



Joe Chilsen has two jobs — mayor of Onalaska and senior lecturer in UW-L's College of Business Administration.

P5



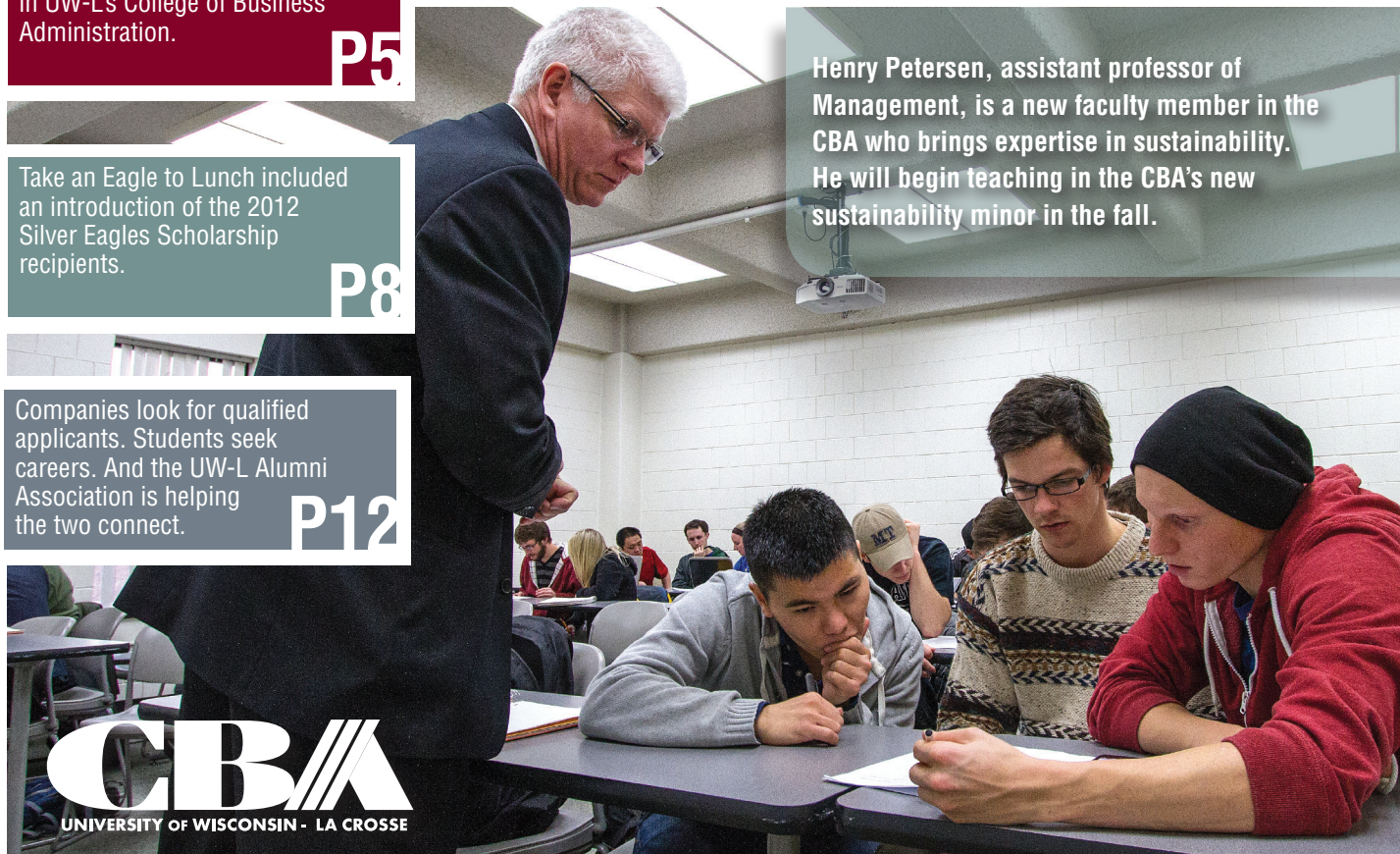
Take an Eagle to Lunch included an introduction of the 2012 Silver Eagles Scholarship recipients.

P8



Companies look for qualified applicants. Students seek careers. And the UW-L Alumni Association is helping the two connect.

P12



Henry Petersen, assistant professor of Management, is a new faculty member in the CBA who brings expertise in sustainability. He will begin teaching in the CBA's new sustainability minor in the fall.



# Building Bridges

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

## Energy is building in the CBA

### CBA sees growth, changes with nearly 50 new faculty

In the last five years, 47 new faculty have joined the CBA. They've come from around the world, bringing with them innovative teaching strategies, research expertise and diverse perspectives. They've advanced curriculum, brought class sizes down and contributed to the vast array of research coming out of UW-L.

"The energy in the college is building," says CBA Dean Bruce May.

While each new faculty member brings unique abilities and interests, they share a common commitment: student success.

Faculty member Nordia Thomas encourages students to "dream big" like she did despite growing up poor in Jamaica. Henry Petersen encourages students to think about where sustainability and their business future intersect. Other new faculty stress the importance of critical thinking, communication skills, leadership and real-world project management experience.

The new faces are the result of retirements and a campus-wide growth plan. About 20 of the 47 positions were added through UW-L's Growth, Quality and Access plan, a gradual tuition increase over the last five years to increase enrollment and hire additional faculty and staff. Since the initiative started, the CBA's student-to-faculty ratio has significantly improved.

Smaller class sizes mean more faculty-student interaction in and outside of class. More faculty also means more expertise in a variety of areas. This has led to the development of four new programs or minors in the college:

- Healthcare Administration Program: Currently under development
- Sustainability minor: Expected to start in fall 2013
- Health Information Systems Management Minor: Starting fall 2013
- Entrepreneurship: Still in the planning phase

CBA Student-to-faculty RATIO	
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BRUCE MAY

## Letter from Dean

### “Vision” accomplished CBA earns national award, re-accreditation underway

Our vision is “To be recognized for quality as the leading business school among regional and state comprehensive universities.” Today I’m proud to say the College of Business Administration is earning recognition well beyond state and regional boundaries and our vision for the future is expanding.

In January I was invited to Washington, D.C., to accept, on behalf of CBA faculty and staff, the national 2013 CHEA Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes, an award for our excellent assessment of student learning. I had the pleasure of addressing a gathering of 450 people from the U.S. and abroad. I was proud to share information about UW-La Crosse and, more specifically, the great accomplishments of the CBA.

As you may be aware, the college has been busy preparing for its re-accreditation visit by a team from AACSB International, the most prestigious accrediting organization for business schools worldwide. It has been 10 years since the last visit. A significant amount of time and effort has been devoted this academic year to preparing the three-volume, self study and supporting materials for the visit. I’m proud to say the AACSB Board of Directors reached a decision in late March to once again approve the accreditation of the CBA. Our re-accreditation will be formally recognized at an upcoming annual AACSB International conference. I will have more good information to share about the re-accreditation in our next issue.

Please enjoy this issue of Building Bridges and share in the pride of our accomplishments. If you have the opportunity, please consider attending one of our annual alumni events in Madison, Milwaukee, Minneapolis or Chicago. I would enjoy hearing from you and sharing more about the good work of our dedicated faculty, staff and students.

Best Regards,

Bruce E. May  
Dean UW-L College of Business Administration



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University of Wisconsin-La Crosse



# MBA GOING GLOBAL

## More international students getting MBAs

As MBA enrollment continues to decline nationally, the number of international students in graduate programs is on the upswing.

Half of UW-L's 48 MBA graduate students last fall hailed from other countries. UW-L MBA Program Director Martina Skobic says international students aren't only helping to fill classrooms, they're adding cultural diversity and exposing domestic students to a needed global perspective.

"Our international students with their diverse cultural backgrounds bring a lot to class discussions and help American students understand different global environments," explains Skobic. "Given the importance of global business networks, it is priceless for our students to start building lasting friendships and connections with their international classmates."

In addition, UW-L international students in 2011-12 contributed more than \$9.2 million to the local economy according to NAFSA: The Association of International Educators.

## Program reputation attracts diverse students

The UW-L MBA program is attractive for a variety of reasons. As a UW System school, UW-L has excellent national and international name recognition, along with an outstanding reputation, says Skobic. The city's natural beauty and safe environment are also desirable. And students like the program's small size and competitive tuition.

"Our students receive more attention and support from our faculty due to the small class sizes," Skobic notes. She also keeps in touch with all international students, helping them adapt to their new linguistic, academic and social environments.

International students receive a warm welcome from the campus and local communities — a key to the small-city feeling, says Skobic.

All international students have host families that welcome them to their homes and share family events with them through the La Crosse Friends of International Students organization. "We also have an excellent library, very good housing and dining services. The proximity to large cities gives us more of a competitive edge when attracting international students," she says.

## 'Building academic bridges' globally

Special arrangements with colleges and institutions overseas are key for maintaining international enrollment. A number of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) documents signed with institutions worldwide promote UW-L and recruit students.

The CBA developed a successful cooperation with two colleges in Taiwan over the past five years — the National Kaohsiung University of Applied Sciences (NKUAS) and the National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology (NKFUST). George Wang, a visiting scholar, and Kuang-Wei Wen, chair of the UW-L Information Systems Department, were actively involved in developing cooperation with the universities.

Last fall Skobic and Wen visited the universities to connect and recruit. They also traveled to Taipei to discuss developing a long-term cooperation with So-

ochow University and UW-L Provost Heidi Macpherson signed a MOU with the university in February. The next steps will be to facilitate student and visiting professor exchanges, as well as developing a joint MBA program.

Already, some NKUAS and NKFUST students who attended the UW-L presentations in Taiwan plan to enroll in fall 2013. "We also expect to have a steady influx of students from Soochow when the joint program is developed, starting, hopefully, in fall 2014 or 2015," says Skobic.

Building academic partnerships is crucial for staying competitive globally, she says. "The agreements build academic bridges between our university and universities around the globe," she explains. "They facilitate student exchanges with quality international students, attract visiting scholars, and provide the opportunity for our faculty to visit other campuses around the globe."

Skobic says universities that have MOUs with UW-L have a strong interest in maintaining and expanding academic cooperation. The CBA hopes to increase and diversify its international partners.

"We are interested in building new collaborations with Chinese, Indian and South American universities," she says. "Brazil has great potential, as well as Columbia."

Skobic expects new agreements with more European universities as well.



**7 Countries** where MBA candidates are from: China, France, India, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

**48** Graduate students in the CBA's MBA program in fall 2012.

**50%** MBA students who are from other countries.

**72%** MBA students who attend full time.

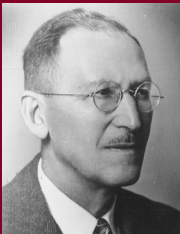
# CBA LOOKS TO NEW HOME IN HISTORIC BUILDING

## Renovation of Wittich anticipated to start in 2015

Plans to move UW-L's College of Business Administration to the historic Wittich Hall will give the college a stronger identity and offer a space that lends to collaboration, says CBA Dean Bruce May.

The CBA is currently located on four separate floors within Carl Wimberly Hall — mixed in with various other university departments. May, who joined the CBA as a faculty member and associate dean in 2002, said he traveled from floor to floor in his first few weeks and noticed some faculty within the college had never met one another. He is excited about how the new facility will change that.

"This building will bring people together in the college and enhance interaction and collaboration," says May.



Wittich Hall is named for Walter Wittich, pioneer of UW-L's Physical Education program.

Wittich Hall's approximately 35,000 gross-square-foot is the perfect size to house the CBA. The building will fit the CBA's six departments, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and some student orga-

nizations. May also looks forward to conference room space, updated technology and room for SBDC training and workshops. Currently the SBDC hosts functions in other campus buildings where space is available.

The renovation of Wittich is anticipated to start in 2015 with the goal of moving in by the end of 2017. Renovation would involve a complete reconstruction of the interior space while preserving the historic integrity of the building. Wittich, listed on the Federal Register of Historic Places, was originally constructed as the campus physical education building. No significant renovations have happened to the building since a 1930s addition and the building is in need of critical repairs. Without the timing of this major renovation, Wittich would likely have to close to occupancy eventually due to significant deterioration.

With the CBA's move, gymnastics will be relocated to the new North Campus Gymnastics Practice Facility and the Adaptive Physical Education program is being relocated to a renovated space in Mitchell Hall. The university will be developing a plan to reallocate the current CBA space in Wimberly Hall to address priorities for UW-L's academic programs, says Bob Hetzel, vice chancellor for Administration and Finance.

UW-L is looking to secure \$24 million in state funding through UW System's facility renewal program to fund the project.

Wittich Hall was built in 1916 and has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Since its construction and addition in the 1930s, no significant renovations have taken place.





Joe Chilsen is a senior lecturer of marketing in the College of Business Administration. He also teaches and provides business advising for local entrepreneurs in UW-L's Small Business Development Center. He became mayor of Onalaska in April 2012.

# A MAYOR WHO KNOWS MARKETING

## Joe Chilsen uses marketing in class, council chambers

Joe Chilsen has two jobs — mayor of Onalaska and senior lecturer in UW-L's College of Business Administration. While seemingly divergent roles, Chilsen wears his marketing hat whether walking into the classroom or Onalaska's city council chambers.

He tells students marketing doesn't always involve a physical product like laundry detergent or tennis shoes. In Chilsen's case, he's marketing a city. He makes appearances at city celebrations and other events, writes marketing plans and reaches out to companies that want to relocate.

"I give my students real-life examples all the time," says Chilsen, '87. "Every day I use my marketing skills. And I don't care what job you land in the future, you're going to need some marketing — even if it's to sell a point to your boss."

Examples of his everyday mayoral challenges have become excellent teaching aids. He walked students through a contentious city billboard ordinance change, which initially meant a negative effect on the city's ability to advertise. Chilsen was able to craft a compromise to keep both sides happy, showing students the scope of marketing challenges and where his work overlaps with other subjects such as politics.

"As a marketer, I needed to get involved in politics because they were going to take the billboard away," says Chilsen.

Chilsen, who became mayor in April 2012, says the day-to-day operations are more challenging than he expected.

"My door is a revolving door every day," he says. "I communicate with so many different people on different levels from citizens to state officials to the governor."

But he has years of experience in communications and marketing, which guides him in these interactions. Chilsen has taught UW-L's Principles of Marketing class for 27 years. He also teaches students and advises business owners in UW-L's Small Business Development Center.

In his early years teaching the entry-level course, he gave students a survey of marketing — touching lightly on a variety of themes. Today, he says curriculum is more focused on key areas and the creation of a detailed, research-laden marketing plan. As students progress, they are carefully assessed to understand what they've learned — a college-wide priority.

Chilsen likes the changes because — whether serving as mayor or teaching students — he wants to see results.

"That's something I said coming into the office— let's get things done," says Chilsen.

### THE JOE CHILSEN FILE

After high school, Chilsen served in the military while working for and owning several small businesses. Chilsen went on to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration from Viterbo University in 1984 and master's degree in business administration from UW-L in 1987.

Chilsen is an active member of the Onalaska community:

- 13 year member of the Police and Fire Commission
- Onalaska Schools Initiative Committee
- Onalaska Sesquicentennial Committee
- Past president, Hunger Task Force
- Volunteer, Onalaska Emergency Food Basket
- North American Squirrel Association (NASA) Marketing Committee
- Youth Football Coach for 27 years
- Board of Directors, Boys and Girls Club
- Organizer, Thanksgiving Dinner Committees (Onalaska and La Crosse)

# Energy is building in CBA

A few of the faces who bring new energy to the CBA:



## Christa Kiersch

Assistant professor of management

**Started:** August 2012

**Highest degree:** Ph.D., Colorado State University

**Originally from:** Des Moines, Iowa

**Teaches:**

Management 308: Organizational Behavior and Theory  
 Management 412: Leadership and Team Development  
 Management 385: Human Resources Employment

There are many forms of leadership. People can be quiet leaders, aggressive leaders, cooperative leaders or powerful leaders. Christa Kiersch studies them all. And she challenges her students to think about what kind of leaders they are.

"I want all of my students to consider themselves as leaders," she says. "I ask them 'How can leadership be something that you engage in every day?'"

Her research explores how leaders, whether formal or informal, can influence. To do this she dissects groups into many layers using innovative forms of statistical analysis. In a university setting, those layers might be friend groups, classes or other subgroups. From her analysis, she can develop a more in-depth understanding of the group's dynamic such as where influence is rooted.

Kiersch says her leadership studies lend well to her love of statistical analysis. It's a love she has a habit of incorporating in class.

Her students may see her as the "leader of the class" and someone who "gives them knowledge," she says. But she challenges students to think of how they can be leaders in class as well and work with her to build their own knowledge base.

"It's hard to break down the norm of seeing the instructor as the one, single leader of the group," she explains. "I have a responsibility in that role, but it's much more about everyone jumping in and making their own educational journey."

## John Nunley

Assistant professor of economics

**Started:** August 2009

**Highest Degree:** Ph.D., Middle Tennessee State University

**Originally from:** Tracy City, Tenn.

**Teaches:**

Economics 110: Microeconomics and Public Policy  
 Economics 307: Introduction to Econometrics, Forecasting and Time Series  
 Economics 308: Intermediate Microeconomic Analysis  
 Economics 330: Labor Economics  
 Economics 435: Law and Economics  
 Economics 474: Economic Forum Family Economics



Since John Nunley started on campus, he has published seven papers in peer-reviewed journals. His area of research expertise — applied microeconomics — explores the economics of health, labor, family and more.

He recently conducted research on racial discrimination on eBay based on the names of sellers. He and his colleagues put two identical items up for sale, switching only the names of the sellers. They wanted to see if a racially distinct name would influence how much someone was willing to pay.

When a seller had a gold star, signifying positive feedback from buyers, other buyers didn't discriminate based on race. However, an "in-group" racial bias occurred when the feedback on eBay about a seller was low. In these cases, when they sold stereotypical white products — such as a white doll — black sellers were discriminated against and vice versa.

Nunley hopes the study will help others see the benefits of using eBay for research. It also sheds light on discrimination, which appears to be based on trust issues, rather than animus-based discrimination such as racism, he says.

In addition to research, Nunley works hard to improve student learning. He's been involved with a departmental committee to address improving students' communication and critical thinking skills.



## Henry Petersen

Assistant professor of management

**Started:** August 2012

**Highest Degree:** Ph.D., University of Calgary, Canada

**Originally from:** Calgary, Canada

**Teaches:** Management 449: Capstone class for the business program

Slated to teach the introductory course and the capstone course within the new sustainability minor in fall 2013.

## Nordia Thomas

Assistant Professor of finance

**Started:** August 2011

**Highest Degree:** Ph.D., University of Illinois at Chicago

**Teaches:** Finance 380: Principles of Investment

Finance 475/575: Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management

Finance 721: Investment Analysis and Management

Nordia Thomas wants students to dream bigger. That's what she did.

Thomas grew up poor but notes that, "when everyone you know is living like you are, you don't dwell on it." Despite financial difficulties, her mother valued education and ensured Thomas always had school uniforms, books and school supplies.

Thomas' love of learning and dedication was evident. She performed well on national placement tests, which allowed her to attend one of the best high schools in Jamaica and continue to do well academically.

Thomas initially intended to attend a university in Jamaica, but through an ACT/SAT prep class, she heard about opportunities to study in the U.S. and earn financial aid. At age 17, she became the first Jamaican to enroll at Harvey Mudd College in California.

The transition was not smooth. "California was so different [from Jamaica], but you still have to succeed," she notes. "There was never a thought of going home without having graduated."

After earning a bachelor's degree in mathematics, Thomas earned master's and doctorate degrees in the U.S. She hopes her story inspires students to dream big too and that her teaching helps them see the interconnectedness of the world.

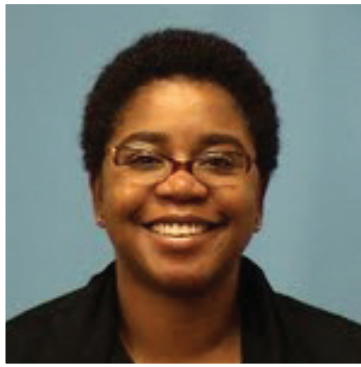
"The outside world can seem so big and far away, but it still plays a role in your life," she explains.

She emphasizes how events in places far away can have financial and economic consequences in the U.S.

Henry Petersen sees a future that can't avoid sustainability. And he sees that as an opportunity for business students.

"In this developed country, we don't live sustainably and eventually that's going to have to change," he says. "When it does, look at all the opportunities for entrepreneurs."

Petersen can speak to students from experience as he begins teaching in the CBA's new sustainability minor this fall. Sustainability has been a theme throughout his life — as a businessman, a graduate school student and professor.



## Ryan White

Assistant professor of marketing

**Started:** August 2011

**Highest Degree:** Ph.D., Michigan State University

**Originally from:** Sterling Heights, Mich.

**Teaches:** Marketing 367: Marketing Research

Marketing 444: Sports and Recreation Marketing:

Business 731: Decision Framing II (co-teaches)

Ryan White likes to see his marketing students manage projects in the real world. Walk into an area business and you'll find them analyzing data, working out website kinks, developing promotional videos and more. At the same time, businesses such as Kaplan Schweser, Inland Label, Trane, Helgesen Machine and Unique Inc. benefit from students' learning experiences.

UW-L has also saved time and money with assistance from White's students who conducted most of the marketing research behind UW-L's recent rebranding. Students also evaluated summer session for Continuing Education and Extension.

White's students take their projects from start to finish. Success or failure falls on them.

"When I talk to people out in industry, they ask for students they don't have to baby-sit," explains White. "As a professor, I'm here to provide guidance, but I have a hands-off approach."

The value of this applied research is responsibility, "The idea is when students leave here, they are model employees — they become the go-to person for their boss," he says.

White also conducts plenty of his own research. His research expertise is in services marketing — such as a restaurant or hair stylist. His recent research on customer loyalty programs such as frequent flyer programs indicates they could be designed better.

These programs attract customers who are "variety seeking" or want what's new or different about a brand. This type of customer is predisposed to not be loyal. White proposes adapting a loyalty program to get these variety-seeking consumers to go the next step.

As a business owner and contractor, Petersen worked on a project to help purify drinking water using up to 35,000 volts of electricity. As a graduate student, he consulted with Ecuadorian companies attempting to drill for oil more sustainably in the Amazon. As he built his sustainability expertise, he mentored firms about sustainable development and sat at a round table with some of the largest firms in San Diego to talk about social responsibility.

He earned a master's degree in energy and environmental management and a doctorate degree in

sustainability, risk and strategy. He then taught for six years at Seattle Pacific University and participated in the development of a sustainable MBA at Alliant International University in San Diego.

Petersen is pleased to see the college focusing on the future.

"Sustainability, from my perspective, will be the next biggest thing, the next wealth creator," says Petersen. "The opportunity for sustainability from a business perspective is insurmountable."



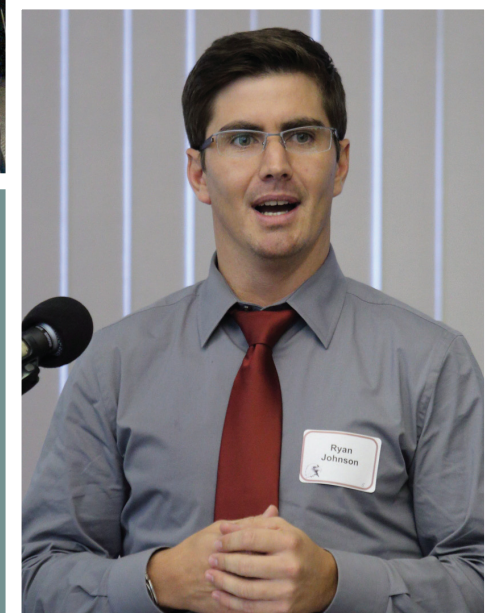


Take an Eagle to Lunch is an annual CBA event.



Ryan Johnson, '01, right, received his bachelor's degree in business marketing. He developed his own brand, B.A. Burrito and stores opened on Copeland Avenue in La Crosse in 2008, on Losey Boulevard in 2010 and in Onalaska in March. He also owns State Room and Howie's in La Crosse.

Photos by Mark Fei.



# SMALL SCHOOL = BIG ADVANTAGE

## UW-L Grad: relationships, support key to business success

Ryan Johnson chose UW-L primarily because it was close to home. But he soon discovered the university offered many advantages beyond close proximity to Bangor.

"Even though you think you are going to a small school in a small town, ultimately you have a big advantage because, on this campus, we have the most top-notch people whom you can have around yourself," says Johnson.

Johnson, '01, says UW-L faculty and staff were instrumental to his success. He is a franchisee turned entrepreneur who built and branded three B.A. Burrito restaurants and acquired two La Crosse bars, State Room and Howie's.

Johnson was the keynote speaker during the UW-L College of Business Administration 13th Annual Take an Eagle To Lunch event Friday, Oct. 19, at the Great Hall of the Cleary Alumni & Friends Center. The CBA Silver Eagles Organization and the CBA Board of Advisors hold the event each year.

Members of Silver Eagles as well as CBA faculty, staff and students attended. Johnson addressed students specifically during a portion of his talk.

"The constant we have here is great people — great professors and a great college community who are going to help us succeed," says Johnson. "Use those people. Use those networks."

UW-L professionals made a lasting impression on him.

"It's not like you have four years here and then you go off and swim on your own," he explains.



Relationships were important at UW-L and have continued to be important throughout his career. In his first job as an account executive for Midwest Coca-Cola, he developed a relationship with an entrepreneur developing convenience stores. It inspired him to open his own restaurant — first as a franchisee. He opened the first Quiznos restaurant in the La Crosse area in 2004, which set a record grand opening turnout for Quiznos restaurants at the time.

“That’s something I’m still proud of,” he says. “In little Onalaska, we were able to top numbers in places like Chicago and Miami.”

He opened a total of four Quiznos chains and then sold them in 2010 as he became busy with the development of his own restaurant brand — B.A. Burrito. He opened the first burrito restaurant in 2008, followed by a second shop in 2010 and a third in March. Unlike the franchise operations, Johnson built the “big burrito” concept from the ground up. And he has continued to invest in local businesses, opening the State Room in March 2009 and more recently securing Howie’s on La Crosse Street.

Johnson and his employees focus on superior customer service, cleanliness, high quality product and professionalism. They put no limits on their success, he notes.

“I want to create the image of something better than I am,” Johnson says. “I want you to think of me as a 200-unit national brand because that’s what I want to become.”

The connections and relationships he forms will help him get there, he says.

“I have my hands full, but I ultimately accept these challenges because of the people around me,” he says.



UW-L student Andrew Simons received the UW-L Alumni Association/Silver Eagles Scholarship for \$1,000.



UW-L student Evan Zachmann received the Silver Eagles Scholarship for \$1,000.

## Silver Eagles award 2012 scholarships

Take an Eagle to Lunch included an introduction of the 2012 Silver Eagles Scholarship recipients Evan Zachmann and Andrew Simons. Zachmann received the Silver Eagles Scholarship for \$1,000 and Simons received the UW-L Alumni Association/Silver Eagles Scholarship for \$1,000.

“I have a large family. My parents couldn’t have put all of their children through school,” says Zachmann. “This scholarship makes that possible.”

Zachmann also noted the success of CBA students. In May 2012 CBA graduates scored higher than 94 percent of other business students from universities across the country on a test measuring their subject knowledge in business.

“I want to thank the Silver Eagles for providing funding for me. And I want to thank the UW-L faculty and ad-

ministration. The reason we (CBA students) are able to test in 94th percentile is because of what you do for us,” he explained.

Andrew Simons, a senior majoring in management and finance, also thanked the Silver Eagles.

“This scholarship will definitely help provide some relief for the future,” he says.

Silver Eagles is an alumni organization open to all CBA graduates who received their degrees 25 or more years ago. The group’s mission is to provide CBA students with opportunities to fully reach their potential and become responsible members of the business world. Associate Silver Eagle membership is open to CBA graduates who have not reached the 25 anniversary year mark, but would still like to remain active in supporting the CBA until they reach Silver Eagle eligibility. To learn about membership visit [www.silvereaglesuwl.org](http://www.silvereaglesuwl.org).



## Keep up your La Crosse pride!

Keep in touch with us, and we’ll keep in touch with you! It’s easy —

- [alumni@uwlax.edu](mailto:alumni@uwlax.edu)
- [www.uwlalumni.org](http://www.uwlalumni.org)
- Alumni Association 608.785.8489 | 1.877.UWL.ALUM



Assistant Professor of Marketing Ryan White leads a class in Centennial Hall. UW-L's College of Business Administration received the Council for Higher Education Accreditation Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes.

# CBA gets an A+

College is first in state, second business school in the nation to earn honor for student outcomes

UW-L's business students can rest assured they have the right business plan for college and their career.

The CBA is the first university in the state — and only the second business school in the nation — to receive the Council for Higher Education Accreditation Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes.

The award recognizes the college “for its use of outcomes assessment to improve student learning in its undergraduate program, using a faculty-driven team that directs a strong assessment culture.”

Other higher ed institutions recognized in 2013 included Drake University, Des Moines; Harold Washington College, Chicago; and St. Luke's College, Sioux City, Iowa.

The national honor is “a distinctive badge of honor,” says CBA Dean Bruce May. “It attests to the high quality of our programs and the great emphasis our faculty

place on student learning. The award is a source of pride for both faculty and students.”

May says while the college has always stressed learning outcomes, it has made great strides in the last four years developing high quality processes to measure success. “Our assessment processes measure whether our students are learning what we hope they are learning — it is a quality control mechanism,” he explains. “This award indicates the success of our efforts.”

External praise falls in line with graduates performing well on national benchmarking exams and finding jobs, says May. A 2012 national exam by Educational Testing Services indicated CBA students performed better on knowledge of business concepts than 94 percent of students at 685 other institutions. The college had a 99.3 percent graduate placement rate following the 2010-11 academic year.

The College of Business has received the 2013 Council for Higher Education Accreditation Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes.

- The award recognizes the college for its use of outcomes assessment to improve student learning in its undergraduate program, using a faculty-driven team that directs a strong assessment culture.
- No other Wisconsin university, public or private, has won this award.
- Only one other business school has won this award.

“Our very high job placement rates show our graduates are valued by employers,” notes May. “Putting test scores and placement together, it shows our quality processes have reaped very successful results.”

The college doesn't plan to rest on its laurels. A faculty task force continuously re-evaluates goals and educational practices. By having faculty from throughout the college come together, they can more easily see the big picture of a CBA-wide education.

“As faculty we tend to look first to improve learning in our classrooms,” explains Betsy Knowles, coordinator for the college's program assessment. “But this assurance of learning process helps to remind us that our courses fit together into a curriculum that is the basis for a business degree.”

May says the prestigious award, high exam rates and stellar graduate placement show that the task force's work is not only helping faculty improve, but also helping students succeed.

“The task force has been very successful in working with all instructors to enhance the learning process and ensure our program is equipping graduates with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed,” says May.

## CBA FOUNDER CLOYCE CAMPBELL REMEMBERED



The man recognized as the “first true business faculty member” at UW-L — Cloyce Campbell — died in August 2012. Professor Emeritus Campbell came to campus in 1956 when economics was a minor in Letters & Sciences and part of the teacher education social studies curriculum, initially taught by Maurice Graff and Carl Wimberly. Both faculty members eventually became provosts and had buildings named in their honor.

Campbell was instrumental in creating a Department of Economics within the College of Letters & Sciences, the forerunner of the current AACSB accredited College of Business Administration.

Campbell taught management and marketing courses until he retired in 1981. He is remembered for his instructional style and stories that made classes interesting and fun. In retirement he served in the CBA Silver Eagles group and established a UW-L Foundation Scholarship.

Memorials may be sent in his name to the UW-L Foundation, 615 East Ave., La Crosse WI 54601.



## ‘IT MAKES CENTS!’

### Finance students mentoring peers in program

CBA finance majors are working to help students across campus improve spending habits and develop financial planning skills.

Finance majors are teaming up with the Wisconsin Covenant Office and the Financial Aid Office as peer mentors in UW-L’s “It Makes Cents!” Program. The program promotes financial success of students by helping them gain knowledge, skills and resources necessary to be financially literate and develop healthy spending habits both during and after college. The program provides online tutorials, interactive events, presentations and more.

With the help of the Finance Department, the program offers a more detailed, educational perspective on finance and helps bring to light financial struggles many students face. Finance students are peer mentors, providing students guidance with personal financial planning, says Shane Van Dalsem, It Makes Cents! committee member and associate professor of finance.

Also, finance majors involved in the It Makes Cents! program learn and gain experience within the field of financial planning through mentoring. As mentors, the students provide financial advice and help peers keep on top of their spending habits.



## Campus Medallion hunt returns

Marketing major Luke Klefstad found the Eagle Eye medallion on campus and became a lifetime member of the UW-L Alumni Association. The junior from Prairie Farm, Wis., found the elusive medallion under a bush near Graff Main Hall. He found it at 1:50 a.m. Friday, Oct. 19, the day the final clue was to be posted. “I did the River Watch patrol from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. then headed out for another look,” says Klefstad. The hunt — open to students, staff and alumni — returned after a four-year hiatus. University Communications and the Alumni Association sponsored the hunt. Find out how to become a lifetime member at [www.uwlalumni.org](http://www.uwlalumni.org).



A corporate event Oct. 1, organized with La Crosse's Reinhart Foodservice L.L.C., was the first time the Alumni Association helped organize an event to bring together UW-L students and alums working for a local corporation.

# STUDENTS, ALUMNI AND CORPORATIONS CONNECT

Alumni Association helping alums discover job opportunities.

Companies look for qualified applicants. Students seek careers. And the UW-L Alumni Association is helping the two connect.

A corporate event Oct. 1, 2012, organized with La Crosse's Reinhart Foodservice L.L.C., was the first time the Alumni Association helped organize an event to bring together UW-L students and alums working for a local corporation. The session at Reinhart also included UW-L faculty and Reinhart executives. It paved the way for future career opportunities for students and networking.

Reinhart hoped to make connections with students to potentially fill future needs — particularly in fields where they see the most demand: business, accounting and information technology. Students were able to hear firsthand what work in their field would be like. At the event, UW-L alums and Reinhart employees shared their career experience at Reinhart. They discussed ca-



Autumn (Tellier) Kletzien-Zietlow, '04, right, corporate finance shared services manager for Reinhart, talks to UW-L student Brett Davis during the Reinhart event.

## Are you an alum interested in mid-level management opportunities?

Alums interested in Reinhart career opportunities can contact Janelle Pogodzinski, human resources manager: [hrcorp@rfsdelivers.com](mailto:hrcorp@rfsdelivers.com).

reer opportunities at the La Crosse location, company philosophies and potential for advancement.

Keli Highland, assistant director of the UW-L Alumni Association, says the alumni real-world career perspective is invaluable to students.

"Alums are often looking for a way to give back and this is a great way for them to offer experience and guidance to students," says Highland.

The connection comes at an opportune time for Reinhart, which is growing. The family-owned business has expanded to cover 39 states and employ 4,500 people nationwide, says Janelle Pogodzinski, human resources manager for Reinhart Foodservice. Much of the corporation's growth is happening in downtown La Crosse. A corporate office at 300 Harborview Plaza provides business, accounting, and information technology services to 28 Reinhart locations across the country.

Inside, office spaces are quickly filling to meet demand.

"We recruit from a variety of schools. Students out of UW-L are so strong," says Pogodzinski. "Their resumes

are polished. They are prepared for interviews. They present themselves well and take it seriously."

Autumn Kletzien-Zietlow, corporate finance shared services manager for Reinhart, says she is personally familiar with the caliber of UW-L classes after graduating from the College of Business Administration in 2004. She also knows about UW-L's high Certified Public Accountant exam pass rates and the overall preparation of students.

At least 20 of the La Crosse location's 180 employees are UW-L alums.

"The students who are coming out of UW-L are very well prepared," notes Kletzien-Zietlow.

Reinhart also sees the Alumni Association partnership as a way to help recruit alums in mid-level management positions who are no longer in the area, but may be interested in returning. The La Crosse campus location is looking for professionals with corporate experience to apply for career opportunities.

## Does your company want to partner with the Alumni Association?

The Alumni Association will continue to look for opportunities to hold corporate events. Companies interested in organizing a gathering with alums and students can contact Keli Highland, assistant director of the UW-L Alumni Association, at 608.785.8494.



## TALKIN' TAILGATER

CBA Dean Bruce May, left, joined around 40 students, parents, faculty and alumni for the first-ever Marketing Tailgater before an October football game at Roger Harring Field. Marketing Department Chair Gwen Achenreiner says the event provides students an opportunity to get to know faculty outside the classroom, along with networking with alumni. "Students love hearing from people in the 'real world' about what types of opportunities their futures may hold," notes Achenreiner. "Students like to know what employers look for, what job opportunities are available, how our graduates found their jobs, and what they like and dislike about various career paths." Another tailgater is planned for fall 2013 – watch for details!



## Wisconsin Golf Outing

The 10th Annual Greater CBA Golf Challenge will be Friday, June 7, 2013, at Wild Rock Golf Course in Wisconsin Dells. Registration is \$120 per person, with sponsorship opportunities available for those who are interested. Friends, parents and alumni are encouraged to attend this event and help support current UW-L CBA students. Proceeds collected at the Golf Challenge will help fund scholarship opportunities for CBA students who plan to study abroad.



## Love spark catches fire in choir

It started as simple flirting between a soprano and a bass. Jonathan Barnett, '04, and his wife, Trina (Burton) Barnett, '02, met in UW-L's Concert Choir. Today the alums, who studied finance and economics, have been married for eight years and live in Madison.





## Students connect to insurance industry careers

A breakfast Feb. 27 on campus connected recruiters from insurance companies to business students. As the insurance industry faces a large workforce turnover in the next 10 years, it's a good time to form a deeper partnership with the industry, says Steve Tippins, associate professor of finance.

About 15 organizations attended from throughout the region. Students connected with potential employers in the insurance industry and employers were able to talk with potential job candidates. UW-L is particularly interested in showcasing students who have a Risk, Insurance, and Financial Planning Concentration — designed to prepare students to enter the insurance and personal financial planning fields. The event was organized by UW-L Career Services and Tippins.

## Class swarms business with 'cash mob'

CBA students organized a "cash mob" to hit Finnottes Nut & Chocolate Shop in downtown La Crosse in early December. The mob of about 50 to 60 extra customers in the shop was an effective way for one person to make a big impact on a single business, says shop owner Laurie Finn. "Not only did we get a boost in our sales, but we now have that many more people that really know what we have to offer," says Finn. "Many hadn't been in the store before and were surprised by the huge variety." The cash mob was part of Economics Professor Donna Anderson's Principles of Sustainable Business class.



LAURIE STRANGMAN

## Economics lecturer is 2013-14 Wisconsin Teaching Scholar

Laurie Strangman, senior lecturer in Economics, was selected as one of the 2013-14 Wisconsin Teaching Fellows and Scholars from UW-L. Strangman, who has been teaching on campus for nearly 11 years, has teaching interests spanning from Introductory Macroeconomics to Economic Development and the History of Economic Thought. As a scholar of teaching and learning, her focus is on the impact of modeling expert behavior on student learning and the difficulty that students have transferring knowledge to new problems or situations. As a teaching scholar, Strangman specifically wants to investigate the problem of transfer with regard to economic models. While various economic models are used to illustrate different principles, they look and function in a very similar fashion. Because students often fail to see these similarities, she plans to study what is inhibiting the transfer of this basic knowledge.



MICHAEL J. MCGINLEY

## CBA Distinguished Lecture Series Oct. 24

Michael J. McGinley, '82, will present "Embrace Change, Opportunity will Follow" as part of a CBA Distinguished Lecture Series at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 24, 2013, at the Strzelczyk Great Hall, Cleary Alumni & Friends Center. McGinley is president and CEO of Heska Corp.

# CBA cookie is tops

## Team wins campus contest

The College of Business Administration has earned a national award for student learning outcomes and remains professionally accredited. Now, it has the “Golden Spatula” for great cookies too.

Senior Lecturer Betsy Knowles and Director of MBA and International Programs Martina Skobic won the baking award in the 2nd Annual Cook-IE Off, a campus fundraising event in December.

“I am in it to win it,” Skobic said jokingly when asked to team up. Skobic wanted to bake cookies uncommon in the U.S. with visual appeal and great taste. So she reached into her past.

“Išlerice (cookies) are very popular in the part of Croatia where I was born,” Skobic explains. “Whenever I made them for my American friends they liked them.”

She made them in small, bite sizes. They were a hit — collecting the most votes.

Skobic, who loves to cook and bake from scratch, started in the kitchen at an early age with her mother and grandmothers.

“My earliest memories are helping them in the kitchen,” she says. “They are no longer with us, but the memories of the time together, the stories they shared with me while cooking and baking, and the feelings of being loved and belonging, are all very fresh in my memory.”

Skobic inherited her mom’s cookbooks and notebooks filled with handwritten recipes. “When I use them, it is like going back in time,” she explains.

Her secret to winning? “Cookies have to taste great, but also need to look great,” Skobic says. “Use the best ingredients and bake with love.”

## Martina Skobic’s **C**hocolaty **B**utter **A**wesome Cookie

(Otherwise known as: Išlerice)

**Dough:** 1 1/2 cups flour  
1/3 cup ground walnuts  
1/3 cup powder sugar  
2 Tbls. cocoa  
2 Tbls. sour cream  
1/8 tsp. baking powder

Mix well all ingredients.

Roll the dough about 1/4 inch thick and cut small rounds using mold or small glass.  
Place on baking paper and bake around 20 minutes on 300° F. Cool.

**Yellow Filling:** Mix and cook over steam:  
3 egg yolks  
1/2 cup powder sugar  
When cooked, cool down and mix in  
1/3 cup of well-mixed butter.

**Chocolate Frosting:** Blend together until smooth:  
1/4 cup bitter sweet chocolate  
1/4 cup powder sugar  
2 Tbls. butter  
3 1/2 Tbls. milk

Place a teaspoon of yellow filling onto the flat side of half the cookies. Place remaining cookies on top, and gently press on each to squeeze filling to edges. Frost cookies with chocolate frosting. Decorate if desired.



From left, Betsy Knowles, Glenn Knowles, Amelia Dittman and Martina Skobic at the second Cook-IE Off, a campus fundraising event in December.

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The CBA is the first university in the state to receive the CHEA Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes. **P10**



Plans to move UW-L's College of Business Administration to the historic Wittich Hall will give the college a stronger identity. **P4**



CBA anticipates its move to Wittich Hall in 2017.

# Building Bridges

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse