



EARNED EXCELLENCE



THE BEST BUSINESS SCHOOLS
IN THE WORLD

Dear Friends of KU Business,

It's hard to believe this academic year is more than half over, but that's certainly the case as we find ourselves already well into the spring semester!

In December we celebrated the graduation of more than 200 Business students, and last month we welcomed 204 new students admitted to the School this semester. This is our largest group for spring admits, but rest assured, these are top-quality students, as their 3.32 average professional GPAs will attest. By "professional" GPA, we are referring to grades earned in a set of eight rigorous pre-business courses.

As you know, one of the ways in which KU Business differentiates itself is by providing our students meaningful "experiential learning" opportunities. Through these opportunities, we enable our students to complement their academic knowledge with real-world business experience. It's an approach that helps prepare our Business students for roles as business leaders. Let me share with you just a few examples of these activities from this academic year.

Last month our first-year MBA students participated in a live case competition hosted by FreightQuote.com, a company founded and led by KU Business alumnus, Tim Barton. Tim told our students as he shared his business case with them, "I'm really excited about hosting this competition. This is very cool!" Typically, the student teams have 24 hours to develop a recommended solution to the case at hand, create a presentation that explains and defends their recommendations, and discuss how to implement their solution.

In April the School will host the 2009 CIBER International Case Competition, involving many prestigious national and international universities. In May our MBA students will travel to Guangzhou, China to compete in the Sun Yat Sen International Business Case Competition. During this semester our MBA students will compete in eight different case competitions. We're confident these students will be outstanding representatives of our School.

Our students also gain real-world perspectives by traveling to meet with today's business leaders. For instance, for the last several years our finance students have traveled to Omaha to meet privately with Warren Buffet, and this year's trip was another great success. Click [here](#) to read what our students and faculty had to say about this trip. A private meeting with Warren Buffet...need we say more about this experience?

We also bring the business world into our classrooms by having a host of guest lecturers speak to our students each semester. The list of lecturers is too long to include here, but the following will give you a flavor for the

quality of these guest lecturers.

- Dennis Gartman, a self-described trader, economist and professor who has been in the financial markets for more than 30 years, spoke to our finance students recently. He gave his views on the current market situation, the bank bailout, China, and job opportunities available for finance grads in today's environment.
- John O'Dea, chief financial officer for Huhtamaki US, talked with our management students about international business. Huhtamaki is one of the world's largest packaging companies and truly a global player. Our students heard about the importance of aligning personal circumstances with opportunities for international business assignments.
- Joe Runyan, a KU MBA, visited one of our entrepreneurship classes to share his real-life experience of leaving Sprint and starting up a "green" dry cleaning business in the Kansas City metro area. Joe's business has grown to 17 stores with several million dollars in annual sales. He told our students it is essential to have a strategic plan, but that flexibility also is required.

Sometimes our experiential learning activities involve public service. Each year, our accounting students team up with KU Law School students to provide a great service to low income Lawrence residents by preparing their income tax returns. Again this year, a Business student is managing this service. Click [here](#) to read more about this program.

Our Masters of Accounting students are always looking for a new way to use their tax training to assist others. This fall 27 students organized a series of financial planning workshops designed to help Lawrence-area businesses understand complicated tax laws for the self-employed. This assignment allows students to develop research skills and apply their knowledge in a meaningful way. Click [here](#) to learn more about these workshops.

As you can see, our experiential learning opportunities comprise a wide variety of activities and truly make for a business education that is "not business as usual" for our students.

We trust you find these messages useful and that you enjoy reading about the School's activities. As always, we thank you for your interest in and support of the School. If you have any questions or would like to talk with me, please send me an email at bfuerst@ku.edu or call me at 785-864-7575.

Once a Jayhawk, always a Jayhawk...Rock Chalk!

Bill