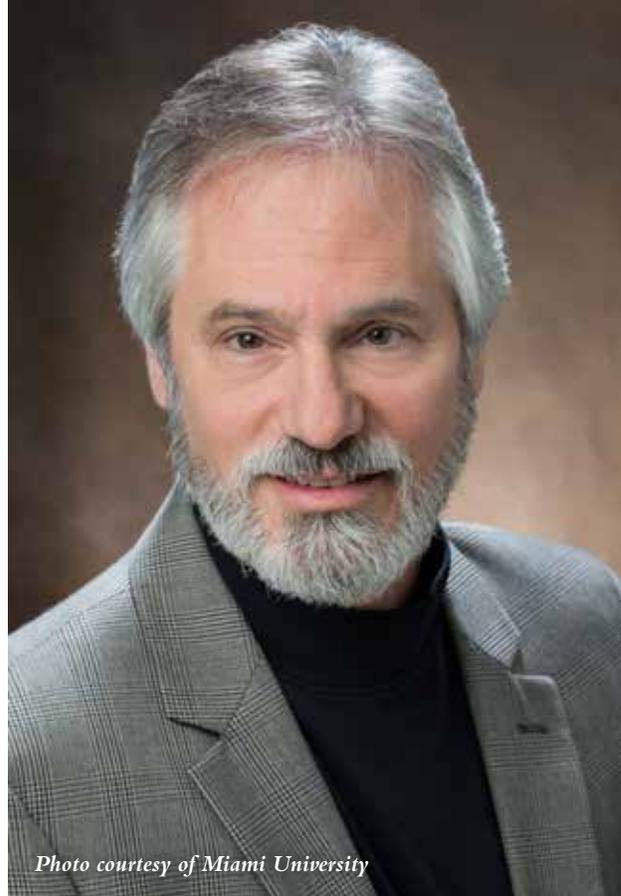


Photo courtesy of Miami University

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Jim Friedman is the White Family Clinical Professor of Creativity in the Institute for Entrepreneurship at Miami University where he teaches innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. He joined the Farmer School in 2008 after a successful career as a producer, director and writer of more than 150 television specials and series. He is the winner of 64 regional Emmys and one national Emmy as well as numerous other national and international awards. Most recently, Dr. Friedman was the winner of the 2016 Associated Student Government Outstanding Professor award. When not teaching, Dr. Friedman teaches creativity and innovation seminars to corporate, educational and non-profit groups and organizations around the country.



# KEEPING STUDENTS *on the path to success*

They're called Academic Advisors, and they're tasked with assisting students in navigating the best path on their journey from incoming first-year students to graduating seniors. But their real work actually begins even before that, as they act as Farmer School ambassadors, leading admission events and talking with potential students, their families, high school teachers, guidance counselors and coaches. Along the way, they transform into teachers, confidants, champions and lifelong friends.

Academic Advisor Marcia Smith explains, "On Mondays and Fridays, we have *Make It Miami* recruitment events. Auditoriums full of parents and prospective students, who are just trying to figure out which school they want to commit to."

Senior Academic Advisor Chanelle White adds, "We teach the first-year experience course. We also support a lot of non-business students who are seeking admission to the program, and help them navigate the requirements for admission. We

have conversations with students about advising and career exploration. We talk about potential internships and strategize about how they can get involved in a student organization."

Marcia continues, "***We want to both challenge and support the students, so we're looking for ways to help connect them to resources and also looking for ways to make sure that they're taking the next step.***" But not all students' needs are the same. "We have some students, who, they're the second, third generation coming here as a business student, so obviously those students are very well educated about Miami and the Farmer School. We also have a number of first-generation college students who get into the school but don't know about the resources. Some maybe don't even realize the caliber of education that they're getting. Our international students tend to put a lot

of emphasis on the rankings, but might not realize we're in Oxford, Ohio and all the opportunities that are here.”

One thing these students discover is that the Farmer School experience is more personal than what their friends experience at similar events at other universities. It's a source of both joy and pride for Farmer School academic advisors.

Chanelle tries to put it into words. “One of the things that I think consistently surprises families and students is the high-touch student experience here. ***When they go to some other schools for admission events, they're not meeting with a faculty member in a small group setting. They're packed into an auditorium, and they have just that singular experience.*** There's no opportunity for questions, they never interact with anyone, and they don't get to talk to current students. Versus when they come here, we try to provide a number of those experiences for them. They really learn what the Farmer School difference is and what really makes the Miami experience so special.”

Marcia agrees. “I've been to several other schools. I've worked in Colorado, Wisconsin and other places. I think that high-touch, personal support and also the dedication of our faculty who are in their office during office hours, who are willing to talk to students is different than so many places.

One of the other differences is the collaboration we have with other areas. We have a strong relationship with Career Services, Student Organizations, Study Abroad, and a lot of those interactions have a direct, positive impact on our students. The students, when they come to us, they don't know exactly what we do. They just need advice. ***We really enjoy what we do and the people with whom we do it. That makes a huge difference.***”



Once students arrive on campus, the academic advisors' role shifts. Their goal is to support the students' growth so that they are well-prepared to become organizational leaders when they graduate. That process sometimes involves "weaning" them from their parents' shelter.

"A parent calls me, I'll talk with them about their student, but then I want to make sure to connect with the student and get the student in my office," Marcia said. "Even though the parent can solve the problem for the student, the student needs to learn to solve that themselves. When we look at campus visits and everything like that, the parents are right there. Often times, it's the parents pulling out the list of questions, so I'll respond to those questions to the student, ask the student questions and start to pull them out of their shell. ***As the students spend more time here at the FSB, you can see them grow and mature***

***and start to take on more responsibility. I really think it's a developmental journey.***"

With the depth of relationship that the Farmer School academic advisors build with their advisees, graduation is an emotional event. Chanelle agrees. "I think as much as they have mixed feelings about starting new chapters in their lives, and closing this chapter, I think that we do as well. Every year, we think we're never going to be able to replace any of the students that we can name. Then every year, we have incredible first-year students who come here, and we're so surprised, and enjoy them. I talk with them for four years about their jobs and their internships, and so I know what a lot of them are doing. It's great."

"Then they come back," noted Marcia. "They don't disappear off the face of the earth. They have a soft spot in their heart for Farmer. They'll come back here as recruiters, or we'll connect them with a student who's really interested in the field they just went into. Social media, LinkedIn, or whatever, really helps us connect those students with each other, which is one of the things that makes the Farmer School special."

Chanelle concluded, "Seeing them grow over four years is very rewarding, as is celebrating the successes with them. I think that sometimes those successes are small, in the grand scheme of things, like 'you did great on that exam that you really had to work hard for,' or celebrating the internship or the full-time offer. I think the students make this place wonderful, and really seriously, the colleagues. I'm so lucky to work in such a great place that has very, very supportive colleagues. ***The students are wonderful, our colleagues are great, and so are our faculty and the wonderful relationships we have here. I know that sounds extremely cheesy, but it's true.***"





## OUR RECENT INITIATIVES...

### *FSB Pre-Arrival Advising & Registration Program for International Students*

A ground-breaking initiative to make it easier for international students to complete requirements and register for classes before arriving on campus. Benefits include:

- Students can register for classes and know their Fall Semester schedule before coming to the U.S.
- The online delivery allows students additional time for language translation as they can use closed-captioning, rewind videos, etc.
- Students can take the English placement test while not jet lagged.
- Short quizzes following modules help ensure that students are understanding important information.
- One-on-one academic advising appointment allows for individualized attention and support.

### *Transfer Course Approval Form*

Keeps students from having to go door to door and should result in a database that would enrich advising for all FSB advisors.

### *FSB Force-Add Site*

Transformed a paper, manual process into an online submission, review and confirmation. Significant because more than 5,500 force-add requests are reviewed by departments on an annual basis in four distinct force-add periods. 🏛️

# By the Numbers...

# 1

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ADVISORS  
AN FSB STUDENT WILL HAVE

# 3.7

MEDIAN NUMBER OF YEARS  
TO COMPLETE DEGREE

# 4

NEW PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS  
STARTING THIS SUMMER

# 7,267

NUMBER OF STUDENT VISITS  
TO THE ADVISORS IN THE  
2015-2016 ACADEMIC YEAR

# *what* **DRIVES**

UBER'S RYAN GRAVES '06?



Ask any of the 929 recently-graduated Farmer School class of 2016 students what their goals are in life, and “changing the world” would rank right there at the top. Miami and the Farmer School graduates have the skills, drive and desire to make a positive difference. But changing the world is a pretty tall order. It takes more than just skill. It takes drive. Guts. A willingness to give up the comfortable and risk failure. Creativity. An entrepreneurial spirit and a knack for disruption.

Those words have all been used to describe Uber’s Senior Vice President of Global Operations, Ryan Graves ’06.

Under his leadership, Uber has grown from one car available in San Francisco in 2010 to more than 450 cities worldwide, from New York to New Delhi, serving tens of millions of riders and drivers. Uber has changed the way people view transportation and spawned an army of entrepreneurs. As Uber driver Liz from Bogota explains, “My goal and dream has always been to be independent, to be an entrepreneur. Uber came in at the perfect moment.”

We talked with Ryan about the road he has traveled and what other destinations might lie ahead...



Ryan grew up in San Diego. His passion for surfing might make land-locked Miami University seem an unlikely college choice. Ryan explained, ***“My mom went to Miami, and her mom went to Miami, so the Midwest roots are deep.*** I did my college search: a number of schools in California, and then a few out of state—Oregon and Colorado and a few others. I visited Miami, and had a friend who was a junior there at the time. I went out with her and her girlfriends and got to sit in a number of business classes and realized Oxford’s a special place, so I had the opportunity to get exposed to what my mom had for her college experience. ***I thought if I didn’t leave home for college, it was going to be hard to find another reason to leave California in life. So that was how it came to fruition, and I’m really happy with how things played out.”***

He chose Economics as his major because, “I was able to study things that were both qualitative, and histories of how the economies of the world, and specifically in the United States economy, evolved through the depression, etc. I was also able to study things like econometrics and scratch the quantitative itch.”

## WHAT DID HE LEARN?

“I’ve taken away a ton from it. I think the real epiphany in college for me was around the end of my sophomore year, early junior year. I realized my grades were not going in the direction that I needed them to go and I had to evaluate the level of effort that I had put into academics as a portion of my overall education. I realized I was going to have to work harder. I learned that my work ethic and my personal results were directly associated. I took a level of ownership into those results and I just started studying a hell of a lot more and finding out ways to study that worked for me.

I would sit in Mac and Joes and study for an econometrics test. I enjoyed the environment—it was relaxed. When I made that change, all of a sudden it was off to the races. My GPA turned around, I really started enjoying my relationships with professors more, and also started to see how I could apply in the real world what I was learning. That was a true epiphany around owning my life’s results and where work ethic and those results converge.

That was the core learning. But at the end of the day, I think there’s a ton of things that come out of college; how to converse with people from different backgrounds, how to spend time with adults and be a professional, I took away from a well-rounded experience I had at Miami. I took public speaking classes that I really took a lot away from. I do a lot of public speaking now, and just understanding the art of public speaking, and how to get over your nerves, how to structure a talk, that’s immensely useful.”

Ryan’s biggest regret about his Miami experience was his inability to study abroad. “My junior year was when my academics turned around. I invested more into school and I got a lot more out of it. Surprise, surprise. But because that wasn’t necessarily the case in my freshman and sophomore years, I missed out on a lot of opportunities. One of the primary ones that I still regret is the opportunity to study abroad. I wanted to do that. All my closest friends had life-changing experiences in Luxembourg and I didn’t get to go.”

The most positive Miami experience for Ryan was also life-changing. He met his wife, Molly, here. “I met Molly in

my senior year at a party at our house. We started dating just before break, at the end of first semester our senior year. We dated through the end of the year—I actually came home to San Diego, but after six months home doing a left over Spanish class that I had not completed at Miami, I decided to move back to the Midwest to Chicago, where I had a bunch of friends and where Molly was.

***I think the most pivotal decision in my life was my decision to marry Molly. It's been kind of an anchor to everything else that's happened since.***

There's a lot of work that's gone into Uber that I would not have been able to stay sane through, or decisions I have made through my experience at Uber where Molly was at the backbone of those decisions. I can't emphasize enough the partner that I have in Molly, and in all life's decisions from here on out. I am lucky that I don't have to go at it alone. That's certainly the decision that I would not change at all and that's been most meaningful."

The story of Ryan's career post-graduation is well documented. He started as a consultant and then moved into a leadership training program for GE Healthcare, but quickly decided that a traditional corporate career wasn't his ideal. "I was a part of GE, which I think is a phenomenal organization, but I also recognized pretty quickly that was not the fastest moving organization.

***So that's why I wanted to find a startup, find a really young company that I could help and learn from, because things just move a hell of a lot faster.***

If you're seeing a lot, I think you can start to hone in on what you really like and what you really don't like, and I think that helps someone build a path with some sort of strategy for their career. I learned that a few years into my career and started making adjustments, and it worked out very well."

Ryan was on the hunt for a more entrepreneurial opportunity. He was a fan of Foursquare, a mobile app that

lets people check in on their mobile devices when they patronize businesses. Ryan decided since he liked the app, he should go work for them. But Foursquare didn't jump at the chance to hire him. For most people, that would have been the end of the conversation. For Ryan, it became a challenge.

So, he worked at GE during the day, and spent nights and weekends cold-calling on Chicago-area businesses trying to get them to sign up for Foursquare. And he did it really well. Without being an employee, he signed up 30 new customers for Foursquare. He emailed the list of new customers to Foursquare's founders. This time, Foursquare did take notice and hired the unconventional business development hotshot. He was promptly brought on board to help with business development.

As Ryan puts it, ***"I wanted to put myself in the right position to meet as many people as possible."*** Being "out there" gave him the opportunity of a lifetime. He responded to a tweet by Uber founder Travis Kalanick: "Looking 4 entrepreneurial product mgr/biz-dev killer 4 a location based service.. pre-launch, BIG equity, big peeps involved—ANY TIPS?" Ryan's response? "Here's a tip. Email me :)." Ryan became Uber's first employee and, after proving his skills, its first Chief Executive Officer.



## SO WHAT ADVICE WOULD HE GIVE TO CURRENT STUDENTS?

“We all have different backgrounds, experiences, so I try not to say, ‘this is what you should do.’ You should figure out your own path. That’s what worked for me, and it goes back to that theme of ownership that I learned during college.

***Take responsibility for what you want to get done. The earlier you think about it the better, but also it has to happen in a natural timeline.”***

“I have this philosophy that when you get married there’s a lot of joy that comes out of it, and as a guy, there’s an excitement path and there’s a joy path, and you get married and you choose the joy path, and I think having kids has significantly amplified that joy that comes out of life. You make investments and there’s shitty nights, and you don’t get sleep, and you make all these sacrifices, but back to the theme of what my dad says, you get out what you put in, in anything in life. So when you make such a significant investment with your time and energy and emotions, you just get a lot out, and so I’ve just been excited by the level of fulfillment and joy that comes from being a dad.

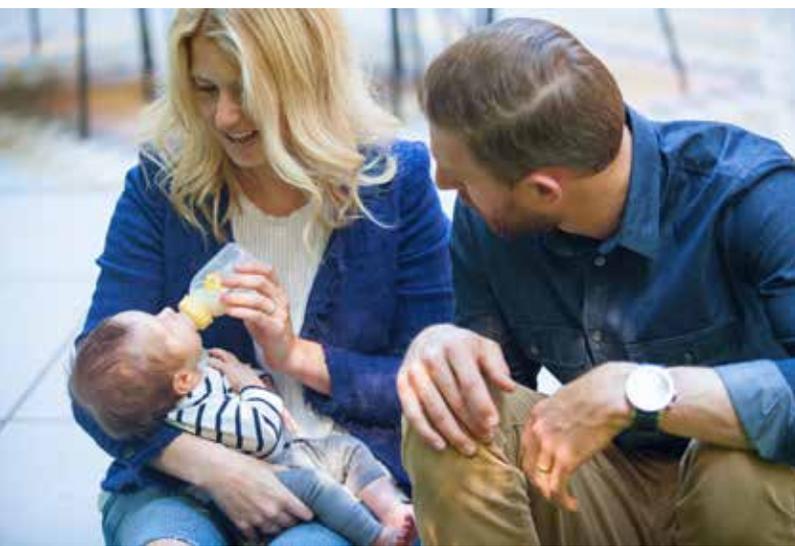
I never expected the connection that I have with my first son to happen as rapidly. He’s 16 months now, and the level of communication is much more hi-def than I ever expected it to be. I can tell... There’s not just happy and sad: There’s angry, and there’s jealous, and there’s nuances to how he communicates, even in his facial expressions, but he also has a lot of words for his age, that I’m just getting so much... It’s so much fun to be a part of those interactions and help develop them, so I think there’s much, much more joy than I ever would have expected from being a dad. Hudson does swim lessons every single week, and that started at 4 months old. Last night we were there, and I can dunk him 3 or 4 feet under the water and he comes up with his eyes red, bloodshot, and a huge smile on his face.”

With so much joy at home, and financial security, why work? “Uber’s changed a lot in six years. I wasn’t very

mission-driven at the beginning of Uber. Being able to pat myself on the back or pound my chest and say that I changed the world is not really what motivates me. But it comes down to the quality of the people that I get to work with, day in and day out. That’s what was attractive at the very beginning when we were Uber Cab, and then over time I’ve had opportunity to own that process and build that team, and we’ve built such a phenomenal crew that every day I’m around a table with people that I really enjoy spending time with and enjoy thinking through hard problems with. Sometimes being taught, sometimes teaching, and so that’s what gets me excited.

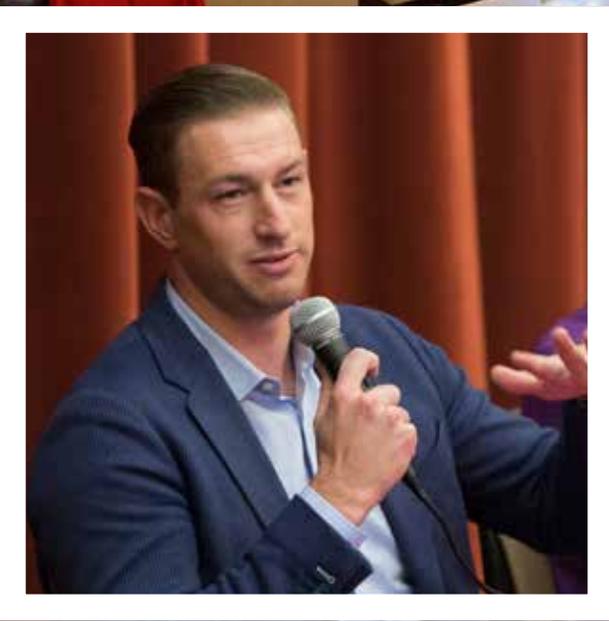
As we’ve now found pretty significant scale, around the world and deep into the cities where Uber operates, we’re really having an impact. At an individual level, for each driver that’s earning money on the Uber platform, the infinite stories around situations that we’ve gotten people out of because of how quick the service works, and the level of time back that people get to spend by not having to drive in or commute into the city themselves... There are a number of impacts that go on and on when you have the service that is Uber, and ingrain it in your life. Having that impact is truly pretty massive at this point, so the mission of reliable transportation for everyone everywhere is now core to the excitement of why we do it, and why I do it.”

***“What motivates me most are the people that I put around me, and I think that if there’s anything that I feel most proud of in my life, it’s throughout the different stages, from high school to college, to dating and marrying Molly, to now at Uber, I’ve just done a really good job—oftentimes by luck and sometimes by skill—at surrounding myself with people who are going to continue to challenge me that are really***





Photos courtesy of Miami University



*exceptional. That's kind of where I am. I feel lucky."*

"As Uber has become successful, and my situation has tracked Uber's success, I've just kind of been myself and I haven't really changed who I am or how I see the world or how I treat people, and I would like to think that in 10 years, regardless of what happens economically or otherwise, I'll be the same guy who I am today, and was yesterday, and will be tomorrow. I think that's kind of an achievement in

and of itself, sometimes, because people do change in these situations, sometimes not for the better. So that consistency of how I am and how I treat people and these sorts of things is something that I certainly value. I think that's a great place to be, because I like where I came from and I like where I am."

*"I feel like I was pitching in a pony league game, and all of a sudden I'm pitching in the major leagues, and now I'm pitching in the World Series, on a stage that the world watches, and I'm really having a lot of fun.* When you're in that situation you should keep pitching, and keep having fun, and hopefully continue to make solid decisions day in and day out." 🏠

## BIG DATA, BIG LEARNING, BIG FUN



Photo courtesy of Miami University

From 6 p.m. on Friday, April 29 until 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 1, 50 students from three Ohio universities participated in a nationwide data analytics competition known as DataFest.

Hosted by Miami University's Center for Analytics and Data Science, 12 teams from Miami University, Bowling Green State University, and the University of Cincinnati analyzed three data sets provided by Ticketmaster, searching for insights into pricing, web-based advertising, and customer segmentation. Working with more than 3GB of data, the teams spent their weekend applying their data science skills to real data in a friendly, but competitive environment. More than 20 volunteers from Miami University's departments of Information Systems & Analytics, Statistics, and Marketing powered the event. Incoming Miami President, Gregory Crawford and his wife, Renate, even stopped by to chat with students.

Tom Fisher, the chair of the local planning committee said, "DataFest is a unique experience for students to be exposed to big data on a grand scale. With millions of rows of data, it's bigger than any project they'll encounter within class and I'm so proud of the students' hard work."

The students were able to hone their skills in programming, data management, data modeling, and data visualization. According to senior Michael Creutzinger, mathematics and statistics major, "When you are in class working with R-Studio, it's in a very controlled manner. Whereas DataFest allowed us to get down and dirty with the data by having to figure it out and learn the syntax ourselves."

After hours of pouring over the data and refining their story, the teams presented a one-page summary, three slides or a dashboard, and gave an eight minute presentation to four industry judges. The judges, who traveled into Oxford from four states, included Meg Walters, Data Scientist at Allstate,

Gary Cao, Executive Leader in Business Analytics at Cardinal Health, James Correa, Sr. Manager-Analytics at IBM, and Michael Alton, data scientist at EY. James Correa from IBM commended competitions like DataFest, because they "prepare the students for a real life understanding of data. By putting things in a time box, we really drive the importance of time to value. ***Today, opportunities present themselves very quickly, the window is small, so you need to be able to capitalize on the insight to improve outcomes fast.***"

### The prize winning teams include the following:

- Best in Show—*Data Scrubs* from Miami University: Ben Smith, Bob Krueger, Bri Clements, Katherine Shockey, and Robert Garrett presented on marketing and price optimization of ticket sales and looked into the ticket price ratio.
- Best Insight—*The Datacats* from the University of Cincinnati: Adam Reichert, Ben Nolan, Brady Ramsaur, Cassandra Gleason, and Yianni Kanellopoulos answered the question "What are the different customers of Ticketmaster and what events should we suggest that they go to?"
- Best Visualization—*Make America Statistically Significant Again* from Miami University: Alan Tatro, Cody Philips, Heather Mathews, Michael Macey, and Mickey Whitford built a Shiny app to display price optimization and the effectiveness of adwords campaigns by state and by advertising method.

Miami University's Center for Analytics and Data Science will be hosting DataFest 2017 April 7–9, 2017. Junior accounting and French major with a minor in analytics, Michael Baader, will be back next year stating, "DataFest was a great way to apply what you learned in class to a real world problem with professors and industry experts helping throughout the competition."



# *EXPLORING*

## *Long-Forbidden Territory: FSB in Cuba*

Study abroad is no longer a luxury or synonymous with “vacation,” it’s a key component of a Farmer School education. Inter-cultural fluency is a critical skill, and one of the things that makes our students so highly sought-after by recruiters. Our students have the opportunity to study almost anything, anywhere. But this winter term, a new program was added, in a place Farmer School students had never experienced.

Students in Dr. Deborah Fletcher and Dr. Bryan Ashenbaum’s economics and management classes left sleepy Oxford one cold January day, bound for the “other” Miami — Florida. Their final destination? Havana, Cuba.

Since Cuba has been cut off from the U.S. since 1961, none of our students have had the opportunity to visit or study there. So when diplomatic relations were restored on July 20, 2015, Kim Suellau, director of international programs at the Farmer School, saw an opportunity. She knew this was a chance for our students to be among the first to explore the newly reopened country and to study how Cuba fits into the global marketplace.

Since this was new territory for FSB, Kim and professors Fletcher and Ashenbaum took a trip beforehand to ensure the logistics were in place and the educational goals could be met. They scouted out businesses to visit and made sure everything would go smoothly. Then, with everything ready, the trio took 24 students to Cuba from January 4–21, 2016.

For approximately two weeks, the students studied Introduction to Operations & Supply Chain Management and Comparative Economic Systems. Dr. Fletcher’s economics course was especially poignant in light of the trip, but both courses allowed the Farmer School students to make connections between what they recognized in America and what they witnessed in Cuba.

The days weren’t just filled with classwork, however. The group took field trips to businesses and even went zip lining. They ate dinner in local homes that functioned as small restaurants and were able to explore a coffee plantation. One thing that struck Elizabeth Stermer, a senior management and leadership major, during her trip was the vibrant nature of the city streets. ***Despite the relative poverty and economic***





***disparities, the students could feel the pulse of Havana through its captivating culture.***

“We would walk down alleyways and streets and hear trumpeters and guitar players and then walk into any restaurant and hear a live band playing salsa music. I had studied Socialism and Capitalism in classes before coming to Cuba but immersing myself in a culture and system so vastly different from our own really helped me gain an understanding of our political system and others that I hadn’t really gotten until now.” Elizabeth recalled.

Junior finance major, Frank Borta, reported that along with the classwork and trips to businesses, it was exciting to have a chance to learn about the people and their customs and traditions.

“It was fun to get lost, explore and interact with the Cuban people in our free time once we knew our way around the city and language. One day a lot of us walked from our hotel along the sea wall to Old Havana (a good 40-minute walk) and just meandered through the old streets, looked at art, ate, and listened to music. On another free day, most of us decided we wanted to go to a local Industriales baseball game (the Havana team is the Industriales). We were the only non-Cubans there but it was just like being at a stadium back in America.” Frank said.

Whenever Farmer students travel abroad, they’re representing the Farmer School and Miami at large. This time, the stakes were higher. As Frank noted, they were among the first to experience Cuba at the beginning of our countries’ rekindled relationship. This made them representatives not only of Miami, but of America itself—and they achieved that status with dignity. “I was honored to be able to represent the United States and Miami University in such an early stage of the growing relationship between our two countries.”

A program for winter 2017 is already planned, with more opportunities to continue to strengthen the bonds forged on the first trip. 🏰



*Student-supplied photos*



Todd Bailey: on to his next great  
*adventure*

After 25 years as a trial lawyer and 15 years of teaching business legal studies in the finance department, Todd Bailey Esq. is ready to start his third career.

Todd received his bachelor's degree from Miami and his J.D. from Duke University, then began his legal career in Cincinnati at Frost Brown Todd, where he remained for 25 years, including spending almost 20 years as a partner in the prestigious law firm. As successful as he was, Todd felt as though there was something missing.

"I was dealing with really complex multi-million dollar disputes, but at the end of the day, win, lose or draw, it didn't give me an intrinsic sense of satisfaction. ***It was challenging work, it was rewarding work but it was not satisfying work.*** Rarely would the client say, 'thank you' or 'job well done,' because I was expected to do that. I approached the finance department because I had an itch to teach."



Teaching might seem an unusual choice for a man who made his mark first in 1970 as an upstart Miami student joining a protest by participating in the storied "flush-in," running showers and sinks and flushing toilets across campus at two synchronized times to drain Oxford of its entire water supply, and then as a trial lawyer handling commercial disputes, but to Bailey (as his students call him), it was a perfectly logical next step. "In 25 years, as a trial lawyer, I saw lots of really smart business people doing

"Your passion for your students, for teaching, for your career and for ethics and IP shine through each and every day in the classroom. The University and future students have no idea the loss they will be taking with your retirement."

—Connor J.

really unwise things. Just because they weren't connecting the dots, they weren't anticipating what might go wrong. ***The more I thought about it, I thought, well, I can have a bigger impact training future business people to understand how to approach this from a strategy perspective and from an ethics perspective.***"

Okay, teaching makes sense. But why at the Farmer School, an hour's drive from his home, instead of a Cincinnati-area school? "I do guest lectures at the MBA programs at other schools, and their graduate students are of the same quality as our undergrads. The quality of the people up here is just exceptional. Without a doubt, the quality of the people that I have the privilege to teach today is just superb. ***We have great faculty, we have exceptional students, and when both of those communities are engaged, the result is an extraordinary thing.*** On my teaching days I get up at 4:30 a.m. I never got up at 4:30 when I was practicing law. I'm here by 7:00 for my 8:30 class. I will get home at 7:00 in the evening. Those are long days, but ***the energy level that I get from the***

## ***engagement in the classroom makes this just a no-brainer.”***

Bailey’s no-nonsense approach, combined with his experience, expertise and genuine love of teaching made him a winner in the classroom. “It’s a great feeling. I get invited to their weddings, they send me pictures of their newborn kids. It’s not at all unusual for me to have a scheduled Sunday conversation about ‘what’s my next career move, do I get my MBA, what do you think about this new opportunity’ and that type of thing. I am still in touch with people whom I taught in my first semester here in August 2001.”

So why stop now? “Last September I was sitting in my senior capstone class and it was a wonderful day in the classroom. The students were engaged, they were well-prepared, the whole thing was coming together exactly the way I would want it to. I realized that I love and value this work so much that it would never be easy or get easier to make this decision, and my wife has been retired from P&G for five and a half years. I just decided now is the time. ***There aren’t many people who get to leave a job they love on terms that I was lucky enough to craft.***”

But that doesn’t mean he’s quitting teaching. “I’m not walking away just because I’m retiring. As a matter of fact, I will be giving my graduate-level intellectual property presentation to the masters of accountancy class this fall. I hope very much to remain actively involved with the Farmer School and with the university community.”

And when he’s not teaching? ***“I have a plan. You’ve got to have a plan. Habitat for Humanity is a charity I’m very interested in, so I think I’m going to get involved with them.*** There are some inner city Cincinnati educational initiatives that I’m going to get

involved in and I’m going to get my private pilot’s license. I’m also going to stay at Frost Brown Todd until the end of the year and do professional development for the new lawyers. The skills that were required at Miami are portable back into that application. I designed a whole new lawyer development program. We’re probably one of the very few law firms in the country that has a mini MBA program, because I brought Brad Bays, Senior Director of the Farmer School MBA Program, into my law firm and he teaches a mini MBA program to all of our incoming lawyers. Then I have a professional development program that has a year-long syllabus with all sorts of deliverables and competencies and everything that gives our folks a terrific head start in the profession.”

## **Todd Bailey’s “Four Questions”**

I have four questions that I tell my students they should always ask whenever they are looking at a piece of innovation or looking at a joint venture opportunity or whatever the problem might be.

The questions are:

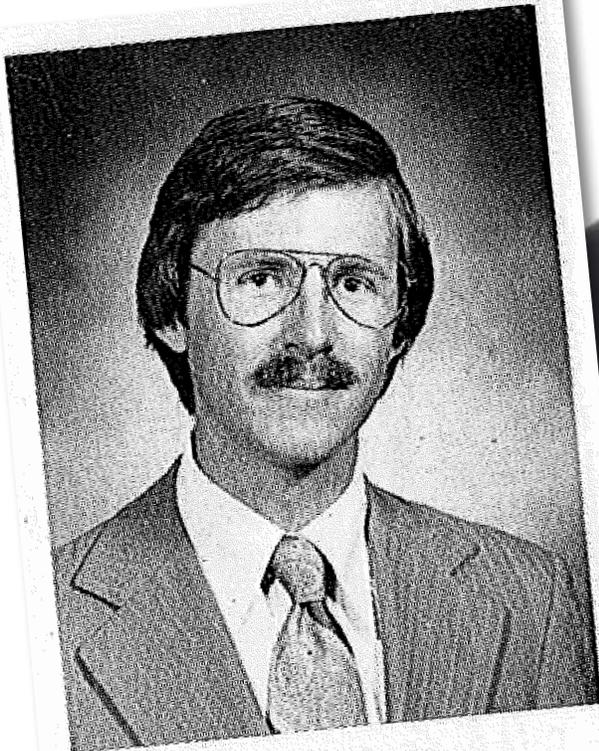
1. Where did this come from?
2. Who owns it?
3. What rights do I have to it?
4. What am I missing?

Number four is the differentiator, because the people who are well-trained, from a process perspective to keep walking around a problem or an opportunity and they don’t move ahead and make a decision until they have exhausted that last question. I’m missing something. What is it?

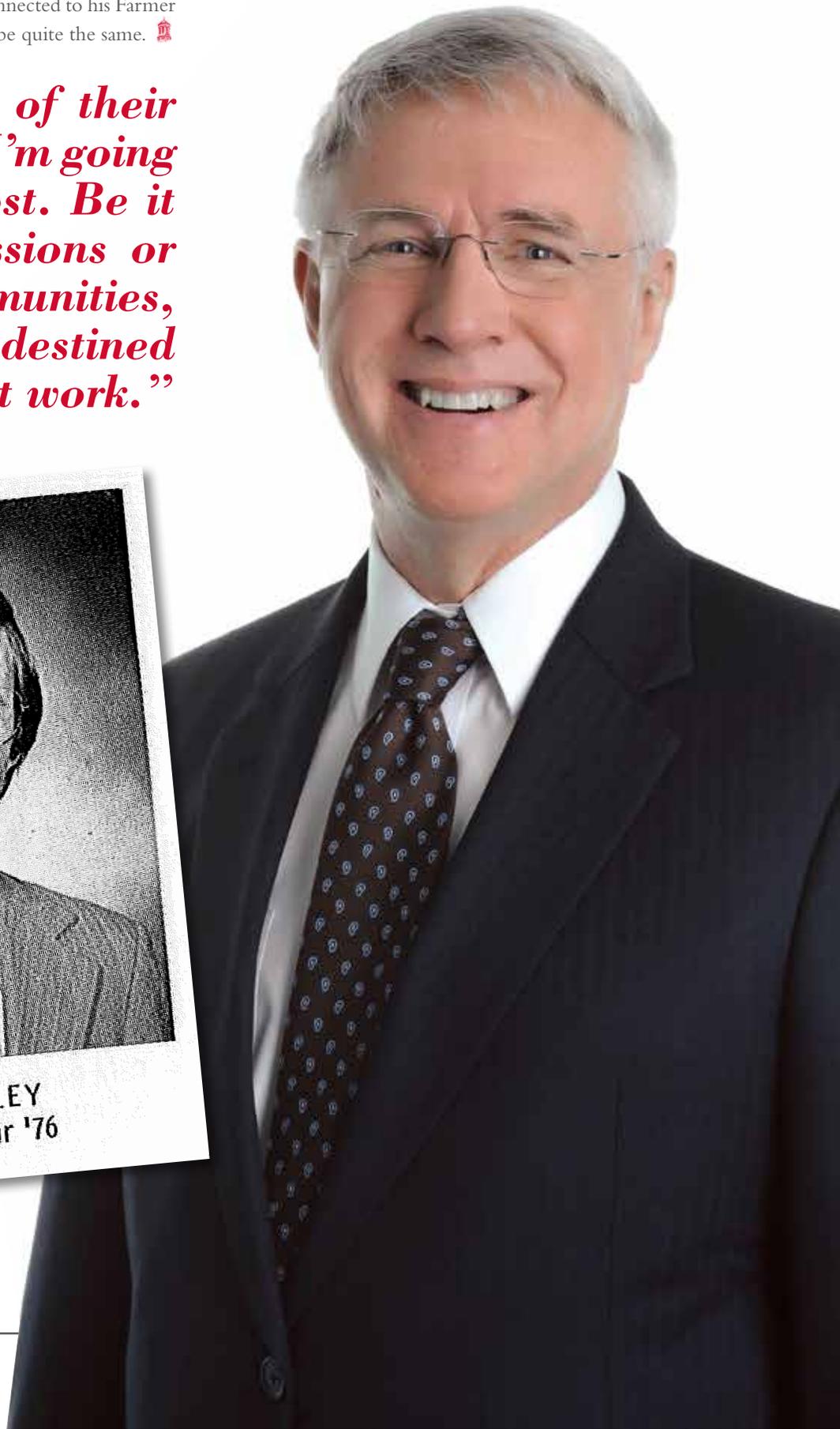
It’s not about remembering something that they memorized. If you don’t have the answers, that’s okay, but if you don’t ask the right questions, you’re in trouble. The best business people with whom I’ve worked, and I’ve worked with a lot of them, are not the people who have all of the answers but they have asked the right questions. That is critical.

Even though he expects to remain connected to his Farmer School family, Bailey knows it won't be quite the same. 🏛️

*“Being a part of their future is what I’m going to miss the most. Be it in their professions or in their communities, these folks are destined for great, great work.”*



TODD H. BAILEY  
Duke '76 Adm. Bar '76



*Photo courtesy of Frost Brown Todd*

## Heroes with Hearts on Valentine's Day

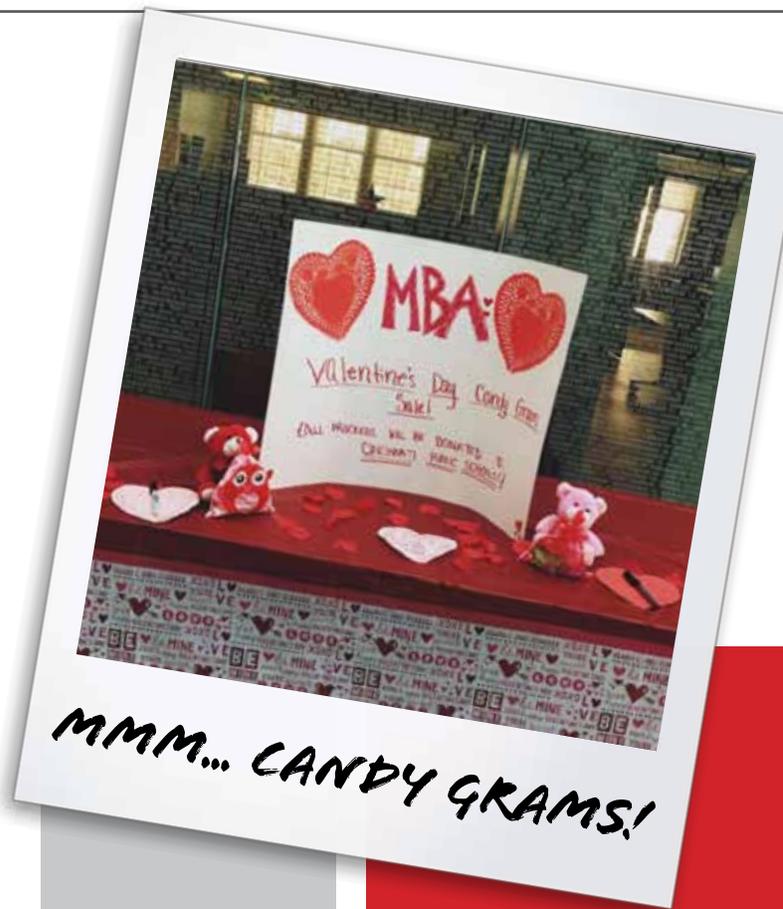
The Farmer School is home to more than 25 student-led organizations that seek to support their fellow business majors through a range of activities and fundraising opportunities. From groups dedicated to scholarly pursuits like the Financial Analytics Association to the world travelers and volunteers of the Global Business Brigades, each group within the FSB adds to the continuing narrative of student engagement and knowledge creation that are pillars of our community.

The Multicultural Business Association (MBA) is designed for students who strive to foster the multicultural community at the FSB. Students of varying interests, backgrounds and majors hang their hats here. These Farmer leaders believe that “diversity” is an inclusive term that expands beyond ethnicity—*everyone is welcome*.

“Everything you are, everything you are doing, everything you have experienced, everything that makes you unique, is how we define it,” Ibukun Ibraheem, a senior entrepreneurship minor and strategic communication major, said. “Our ultimate goal is to create a network of well-rounded and diverse leaders who recognize their potential and are ready to maximize it so they can lead a rewarding life.”

This February, the MBA opened their hearts to support children in need. By partnering with ‘Collab-Donation,’ a campus-wide philanthropic alliance between 13 different student organizations, the MBA set out to raise money for underprivileged children in Cincinnati Public Schools.

With Valentine's Day right around the corner, the students of the MBA saw an opportunity. Why not use the holiday as a chance to conduct a themed fundraiser? With that idea, the students in the organization created the Valentine's Day Candy Gram Sale. The group was able to sell 72 candy grams—and at the end of the day, raised more than \$340.



MMM... CANDY GRAMS!

## New AAF Team Wins Best Creative In District Competition

The National Student Advertising Competition is an annual contest held in the U.S. by the American Advertising Federation (AAF) for teams of college students. The AAF is divided into 15 districts, each containing one to five states. Each district holds a competition in April and the winning team advances to the national finals which are held during the annual AAF National Conference in June.

Miami Advertising (MAD), founded in Fall 2015, and advised by professors Jan Taylor and Jim Coyle, assembled a 14 person team that included marketing, graphic design, creative writing and interactive media studies majors. Five team members presented their findings at the AAF district competition and placed third overall and won best creative.



*Students Left to Right:  
Mike Coutre, Kayla Brighter,  
James Rooney, Casey Wood,  
& Jackie Hayes*



**TRIPLE CROWN!!**

## PSE Wins Triple Crown

Our Pi Sigma Epsilon National Business Fraternity chapter, Gamma Gamma, achieved a rare Triple Crown by winning the Top Chapter, the Top Management Team (Ben Arwine, Conner Jarvis, Lawler Coe, Marilyn Zubak and Alex Gertz presenters) and the Whan Challenger Awards (Ben Arwine for top student Leader).

This represents the first time in five years and only the sixth time in 60 years that a chapter was able to sweep these three awards. And yes, our chapter was the most recent winner, five years ago.



**NINTH ANNUAL FSB  
GOLF CLASSIC!**

## Ninth Annual Farmer School Golf Classic Scores Big For Habitat For Humanity

The sun was shining on Weatherwax Golf Course in Middletown as 88 golfers teed off at the ninth annual Farmer School Golf Classic on April 24. The event, created in 2007 as a project in Professor Pat O'Brien's "Making College Count" class, has become a tradition for students, faculty and Farmer School supporters.

The event format encourages interaction, fosters friendships and builds networks for all involved. It also raises thousands of dollars for the Oxford Habitat for Humanity – more than \$24,000 this year, bringing the nine year total to more than \$200,000. Not bad for an event run entirely by student volunteers.

"This is a wonderful tradition the students champion each year, remarked Dean Matt Myers. It's a fun way of giving back to the Oxford community while forging friendships with our peers and establishing important relationships with corporate recruiters." Samantha Platek, co-chair of the event, added, "We look forward to keeping this tradition of being an event that students, administrators, faculty, alumni and sponsors value year after year."



**MAKING COLLEGE  
COUNT!**



## Farmer School and Accountancy Program Get Two Thumbs Up from the AACSB

The Farmer School of Business and our Accountancy program have passed the mandatory Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) Five Year Continuous Improvement Review with flying colors.

As the AACSB notes, “AACSB Accreditation is the hallmark of excellence in business education, and has been earned by less than 5 percent of the world’s business schools. Today, there are 755 business schools in 51 countries and territories that have earned AACSB Accreditation. Similarly, 182 institutions hold an additional specialized AACSB Accreditation for their accounting programs.”

The review team was extremely impressed with our faculty, students, innovative programming, dedication to improvement and the Farmer School building itself. What stood out most to the review team? Denise Schoenbachler, Dean, Northern Illinois College of Business and AACSB Review Team Chair, commented, ***“Providing exceptional student engagement experiences inside and outside the FSB is perhaps the school’s strongest differentiator. Experiential learning opportunities touch every FSB student across curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities.”***

## FSB Students Win Political Science Competition

Farmer School students Jackie Craig, Harrison Fox and Spencer Reynolds participated in the American Enterprise Institute budget case competition hosted by the political science department.

The competition required students to devise a scenario to balance the federal budget in ten years. Student groups were asked, “How would you balance the federal budget in ten years?” Once they received an information packet, they put together a Power Point presentation outlining their plan. Those that passed the preliminary round became finalists and presented in front of a panel of five judges—some Miami faculty, others from outside the university.

In the end, the Farmer School students’ analysis and presentation made them winners over the other 13 teams participating.

# EXCELLENCE IN & BEYOND

## *the classroom*

RICHARD K. SMUCKER  
TEACHING EXCELLENCE  
AWARD

**Outstanding  
Professor**

Megan Gerhardt  
*Management*



RICHARD K. SMUCKER  
TEACHING EXCELLENCE  
AWARD

**Outstanding  
Junior Professor**

Po-Chang Chen  
*Accountancy*



RICHARD K. SMUCKER  
TEACHING EXCELLENCE  
AWARD

**Outstanding  
Clinical Professor**

Susan Cramer  
*Information Systems & Analytics*



FARMER SCHOOL  
OF BUSINESS  
SENIOR FACULTY AWARD

**Research  
Excellence**

Lisa Ellram  
*Management*



JAMES ROBESON  
JUNIOR FACULTY  
AWARD

**Research  
Excellence**

John Bowlblis  
*Economics*



FARMER SCHOOL  
**Faculty  
Service  
Excellence**

Steve Elliott  
*Economics*



FARMER SCHOOL  
**Faculty  
Service  
Excellence**

Allison Jones-Farmer  
*Information Systems & Analytics*



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Dr. Thomas Boulton	Lindmor Professor
Dr. Neil Brigden	Richard T. Farmer Endowed Assistant Professor
Dr. James Brock	Bill R. Moeckel Professor
Dr. Rhett Brymer	John Mee Endowed Assistant Professor of Management
Dr. T. Colin Campbell	ARMCO Alumni Assistant Professor
Dr. Robert Dahlstrom	Joseph C. Seibert Professor
Dr. Lisa Ellram	James Evans Rees Distinguished Professor of Supply Chain Management
Dr. William Even	Raymond E. Glos Professor in Business
Dr. Allison Jones-Farmer	Van Andel Professor of Business Analytics
Dr. Jim Friedman	White Family Clinical Faculty in Entrepreneurship
Dr. Jonathan Grenier	PwC Endowed Assistant Professor in Accountancy
Dr. Mark Griffiths	Jack Anderson Professor in Finance
Dr. Dan Heitger	Deloitte Professor
Dr. Tyler Henry	Frank H. Jellinek, Jr. Assistant Professor
Mr. Thomas Heuer	Forsythe Chair in Entrepreneurship
Dr. Tim Holcomb	Cintas Chair in Entrepreneurship
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Dr. Yao Henry Jin	Neil R. Anderson Endowed Assistant Professor
Mr. Mark Lacker	John W. Altman Clinical Professor of Entrepreneurship
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Dr. Matthew Myers	Mitchell P. Rales Chair of Business Leadership
Dr. Glenn Platt	C. Michael Armstrong Professor of Network Technology & Management
Dr. Joseph Rode	Endres Associate Professor Fellow
Dr. Marc Rubin	PwC Professor
Dr. H. Jeff Smith	George and Mildred Panuska Professor in Business
Dr. Eric Stenstrom	Richard T. Farmer Endowed Assistant Professor
Dr. Chris Sutter	David F. Herche Endowed Assistant Professor
Dr. Melissa Thomasson	Julian Lange Professor of Economics

## FACULTY PROMOTIONS *(effective July 1, 2016)*

Dr. Colin Campbell	Associate Professor – Finance
Dr. Megan Gerhardt	Professor – Management
Dr. Jonathan Grenier	Associate Professor – Accounting
Dr. Xiaowen Huang	Professor – Management
Dr. Joseph C. Rode	Professor – Management

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FARMER SCHOOL  
OF BUSINESS

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