The Franchising Genius of Shelly Sun
The possibilities? Endless.

#1
Supply Chain Management
UT’s Largest Major
(2019 – 2021)

#26
Among US Public Undergrad Schools
(Poets&Quants, 2021)

#1
US EMBA Program
Overall Alumni Satisfaction
(Financial Times, 2020)

#17
Worldwide for Alumni Rating of MBA Career Services
(The Economist’s WhichMBA, 2021)

#17
Best Business Schools Among US Publics
(U.S. News and World Report, 2021)

#6
Worldwide Archival Audit Research
(Brigham Young University’s Research Rankings of Accounting Programs, 2020)

#19
MBA Among US Publics
(The Economist’s WhichMBA, 2021)

#20
Worldwide Archival Accounting Research
(Brigham Young University’s Research Rankings of Accounting Programs, 2020)

Be what’s possible.

HASLAM
College of Business
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
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CONNECTION...IS THERE EVER TOO MUCH?

If so, how much is too much? After months of waving to grandparents through windows and depending on spotty internet for work and family get togethers, some feel that more connection is not only necessary to thrive but to survive. Others may find themselves looking back upon time spent this past year in gardens, books, and computer screens, and feel more complete with less connection.

Connection often hinges on “what ifs?” If we connect with this, then we do not connect with that. If that connects us, then this may pull us apart. In the 1990s writer-director Peter Howitt dedicated an entire movie to the idea of connections—how losing them or making them changes not only one person’s life—but the lives of all those around them. In an interview with The Ringer in 2018, Howitt talked about his movie “Sliding Doors” and the moments that make us by saying, “It’s a happy beginning rather than a happy ending.”

We celebrate the joys of making strong ties and finding happy beginnings in this issue of Haslam Magazine. For our cover subject, Shelly Sun (HCB, ’92), a struggle with her grandmother’s illness inspired a business that meets a need felt nationwide—dependable, experienced care. BrightStar, Sun’s entrepreneurial brainchild, connects local caregivers and medical personnel with those in need of services in their area. Its national support network keeps overhead and anxiety low for franchisees.

Diane Walker Markarian (HCB, ’83), and her husband, Raffi, have leveraged their success to remove worries of entrepreneurial-minded current students. Their connection with the Anderson Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation allows more students to attend pitch competitions by alleviating some of the financial burden involved with travel. The competitions open doors for students in their careers and give them the confidence to move forward with their dreams.

In yet another example, a large group of connected alumni have come together to honor the professor who encouraged them on their paths to success. In acknowledging the impact and expertise of Dick Townsend’s 42-year career teaching accounting, Marty Brown (HCB, ’85) and other beneficiaries of Professor Townsend’s expertise and devotion have memorialized his impact through a “happy beginning.” Their fundraising efforts have created the Department of Accounting and Information Management’s first endowed chaired professorship, the Richard L. Townsend Chair of Accounting.

As summer comes into full swing, may you find ways to connect with those around you and encourage fresh outlooks and new beginnings.

With gratitude,

Stephen L. Mangum
Dean and Stokely Foundation Leadership Chair
Haslam College of Business
DEAN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

AS A PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL, the Haslam College of Business at the University of Tennessee must keep in touch with the world in which its graduates will function. One important avenue for maintaining this contact is the Dean’s Advisory Council.

Since its formation in 1975, this council has played an increasingly vital role by developing plans and strategies to guide the college’s future. The advice and insights of these leaders have proven invaluable to the college as it strives to improve its reputation as a national leader in business education.

These professional and business executives meet with the deans and faculty each year to discuss current business issues. Through the years, this continuing dialogue has shaped the college’s choices of action in order to improve its response to the current issues and the anticipated demands of the marketplace.

The Deans and Executive Committee of the Haslam College of Business thank each member, past and present, for their service and devotion to the college.

MOLLY ADAMS
EVP Chief Integration & Transformation Officer
Fanatics
Tampa, FL

TOM BELL
Chairman
Mesa Capital Partners
Atlanta, GA

CHRISTI BRANSCOM
Commissioner
Tennessee Department of General Services
Nashville, TN

SHIRLEY PIH BROADBERY
Global Finance Transformation Director (retired)
The Coca-Cola Company
Bay Harbor Islands, FL

RICHARD W. CARDIN
Managing Partner (retired)
Arthur Andersen
Loudon, TN

PAUL A. CASTAGNA
Co-Founder, Chairman, and CEO
Golden Gate Financial Group, LLC
San Francisco, CA

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Girl Scout Council of Cumberland Valley
Nashville, TN

DAVID EVANS
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JACK MILLS
Partner
JB&B Capital
Knoxville, TN

JOSEPH M. O’DONNELL
Private Investment
Boca Raton, FL

ED PERSHING
Founder, Healthcare Horizons
President & CEO, PYA
Knoxville, TN

SHARON PRYSE
Chairman & CEO
The Trust Company of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN

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Knoxville Utilities Board
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MARTIN ROBINSON
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Wedge Capital Management
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Memphis, TN

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Director of Industry Affairs (retired)
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EVP, Global Operations & Supply Chain
Medtronic
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DAVID STEVENS
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Knoxville, TN

MICHAEL STRICKLAND
Chairman
Bandit Lites
Knoxville, TN

HOLLY SULLIVAN
Vice President, Worldwide Economic Development
Amazon
Rockville, MD

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Gerber/Taylor Associates
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MIKE WEST
Chairman
Liro, LLC
Knoxville, TN

ALAN WILSON
Executive Chairman, Board of Directors
McCormick & Company
Naples, FL

HASLAM.UTK.EDU | 3
chains might be permanently changed by the pandemic. professor of supply chain management and Tom Goldsby, over the last year. Those that were not so well prepared learned some really hard lessons a year ago. Those that were not so well prepared learned some really hard lessons a year ago. Those that were not so well prepared learned some really hard lessons a year ago. Those that were not so well prepared learned some really hard lessons a year ago.

“Companies are so much smarter now than they were a year ago. Those that were not so well prepared learned some really hard lessons over the last year.”

Tom Goldsby, professor of supply chain management and Dee and Jimmy Haslam Chair of Supply Chain, on how supply chains might be permanently changed by the pandemic.

“Suppose that business is good and you could probably double earnings over the next couple of years if you could open a branch office and manufacturing facility in another part of the country. That sort of expansion isn’t cheap; where are you going to come up with, say, $300 million?”

Ramon Degennaro, Haslam College of Business Professor in Banking and Finance, explaining the role initial public offerings can play in helping firms raise funds and gain access to capital markets.

“Part of the use of part-time workers was related to optimizing flexibility at a time when there was a lot of uncertainty. And my guess is the uncertainty surrounding spending patterns is starting to recede.”

Marianne Wanamaker, associate professor of economics, George A. Spiva Scholar, Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research Faculty Fellow, and Kinney Family Faculty Research Fellow, on Walmart’s decision to promote more of its workers to full-time employment.

“Companies are so much smarter now than they were a year ago. Those that were not so well prepared learned some really hard lessons over the last year.”

Tom Goldsby, professor of supply chain management and Dee and Jimmy Haslam Chair of Supply Chain, on how supply chains might be permanently changed by the pandemic.

“The requirement for the audit committee to be 100 percent independent is really important. As soon as you relax it even a little, you start to lose the benefit.”

Terry Neal, accounting and information management department head and Richard L. Townsend Chair of Accounting, speaking about Coinbase. As the company prepared to go public, its audit committee included two major shareholders, one of whom was a founder.

“The three biggest factors I see driving trading shifts are interest rates, inflation expectations, and government intervention, all of which are highly related. We may see yields level off, reducing asset correlations. Even then, I expect downward pressure on valuation multiples, threatening returns to growth stocks.”

Ryan Z. Farley, assistant clinical professor of finance, on how the pandemic may affect stock prices.

“Ultimately, their business is based on that workforce, so it’s in their interest to keep them safe and coming to work.”

Andrea Sordi, clinical assistant professor of supply chain management, on the importance of fast-food companies ensuring the health and safety of their workers during the pandemic.

“In the beginning, it was new and they spent more time with family, which was a good thing, but now they feel isolated.”

Debbie Mackey, distinguished lecturer of management and entrepreneurship, speaking about the rise in anxiety and loneliness among young professionals during the pandemic.

“Just go through the list of things that have been challenges for the labor force during COVID, and you don’t have these problems with AI and with autonomous vehicles.”

Bill Fox, Randy and Jerrey Boyd Distinguished Professor of economics and director of the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research, on the ways in which the pandemic has accelerated the use of artificial intelligence.

“Part of the curriculum strategy included young women who are top college supply chain students at UT to talk about why they chose the field. Videos and live interaction with these students, alumni, and veterans like myself, made the program fun and relevant for the girls.”

Mary Long, managing director of the Global Supply Chain Institute’s Supply Chain Forum, speaking about a pilot program that helps Girl Scouts earn merit badges in supply chain.

“We will rely on professionals across the full spectrum of the supply chain from the military to civilian sector manufacturers, distributors … transportation providers … and the health care organizations called upon to achieve this Herculean effort. Vulnerabilities at any point in this chain can seriously reduce the effectiveness of this whole effort.”

Tom Goldsby, professor of supply chain management and Dee and Jimmy Haslam Chair of Supply Chain, on Pfizer’s roll-out of its COVID-19 vaccine.
Haslam College of Business Celebrates Faculty and Staff at Virtual Awards Ceremony

The Haslam College of Business at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, recognized the accomplishments of faculty and staff at its annual awards celebration. The honors were announced during a virtual ceremony in late April.

Outstanding Staff Award for Superior Customer Responsiveness: The Financial Information Office team, including Jessica Bartlett, Lindsey Brown, Jenny Colson, Jennifer Horner, Vickie Killion, Brittany Permaul, David Price, Ben Scheffler, Sherry Snider, Juliana Troxler and Denise Watson.

Tim Williams Staff Award for Professionalism: The Undergraduate Advising team, including Amy Anderson, Robin Anderson, Marg Basehart, Kendra Duncan, Brian Francis, Betsy Gullett, Lindsey Herrell, Cindy Keyes, Megan Laverty, Beth Maney, Kam Manuel, Karson Marsh, Ellie Mulherin, Brenda Perry, Ryessia Russell, Alysa Schoenfeld, Dwight Stooksbury, Keima Talley, Laura Trainer, Tracy Trencbam, Merrill Walker, Jennifer Washick and Guannah Washington.

Outstanding Staff Award for Innovation and Creativity: The Technology-Enhanced Education team, consisting of Mark Collins and Jason Greenway.

Outstanding Doctoral Student Teacher Award: Tyler Milfeld (Marketing)

Richard Sanders Award: Mary Holcomb

Outstanding Doctoral Researcher: Richard Beem (Economics)

Allen H. Keally Excellence in Teaching Award: Kimberly Sims (Economics)

Richard C. Reizenstein Outstanding Commitment to Students Award: Adam Petrie (Business Analytics and Statistics)

Rising Star Research Award: Wenjun Zhou (Business Analytics and Statistics)

Vallett Family Outstanding Researcher Award: Chris Craighead (Supply Chain Management)

Volunteer Spirit Award: Shay Scott (Supply Chain Management)

Diversity and Inclusion Award: Tom Van Dorselaer (Marketing and PSF)

Bank of America Faculty Leadership Award: Mark Collins (Marketing and TEE)

Martin & Carol Robinson Excellence in Teaching, Research and Service Award: Lauren Cunningham (Accounting and Information Management)

George Miller Jr Award: Jody Crane

#28
Haslam came in No. 28 among public institutions and No. 44 nationally in the U.S. News & World Report 2021 rankings.

#26
In Poets&Quants’ 2021 rankings, the Haslam College of Business tied for No. 6 among public US universities. The college ranked 64th among all institutions and 17th in academic experience among publics.

#6
In Brigham Young University’s research rankings of accounting programs for 2020, Haslam tied for No. 6 worldwide in archival audit research and placed at No. 20 world-wide in archival accounting research. The college’s PhD program ranked No. 15 in archival research and No. 3 in audit research, based on the research productivity of its graduates.

A grassroots fundraising campaign from alumni resulted in the department’s first endowed chair, the Richard L. Townsend Chair of Accounting. Department head Terry Neal is the first person to hold the chair. (See story, page 32.)

Don Bruce has joined a new think tank established by the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee to help sustain Olympic and Paralympic programming opportunities in college athletics. tiny.utk.edu/islft3

Celeste Carruthers received the 2020 Georgescu-Roegen Prize for the best paper in the Southern Economic Journal for her paper with Kara Smith, “Are ‘Education Lotteries’ Less Regressive? Evidence from Texas.”

Marianne Wanamaker spoke to POLITICO’s Global Translations podcast about the future of the global workforce in a labor market disrupted by COVID-19. The Tennessean asked Wanamaker why some businesses in the South have succeeded during the pandemic while others have not. On the first Friday of each month, Wanamaker joins Sam Chandan on the Urban Lab podcast for an analysis of the current labor market.
In addition to leading the center, Cole teaches undergraduate courses in the Smith Global Leadership Scholars program and graduate courses in the Physicians Executive MBA program. Teaching isn’t a career for her. It’s a choice. “I love helping my students learn financial skills, particularly the basics of personal finance, budgeting, and making investing decisions,” she says. “Those are things every college student should know. They can be life-changing.”

Cole’s research interests focus on behavioral finance, or why people make particular investment decisions. “I’m really interested in how gender and generation impact investment decision making—for example, why Gen Zs invest differently than Baby Boomers.”

In her spare time, Cole enjoys riding her Vespa, spending time with her Boston Terrier, baking, and volunteering in the community. She serves on the board for the Women’s Fund of East Tennessee, a nonprofit that promotes education opportunities for low-income women and girls.

Grace Yagodich, a senior in finance and international business, says working with Cole in the MILC has left a lasting impression. “She’s one of the most intentional people I’ve ever met,” Yagodich says. “She really invests in her people, and will go the extra mile to lend a hand in the classroom or the community.”
Under the leadership of its executive director, Tom Van Dorselaer, the Professional Sales Forum continues to grow and currently has the support of 30 corporate partners.

Amazon committed $750,000 for an endowed distinguished professorship in business analytics and statistics, which will receive a one-to-one match from the Haslam family, for an endowment totaling $1.5 million.

PROFESSIONAL SALES FORUM

Having raised $5,000 or more from its five inaugural diversity scholarship partners, E&J Gallo Winery, Lutron Electronics, PepsiCo, Ryder, and Enterprise, the Professional Sales Forum is seeking $5,000 in support from five additional corporate partners that share its commitment to salesforce diversity. As part of the 5 x 10 initiative, Dell Technologies and ALKU have agreed to be the newest contributors to the forum’s diversity scholarship fund.

BUSINESS ANALYTICS AND STATISTICS

Michel Ballings received the MSBA faculty “Excellence in Teaching” award from MSBA students for commitment to excellence in the classroom and steadfast emphasis on curriculum content, innovation, and delivery.

Bogdan Bichescu is working with graduate student Varun Rangnekar to investigate the impact of technology and a digital workflow on patient wait times at a local free clinic through a Haslam Scholars Program research grant.

Journal of Marketing will publish Michel Ballings, Neeraj Bharadwaj, and their co-authors’ paper, “A New Livestream Retail Analytics Framework to Assess the Sales Impact of Emotional Displays.”

Jordan Gill was hired as a lecturer and co-director of the MSBA program, while Nana Bryan, joined the department as a lecturer.

Decision Sciences accepted Paolo Letizia and Wenjun Zhou’s “Three Cobblers Worth the Mastermind? Crowdsourcing Innovation with Potential to Ensemble.”

Paolo Letizia and his co-authors’ “Governance of Collective Entrepreneurship” was accepted by Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization.


Brian Stevens and Sean Willems’ paper, “World of EdCraft: Challenges and Opportunities in Synchronous Online Teaching,” is under consideration for publication.


Yang Liu and co-authors published “Predicting Labor Market Competition: Leveraging Interfirm Network and Employee Skills” in Information Systems Research. The paper also was selected as the Best Paper Award runner-up at the WITS 2020 conference.

ChuanRen (Charles) Liu was named an IEEE Next-Generation Data Scientist, an award that supports the advancement and certification of qualified next-generation data scientists.

Missie Bowers’ “The Recession’s Impact on Analytics and Data Science” was MIT Sloan Management Review’s most downloaded article of 2020 in the AI/ML category. Bowers received the MSBA faculty “Outstanding Commitment to Students” award from MSBA students for outstanding service to students beyond the classroom.

Emre Demirkaya’s “Large-scale model selection in misspecified generalized linear models” will be published in Biometrika.

Julie Ferrara announced that Trimble is a new premier partner and Radio Systems/PetSafe is now a basic partner with the Business Analytics Forum.

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NEEL CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CENTER

Lauren Cunningham, director of research for the center, and Jacob Leidner from the Universität Würzburg presented virtually to the CFA Society of Germany about the SEC filing review process.

In a Wall Street Journal exclusive, Terry Neal, head of accounting and information management at Haslam and director of the Neel Corporate Governance Center, weighed in on the need for neutrality on Coinbase’s audit committee.

The latest American Corporate Governance Index from The Institute of Internal Auditors and the Neel Corporate Governance Center found that, despite the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, US corporate governance remained healthy.

MASTERS INVESTMENT LEARNING CENTER

Sharon Pryse (HCB, ’72) and her investment firm, The Trust Company of Tennessee, endowed a directorship for the Masters Investment Learning Center (MILC). As the MILC’s current director, Laura Cole is the first beneficiary of the Sharon Pryse/The Trust Company of Tennessee MILC Directorship. (See story, opposite.)
In response to growing demand from students and employers, the Haslam College of Business is building a real estate program. The Department of Finance recently hired Scott Roark as a clinical associate professor to lead the endeavor. With Roark at the helm, the department has created a new series of real estate courses, plans for a certificate program, and a real estate club for students.

Department Head Tracie Woidtke, the Sharp/Home Federal Bank Professor, said students have expressed great interest in the plan of study, especially in commercial real estate. While real estate pairs well with other offerings in finance, she says there’s potential for expanding to a cross-disciplinary degree or graduate program in the future. “We’ll continue to assess the demand, evaluate the skills needed, and grow from there,” Woidtke says.

Benjamin Spears, a senior in supply chain management and finance who’s interested in real estate development, is ready for the new emphasis area. “I decided to help start the real estate club,” he says. “I’m excited to see future students gaining more opportunities in this area.”
Many of the nation’s fastest growing real estate markets are in our geographical region. We’re excited to give students high quality exposure to the real estate industry and to alumni who are excelling in this economic sector.

—DEAN STEPHEN L. MANGUM

Certificate Program and Collateral
The college’s existing course in real estate has been reworked and two more added to create a series of three. The first course will offer a basic introduction to the field, followed by a course on real estate finance and investment analysis, and finally a capstone with experiential learning elements. “It’s going to be very hands-on,” says Roark. “Students will participate in at least two national real estate competitions as part of the capstone.” The competitions ask teams of students to create or analyze a real estate project and present their plans to a panel of real estate experts.

All three courses are now approved, and students can take them in a series beginning in the fall. Upon completion of the series, they will receive a real estate certificate. The department also is pursuing the possibility of offering a real estate collateral.

Experiential Learning Opportunities
Roark and a small group of students, including Spears, started a real estate club last year with the goal of providing more exposure and experiential learning opportunities for current students. In their bimonthly meetings, the club invites real estate professionals to speak to students. “In the future, we also hope to bring back Haslam alumni to pitch what they’re doing and drum up interest in real estate careers,” says Roark. “Alumni involvement and financial support will be essential to what we do with real estate at the college.”

Students also have the opportunity to learn the basics of ARGUS commercial real estate modeling software. Roark hopes to provide a certification course for the software because those skills are in high demand in the industry, particularly in larger real estate markets. “If students are wanting to work in big markets such as Nashville or Atlanta, knowing ARGUS is a necessity,” he says.

Case competition opportunities will continue to be offered to interested students, whether or not they’re enrolled in the capstone course.

Roark sees a strong employer demand for graduates who understand real estate. “It represents about 25 percent of the economy, so there are lots of jobs out there,” he says.

Stephen L. Mangum, dean and Stokely Foundation Leadership Chair, notes that Haslam has a geographic advantage in the field. “Many of the nation’s fastest growing real estate markets are in our region,” Mangum says. “We’re excited to give students high quality exposure to the real estate industry and to alumni who are excelling in this economic sector.”
Supply chain management faculty continue to be go-to sources for supply chain trade and mainstream publications, being quoted in media such as Freight Waves, DC Velocity, Supply Chain Brain, NBC News, and the Memphis Commercial Appeal, among others.

In a column for The Wall Street Journal, Alan Amling explained that distribution changes during COVID-19 may be pushing parcel carriers to reexamine last-mile strategies.

Four new supply chain faculty members will start August 1: Yemisi Bolomole, John-Patrick Paraskevas, Alex Scott, and Jeff Trombly.

The department now has more than 1,400 students (up from 1,200 last year) making it UT’s No. 1 major for three years in a row.

Registration is now open for the SCM Leadership Academy, a 14-week program that develops managers, directors, and other key stakeholders into supply chain leaders through Haslam’s industry-leading supply chain curriculum the peer connections and group learnings from interaction with faculty formed during the class.

https://hubs.la/H0LSWcD0

In Memoriam

Mary Holcomb, Gerald T. Niedert Professor of Supply Chain Management and Martin and Jean Mills Faculty Research Fellow in the department of supply chain management, died Friday, February 12, 2021. Born and raised in Oak Ridge, Holcomb received her bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate degrees from UT. A true Vol for life, she taught at UT for more than 28 years.

If you would like to join UT in honoring the life and legacy of Mary Holcomb by supporting the newly established Dr. Mary C. Holcomb Scholarship Endowment, please visit giving.utk.edu/Holcomb

Chain Brain. In another interview, with NeXus UTK President, Jessica Thomas, Sordi discussed elements of economic inclusion and supplier diversity.

Ted Stank and Stephanie Eckerd were recognized by the Journal of Business Logistics in 2020—Stank as Outstanding Associate Editor and Eckerd as Outstanding Reviewer.

Kate Vitasek was named 2021 World Commerce and Contracting Fellow, the highest accolade the not-for-profit confers.

Eunae Yoo partnered with Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (HOT) to conduct research examining the relationship between users’ experience levels and two outcomes of interest to HOT and organizations that use the Tasking Manager: project completion and retention.

https://hubs.la/HOLSwCd0

The Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research launched a new website that aims to make the lab’s research about higher education in Tennessee simple to access and easy to understand.

A survey conducted the Boyd Center indicated that Tennessee business leaders continue to be more optimistic about the state’s economic outlook than the nation’s, while in another report, the center said positive, if sporadic, economic growth is expected over the next year for the state.

In a third study, the Boyd Center reports that the percentage of uninsured children in Tennessee stayed low and TennCare recipients’ satisfaction with the program remained high in 2020.

When Is(n’t) Blockchain Right?

The Global Supply Chain Institute launched a new website that aims to make the lab’s research about higher education in Tennessee simple to access and easy to understand.

A survey conducted the Boyd Center indicated that Tennessee business leaders continue to be more optimistic about the state’s economic outlook than the nation’s, while in another report, the center said positive, if sporadic, economic growth is expected over the next year for the state.

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The Global Supply Chain Institute published its 24th and 25th white papers: “Advancing E2E Agile Resiliency in Supply Chains” and “When Is(n’t) Blockchain Right?”

The Global Supply Chain Institute’s successful, virtual spring 2021 Supply Chain Forum was headlined by two prominent figures in business and education. Randy Boyd, president of the University of Tennessee System and founder and executive chairman of Radio Systems Corporation, delivered a talk outlining four things that organizations need to be successful and shared a collective vision for creating the greatest decade in UT history. Jimmy Haslam, COB of Pilot Flying J, co-owner of the Cleveland Browns of the National Football League, and the Columbus Crew SC of Major League Soccer, covered “Network Strength, Reinvention, Partnerships, and Community Connections.”
According to research done by Dan Flint and PhD candidate Tyler Milfield, companies were more reluctant to present positions on social issues in their Superbowl game-day advertising this year.

Kelly Hewett was invited to join the Sheth Foundation Board, where she will help promote initiatives related to emerging markets and international marketing scholarship as a representative of the Academy of International Business. Hewett’s 2016 Journal of Marketing publication, “Brand Buzz in the Echoviser,” was named a finalist for the 2021 Sheth Foundation Journal of Marketing Award.

Hewett and Alex Zablah have been selected to receive the 2020 Journal of Marketing Outstanding Reviewer Award.

Mark Moon won the 2021 Lee and Allison Herring Endowed Teaching Fellowship in Marketing.

The marketing department is now home to the editor or co-editor of these leading Marketing journals: Stephanie Noble in services marketing (Journal of Service Research); Kelly Hewett in international marketing (Journal of International Marketing), and Charlie Noble in new product development (Journal of Product Innovation Management).

Stephanie Noble will co-chair the 2021 Frontiers in Service Doctoral and Early Career Consortium.
Cracking the Labor Market

PREDICTING BUSINESSES’ BRAIN POWER NEEDS IS POSSIBLE

Suppose a fortuneteller could gaze into a crystal ball and foresee which high-value employees companies would lose to competitors in the next year? Could the prediction be used in taking steps to retain valuable workers?

Managers could soon have access not only to forecasts like this, but also to the crystal ball that generates them. In a study in last November’s Information Systems Research, Yuanyang Liu, a professor in the Department of Business Analytics and Statistics, and two colleagues applied conventional data analytics tools such as data scraping, text mining, network analysis, and machine learning to publicly available information. The result? The researchers mapped “human capital flow” between companies including Amazon, Walmart, Ford Motor Co., and IBM from 2000-2014.

Liu, with Gautam Pant (University of Iowa) and Olivia R. L. Sheng (University of Utah), used data from online profiles of 89,943 employees, tracking their careers across 3,467 public businesses over 15 years. Through this analysis, they formulated the human capital flow network (i.e., tracking workers’ movement among firms) and identified “firm-pair” similarities derived from the employee mobility pattern between firms.

Using employees’ reported skill terms, they could associate a firm with its employees’ skills and identify pairs of firms that have employees with similar skill sets. This means those “firm-pairs” are likely to compete in the same human capital pool. Their work in “Predicting Labor Market Competition: Leveraging Interfirm Network and Employee Skills” utilizes these two set of information to predict businesses’ future competitors for high-value employees.

Liu says that while much research has been done on businesses’ competition in the product market, comparatively little has been done on the labor market.

“The competitors in the cookie market, for example, are obvious,” Liu says. “There are many different cookie producers, but all the cookies are on the market shelf where the consumer can see them.” It’s clear which cookies are being picked and therefore easy to identify competitors as well as which are succeeding.

From analyzing past talent migration, it’s a short step to predicting future human capital flow.

Human capital competition is not so obvious. Liu uses the example of data scientists: Who needs data scientists? Tech companies, and the auto industry’s needs are growing. What may be less obvious is that data scientists can work in the agricultural industry (Consider precision agriculture.). What makes the labor market competition challenging is that a firm’s competitors are not necessarily the same as its product market competitors. This is because some skills can be applied to produce different products, and a product can be produced in different ways (e.g., natural vs synthetic diamonds, digital camera vs smart phone). Thus, analysis of labor market competition, especially the so-called knowledge worker competition, has been elusive.

“Naturally, we thought about employees’ profiles posted online: we can find their profiles, which shows what skills they have and where they have worked, and we can scrape them for data,” Liu says. They used search engines to search for employees of a given company, returning many LinkedIn profiles.

That simple search gave the analysts a static data picture of employees with certain skill sets at specific companies in a given timeframe. By applying common data analytics tools, the team moved from a single-year snapshot of firms’ human capital assets to a dynamic view of talent movement among the companies over time. From analyzing past talent migration, it’s a short step to predicting future human capital flow, Liu says. It can be done with the same tools his team used—publicly available data and algorithms.

It’s just a question of who wants that crystal ball enough to expend the effort to get it. —Scott McNutt

Note: Yang’s team is not the first to conduct this kind of research. A data analytics firm in California conducted similar scraping to alert its clients when employees might be seeking new jobs. LinkedIn sued, claiming the data in their profiles was proprietary. A lower court ruled against the social network, but the case is ongoing. Precedent in such suits has the potential to ignite larger data ownership dust-ups between social networks and the users who post to them.
tiny.utk.edu/linkedindatacase
Clarence L. Vaughn, III, director of the Office of Diversity and Community Relations, spoke on the importance of diversity, inclusion, and awareness to a number of organizations and events, such as the Regional MEDIC Board Leadership Retreat, the Junior League of Knoxville’s series, the Professional Sales Leadership Forum, UT’s student-led Management Society, Delta Sigma Pi, and the ORNL.

Women’s Leadership Conference.

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

At the sixth annual Women in Business, Entrepreneurship and Leadership Summit, hosted virtually by Haslam, female leaders (including former mayor of Knoxville Madeline Rogero) shared their knowledge about issues women face in the business world.


Ramon DeGennaro provided MoneyGeek.com with expert commentary for two recent studies on car insurance.

Ryan Z. Farley and Laura Cole organized a finance career panel featuring alumni at Goldman Sachs. The panel was hosted by the Tennessee Capital Markets Society student organization and faculty advisor, Phillip Daves. Farley also was featured in a WalletHub article about hedge fund holdings, top stocks, new buys, and more.

Eric Kelley created an interview series with friends of the finance department, former students, and faculty colleagues about issues in the finance world. Many of these conversations pertain to relevant career paths for finance students.


Matthew Serfling’s papers with John (Jianqui) Bai and Wang Jin, “Management Practices and Mergers and Acquisitions” is forthcoming in Management Science. Serfling also is the recipient of the 2020 Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis Outstanding Reviewer Award. Serfling is also the 2021 recipient of the Sharon Miller Prisey/Trust Company Outstanding Finance Faculty Award.

Andy Puckett’s paper with David Cicero, Albert Wang, and Shen Zhang, “Do Mutual Funds Exploit Information on Local Companies? Evidence from Fund-Firm Taxi Trips in NYC,” was accepted for presentation at both the Western Finance Association Conference and the China International Finance Conference. Puckett also is the 2021 recipient of the Dr. John M. Wachowicz, Jr., Outstanding Teaching Award.

Scott Roark is the faculty advisor for the newly formed Real Estate Club. (See story on page 8.)

Department head Tracie Woidtke presented a talk for the Women’s Fund of East Tennessee, exploring the question of whether women can be both happy and successful in male-dominated fields. Woidtke also was invited to join the Topic Board of the Journal of Risk and Financial Management.

FINANCE

Rankings

#47 In Poets&Quants’ latest rankings, the full-time MBA program rose to 47th among all US institutions and 24th among all US publics. Also, according to Poets&Quants, despite the challenging environment of COVID-19, Haslam led the country’s business schools in GMAT score improvement for the second year in a row.

#19 In The Economist’s WhichMBA 2021 MBA and Business School rankings, the MBA climbed to No. 19 among US public institutions and No. 54 worldwide. It also ranks No. 7 worldwide for alumni rating of career services.

#97 Haslam’s Executive MBA program is now ranked among the London-based Financial Times’ Top 100 international executive MBA programs. In the Times’ 2020 list, Haslam placed at No. 97. Only 29 US EMBA programs appeared in the top 100, and the Haslam EMBA was one of just 11 US public institutions to make the Financial Times’ list. Additionally, within the Times’ subcategories, Haslam ranks as the No. 1 US EMBA program for overall alumni satisfaction.

#17 In the latest U.S. News and World Report Best Business Schools rankings, Haslam placed 17th among public schools (up five spots from 2020) and 39th among all institutions (up seven spots from 2020). Haslam’s Supply Chain Management MBA concentration marked its sixth consecutive year in the top 10.

The Princeton Review again included Haslam on its annual list of best full-time MBA programs.

Modern Healthcare placed Haslam’s Physician Executive MBA program (PEMBA) and Executive MBA for Healthcare Leadership (EMBA-HL) at the top of its annual ranking of largest program enrollment in healthcare MBA programs.

GRADUATE AND EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

Haslam held its annual celebration of graduate and professional students in conjunction with Tennessee’s Graduate Education Week, during which more than 650 students were honored.

In January, the undergraduate and graduate career offices collaborated to host a Career Leadership Academy for a second year in a row, although virtually in 2021. Alumni participated as Ted Talks speakers and five top employer partners conduct career immersion seminars for students.

David Ecklund, retired lecturer and founding director of the Executive MBA – Global Supply Chain, received the Innovation Award from Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee.
In less than two decades, Shelly Sun (HCB, ’92) has built a $569 million home care company, BrightStar Care, using a franchise model to grow from a local business to a national enterprise.
Franchise Success

While in a training session for new owners and managers at a hotel she’d invested in, Sun had an epiphany. Franchising her business model made perfect sense. “The services we provide are so personal, you really need someone in charge who knows the local community they serve,” she says. “Franchising makes way for those local teams.”

Sun and her team laid the foundation for enfranchisement in 2005. Within five years, the company generated more than $100 million in revenue and served thousands of families annually. Today, BrightStar Care has 345 locations and is able to serve 75 percent of the United States from one of their locations.

“Franchising has given us the opportunity to be local, yet scalable and consistent,” Sun says. “This type of growth would have been difficult to achieve as a corporate entity.”

Most franchise owners don’t come from a healthcare background, but Sun says many have personal experience with finding homecare for family members and are passionate about making a difference in their local community. BrightStar Care has worked hard to give franchisees ongoing support to expand their businesses and requires everyone to become Joint Commission accredited to help ensure consistency across the country.

During the COVID-19 pandemic many BrightStar Care franchise owners have continued to thrive and grow, due in part to Sun’s leadership. “We pivoted to where the business was going to be, particularly in screening and then vaccinations,” she says. “For example, our nurses were tracking those who were vaccinated to make sure there were no adverse effects. It felt really good to help our franchisees make a difference and get their communities operating again.”
FRANCHISING AT HASLAM

After receiving Haslam’s Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2017, Sun became involved with plans for a new program on franchising within the college, led by the Anderson Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation. Tom Graves, distinguished lecturer and operations director for the center, says the program will expand the awareness of business opportunities for new entrepreneurs. “Franchising is an integral part of entrepreneurship and a major driver of economic growth, creating $1.6 trillion, or about 5.8 percent of GDP, in the United States each year. It’s an important opportunity for students to be aware of, because franchisees receive much more support than they would if they started a business from scratch.”

Sun has partnered with Haslam faculty in an advisory position to develop plans for a franchising initiative. Eventually it will include a certificate program and introductory graduate level courses. Last year the college launched an undergraduate course in franchising. Graves, who teaches the course, says the students have been engaged and enthusiastic. “It’s really opened their eyes to the wide variety of business opportunities available under the franchise model—not just restaurants and hotels but many other types of business as well.”

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Even as an undergraduate student, Ben Weprin (HCB, ’01) had an optimistic vision of success and a talent for leadership. Those traits, combined with a strong work ethic, have taken him far. Launched during the economic recession in 2008, Weprin’s hospitality company, Adventurous Journeys, now represents more than $5 billion in holdings including a successful collection of 30 boutique hotels.
A NATIVE OF OHIO, Weprin fell in love with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, on a campus tour and decided to apply. “It was a magnetic campus in 1997 with Peyton Manning returning for his senior year on the football team,” Weprin recalls. “I couldn’t imagine going anywhere else.”

Weprin’s desire to be an entrepreneur began at age 10, when he and his brother started their own business selling baseball cards. As an undergraduate at Haslam, pursuing a general business degree was a natural fit. “The college provided me with great opportunities to figure out my passions.”

Within a year, Weprin dove into leadership positions for campus events as an orientation leader for new students and eventually as president of the Interfraternity Council. He and a friend, William Kirkland, also launched a side hustle selling ads for a campus telephone directory.

Jerry Adams, associate director of residence life for university housing, worked with Weprin during that time. “I found him to be an authentic leader and a really hard worker,” Adams says. “Not worried about getting his name in lights, he just wanted to get the job done.”

While at UT, Weprin met and later married his wife, Mary Ann, and the day after walking in a graduation ceremony, he drove to Chicago to start his career.
CHARTING A COURSE TO REAL ESTATE

WEPRIN FIRST WORKED as a real estate broker in the low-income housing market, then moved to Nashville where he started another business with Kirkland, this time buying and renovating properties. A few years later, he returned to Chicago to work for an established real estate investment firm. In 2008, he had the opportunity to purchase interest in a luxury hotel and decided to take a chance despite the economic downturn. Adventurous Journeys, Weprin’s fledgling company, grew from resorts to urban development to a hotel chain in 2014 that is now expanding internationally. Two locations will open in Cambridge and Oxford this summer. Graduate Hotels use college memorabilia and local art from the university towns where they’re located. “I loved college and didn’t want to give up the excitement it brought,” says Weprin. “His love for Knoxville and commitment to this project were obvious.”

The chain’s twenty-fourth hotel opened in Knoxville last August, designed with help from football icon Peyton Manning. One of Manning’s brothers, Eli, is Weprin’s longtime friend and another brother, Cooper, works for Adventurous Journeys. When Weprin acquired property for Graduate Knoxville on Cumberland Avenue, he asked Peyton for input. “He developed every single item on the restaurant menu, chose every musician and song on the jukebox, and selected every photo and piece of memorabilia on the walls,” says Weprin. “His love for Knoxville and commitment to this project were obvious.”

The hotel’s bar and restaurant, Saloon 16, has a cozy atmosphere with dark walls and warm colors. Handcrafted by Manning, it tells the story of his UT experience. “For me, it was fun to go down memory lane and celebrate the people who have been part of my Tennessee journey,” Manning says. “The goal was to create a place where everyone who comes in can reminisce about their time in college.”

As he worked on the project, Manning was impressed with Weprin’s abilities. “Ben had this great vision of where everything was going to go,” says Manning. “He could see it before it was there.”

Weprin’s longtime friend and colleague William Kirkland agrees. “Ben sees potential where others don’t see anything at all, and has the work ethic to match his vision,” he says. “He also has an amazing heart for others—he wants a project to succeed not just for himself, but for the community it will impact.”

Reflecting on his entrepreneurial success, Weprin is amazed at how everything has come together. “For me, the best part is the impact we can make on employees, guests, and the community,” he says. “Opening a property in Knoxville, home of my own alma mater, has really brought it full circle.”

OPPOSITE, L–R, TOP TO BOTTOM: Design throughout the hotel boasts Rocky Top lore, with a palette of Tennessee Orange, complemented with blue and white accents; the exterior entrance of Saloon 16 faces campus; the family suite features camping gear and timber loft beds to appeal to the hotel’s younger guests; late-night inspired items such as Cheese Bings and Rooster Sliders hint to classic Knoxville eats; Jim Haslam, Peyton Manning, and Ben Weprin at the hotel’s private opening; Jim Haslam in Saloon 16; Manning’s memorabilia adorns the walls and tells the narrative of his University of Tennessee experience; the hotel’s front desk, reimagined as a Vol Navy-inspired tailgate boat. THIS PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM: The hotel’s king suite; the hotel entrance’s Smoky Mountain welcome; the University of Tennessee’s beloved mascot Smokey is a prominent fixture throughout the hotel.
Taylor Boyer’s enthusiasm for the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is infectious. “I’ve always loved UT,” Boyer says. “I grew up a Volunteer, watching the leadership of Coach Pat Summitt.”

Boyer arrived on campus as a freshman determined to meet new people, grow as a person, and find her passions. She entered Haslam’s accounting program, but switched gears after interning with a bridal designer’s marketing department while in London with the Global Leadership Scholars program. “I fell in love with marketing,” she says. “There are so many ways you can apply those skills.”

As an undergraduate, she’s pursued a whole-hearted passion for business, her fellow students, and the Haslam community. “I wanted to make an impact and make the most of my four years here,” she says. “Some opportunities I knew I wanted to be part of, while others I discovered along the way.”

From the start, Boyer says she received support and encouragement from the university community. “I am grateful for those who saw in me the ability to lead,” she says, talking about a residence staff member who encouraged her to take a leadership role in her dormitory. “I know I’m where I am today because of mentors and others pouring into me, and I’ve made it a personal goal to pay it forward.”

Boyer has turned that investment around, expending her energy serving others in leadership roles within the Haslam College of Business, Student Alumni Associates, and Leadership Knoxville Scholars. In 2019, she founded a new organization, Women of Haslam, which is open to both business and non-business majors. “I wanted to create a space that provides networking opportunities and inspires women to develop personally and professionally,” she says. “Our priority is to bring together students and businesswomen who serve as role models.”

While working to bring alumni back as mentors, Boyer similarly enjoyed connecting with younger students as a peer mentor over her college career. “It’s been so rewarding to help them fill out applications for programs or prepare for job interviews,” she says. “I know firsthand that the voice of encouragement—having someone say, ‘I see these qualities in you’—is powerful. I love helping others discover their capabilities and passions.”

Now a senior marketing student with an international business collateral, Boyer plans to pursue a law degree and will enter UT’s College of Law this fall.

In recognition of her hard work and achievements, Boyer was named one of the university’s Torchbearers for 2021.

The Torchbearer is the highest student honor conferred by the University of Tennessee. Torchbearers are seniors who have served their alma mater with overall excellence. The Torchbearer is awarded for academic achievement and outstanding commitment to others as demonstrated by the student’s various activities and significant contributions to the university and the community. Students chosen for this award embody the Volunteer spirit, displaying initiative and service in the best interests of both the university and their fellow students.
Seniors Taylor Boyer, a marketing major, and Tyler Young, a supply chain management major, were named 2021 Torchbearers. The Torchbearer, the highest student honor conferred by the University of Tennessee, is awarded for academic achievement and outstanding commitment to others. (Read more about Boyer and Young on pages 22 and 27.)

In April, Haslam’s Office of Student Engagement presented the Haslam College of Business Student Organization Awards. The student honorees were: Marshall Summar (Member of the Year), American Marketing Association - UT Chapter (Organization of the Year), Women of Haslam (Event of the Year), and Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) - UT Chapter (Innovation of Year).

JAEWOO JUNG AND ASHLEY ROCCAPRIORE, PHD STUDENTS, BOTH DEFENDED THEIR DISSERTATION PROPOSALS THIS SPRING.

In spring 2021, student members of the Professional Sales Leadership Program received 25 full-time employment offers and eight internship opportunities from Professional Sales Forum partners alone. From non-forum partners, another 21 students received full-time job offers and nine received internship offers.

Kelly Hewett’s Marketing Insights class spent the fall 2020 semester analyzing data to help Twiddy & Company, a property management and vacation rental firm in the Outer Banks, navigate the pandemic.

Students from Haslam’s course in corporate social responsibility—senior marketing major Kiley Dibble, junior marketing major Michael Rodriguez, senior marketing major Will Slate, and senior finance major Zach Yunger— teamed up with P&G’s nonprofit Children’s Safe Drinking Water program to demonstrate a simple, affordable, and convenient way to purify water.

The team of Zach Adkisson, Mckenzie Cossette, Karli Ailshie, and Jonathan Henry placed second in the 2021 University of Missouri-St. Louis International Business Institute Case Competition, held virtually in March.

The team of R.J. Clemmons, Michaela Faunce, and Drake Oberholtzer placed third in the Marketplace Challenge at the 2020 Global Conference of the Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization club.

In his last year in the doctoral program, Riley Krotz (now joining the faculty at Texas Tech University) was honored with a variety of prestigious awards, including:

- Finalist for the AMS Mary Kay Dissertation Proposal award
- First Place for the KU BESH Doctoral Research award
- Awarded the Dr. Marva Rudolph Award for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion from the University of Tennessee
Initiated in 2018 by the Haslam Undergraduate Cabinet, the Haslam Volunteer Impact (HVI) program recognizes community service by students, faculty, and staff. The program acknowledges participants when they reach 40, 80, 120, and 160 hours of service. This year, 213 Haslam students have progressed from one tier to the next, and six of these were honored at a recognition ceremony on April 29 for volunteering more than 160 hours during their time at college.

Lailah Blackwell, a senior studying supply chain management and finance, was one of the honored. She’s volunteered with several local nonprofit organizations, including Keep Knoxville Beautiful and the FISH Hospitality Pantry. “Using my abilities to help someone else is a great feeling and a great way to spend my spare time,” Blackwell says. “I think it’s important to serve the community because as students, we’re part of the community.”

Ramo Stott, professional development coordinator for HVI, says the program recognizes that being a volunteer is part of who students are while at Haslam and beyond. “It guides our experiences in the world,” Stott says.

The college’s Office of Student Engagement has several ways to connect students, faculty, and staff with volunteer opportunities. BUAD 405, part of a series of professional development courses required for all Haslam undergraduates, challenges students to consider how their education will help them make a positive impact. “That includes teaching them to identify needs, find service opportunities, and volunteer,” says Stott. “We focus on skills-based volunteering, knowing that business professionals have many talents to offer to nonprofit organizations, such as marketing, accounting, or analytics.”

Another initiative, Haslam Serves, provides a monthly opportunity for students, staff, and faculty to volunteer together. The program has worked with Beardsley Community Farm, KARM, and the Ben Atchley Tennessee State Veterans Home.

In addition, the Office of Student Engagement often relays opportunities to Haslam students from the campus-wide Clay and Debbie Jones Center for Leadership and Service. Including all the college’s programs, 1,718 Haslam students have recorded 15,311 hours of service during the 2020–2021 academic year.

Mark Willoughby, director of student engagement at the college, says these service initiatives plant the seeds of community engagement within students. “The university has a focus on experiential learning, and we recognize service as a high-impact practice that deeply impacts students,” Willoughby says. “We want to make sure they have the opportunity to reflect on their experiences and take what they’ve learned to their future communities.”

The Haslam Community Makes a Volunteer Impact

First Place

Four supply chain seniors took home first place in the Conexus Indiana Case Competitions: Ashlyn Bowman, Maikel Mikael, Spencer Strei and Jessica Thomas.

Bridgette Larsen was awarded both the prestigious Richter Scholarship and the Traffic Club of Pittsburgh Scholarship.

Supply Chain Management

Senior Jessica Thomas, NeXxus president, helped the Global Supply Chain Institute, Ryder System, Inc. and Girl Scouts of Tropical Florida to develop a curriculum tracing cookies’ journey through the supply chain, enabling scouts to earn a badge in supply chain. She explained that “this patch was created to teach girls about exciting opportunities in supply chain and imagine themselves as leaders in the industry one day. I’m eager to see how this patch continues to grow and inspire the next generation of women in supply chain.”
Spencer Payne’s Brotallion, a military aviation apparel company, won first place in the spring 2021 Vol Court pitch competition. Second place went to John Philip Nelms for SIP Pad, an enhanced incontinence pad to prevent injury to healthcare professionals. Mary Warchol received third place for WrapItUp, a wrapping product designed to save time and improve the gift-wrapping experience.

Four student-owned businesses were awarded a total of $30,000 in seed funds in the spring 2021 Boyd Venture Challenge. Clay Franklin’s Arid Delivery Products and Mekal Smith’s Sleepy Owl Company were awarded $10,000 each. BusiCard, co-founded by Jonathan Henry and Tihomir Nikolic, and Fluffy Friends for Children with Chronic Conditions, founded by Allison Campbell, each received $5,000.

Haslam accounting students Browning Clark, Caroline McDougal, Mason Tincher, and Lukas Jaktas represented UT at this year’s Deloitte R.I.S.E. (Risks, Issues, Solutions, Experiences) case competition in April. In the competition’s final results, Clark was part of the first-place team and McDougal was on the team that placed third.

The team of Kainat Bhayani, Peyton Boord, Mitchell Maxim, Caroline McDougal, and Collin Wilcox placed second in the region in Deloitte’s FanTAXtic case competition. This was the first time a team from UT has participated in the annual contest.

HARRY CHANNING, BUSINESS ANALYTICS STUDENT, MCCLAIN VALUE TORCH FUND MANAGER, AND MELTON SCHOLAR, WAS ACCEPTED INTO MIT’S MASTERS IN BUSINESS ANALYTICS PROGRAM.
THE UT CENTER FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT HONORED THE SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (SHRM) AS THE STUDENT ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR IN THE SMALL DIVISION.

A symposium at the Academy of Management’s annual conference this summer, “The Art of Storytelling in Academic Writing” (Tim Pollock, with Ashley Roccapriore and Ace Beorchia, SEO PhD students) won the OMT Division Best Symposium award.

MANAGEMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Two senior human resource management majors were recognized at UT’s inaugural Volunteers of Distinction Awards ceremony: **Annika Fischer** (Professional Promise) and **Lauren Watkins** (Academic Achievement).

Senior **Kaylee Pigott** passed her Society for Human Resource Management CP (Certified Professional) exam in January. Students are eligible to sit for the exam only if they have accumulated 500 hours of an internship or practical HR experience.

**Lucy Buck** of the Management Society-UT (MSUT) won the Spirit of Tennessee award for her continued efforts of Mobile Meals in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Trey Lewis** earned his PhD in the Strategy, Entrepreneurship, and Organizations program in Management and Entrepreneurship in April, and will join the faculty of Virginia Tech this summer.

**Olivia Ray**, graduate student in management and human resources, was awarded the Joseph P. Goddard state Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) scholarship for grad students.

Senior **Annika Fischer**, president of the UT student chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), was named Student of the Year by the Tennessee Valley Human Resource Association, a professional affiliate chapter of SHRM, where she served on the board.

ECONOMICS

2021 Economics PhD **Eunsik Chiang** accepted a position as assistant professor at Mississippi State University.

2021 Economics PhD **Hieu Nguyen** accepted a position as assistant professor at Illinois Wesleyan University.

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The ODCR launched the inaugural **Sophomore Mentoring Program** in spring 2021. The program is designed to help students navigate their second year at Haslam as they prepare for upper-level coursework and internships. A support group consists of a student mentor and advisor.

**EVENTS**

The ODCR has held several programs, events and speaker sessions, including:

- PepsiCo Power of One: Diversity Leadership Development Program, in which students examined the business case for diversity and were given tools for managing a diverse workforce.
- Diverse Alumni Speaker Series with Ishhea Mistry, Abel Velazquez, Alexandra Hughes and Eliasar Zuniga, in which students learned how to best navigate the university experience from alumni.
- Personal Branding Information Session, in which participants were provided with information and best practices related to building interpersonal skills and leadership attributes focused on professional development.
- Take Off Program “Pitch Competition”: Pamela Sanchez, coordinator for retention and education, launched the first “Pitch Competition” for the Take Off program cohort. Students participated in a competition outlining their franchise and start-up business to a juried panel.
Tyler Young wants to give younger students the same support and encouragement he received as a freshman at the Haslam College of Business. “I had a really impactful peer mentor my first year,” Young says. “I’ve had other great mentors as well, and their collective influence has shaped my college career.”

Young’s mentors pushed him to get involved with many organizations and opportunities, making the most of his college experience. “That kind of encouragement is something I wanted to give back to others.”

A senior studying supply chain management and business analytics, Young has spent the last three years volunteering as a peer mentor for first-year students, focusing on helping them make a successful transition. He’s also mentored high school juniors and seniors through the Haslam Network program and represented the college as a Haslam Ambassador. “I still stay in touch with a lot of the students I’ve mentored,” he says. “It’s rewarding to watch them succeed.”

In addition, Young volunteered at Emmett Elementary School in Bristol, Tennessee, teaching business principles to fifth graders. “I had no idea what to expect the first year I went, but the kids were incredibly enthusiastic and eager to connect with us,” he says. “That experience showed me the impact that one small act of service can have.”

In summer 2020, Young worked with Dell Technologies in Austin, Texas, as a supply chain intern. “While I was there, I realized that this field is definitely the right fit for me,” he says. “It was cool to be at a large company at an interesting time in history, when they had to meet the needs of many customers while facing supply chain challenges from the pandemic.”

After graduating this spring, Young will return to Austin to work in Dell Technologies’ supply chain development program. He’s excited to get involved in a new community, where he’s determined to carry on his role of serving others. “The impact you have on others just comes from being intentional,” he says. “As I get involved in a new community, I want to continue mentoring as well as working with homeless populations.”

In recognition of his extensive service, Young was named one of UT’s 2021 Torchbearers, the university’s highest undergraduate honor.”
DIANE WALKER MARKARIAN
& RAFFI MARKARIAN

Supporting Young Entrepreneurs

The daughter of two University of Tennessee alumni, Diane Walker Markarian (HCB, ’83) grew up on a working farm in Maryville, Tennessee, before studying literature and journalism at UT. While working as a freelance writer for a local publishing company, she developed an interest in business. “Many of the stories I wrote were about young entrepreneurs,” she recalls. “That captured my attention and I decided to go back to school.”

Walker earned a master’s of accountancy from the Haslam College of Business with the goal of working for a large accounting firm. PwC hired her to work in London, England, for six months following graduation, and then she moved to Chicago to work in the firm’s international tax department. She met her husband, Raffi Markarian, there. “We worked together, making presentations on a new software product, and we had to travel to clients all over the country,” she says. “It was different from the usual accounting culture—very fast-paced, and it felt like an entrepreneurship venture within a large company. I loved it.”

Walker eventually left PwC to work in management consulting for the software industry, including for IBM and several startup technology companies.

With a background in science and technology and an MBA in accounting and finance, Raffi enjoyed working at PwC for about five years, but says meeting Diane was the highlight of his early career. He eventually moved to Deloitte, where he’s worked for 22 years. “It’s a very fulfilling and dynamic organization,” he says. “The rapid changes of pace in many areas have been very dramatic, especially related to technology and globalization.”

Over the years, Diane and Raffi enjoyed frequent trips from Chicago to visit Diane’s family. Among other activities, the couple enjoyed attending football games. “UT gave me a whole new perspective on college life and the color orange,” Raffi says. “It satisfied something I missed in my own undergraduate experience—the exhilaration of college athletics.”

A few years ago, Diane and Raffi attended a social event in Chicago for UT alumni where they learned about new initiatives at the university. As they explored opportunities to be more involved, they learned about the Anderson Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation. “We came down and spent time attending the pitch competitions,” says Diane. “We were very impressed with both the events and the students involved.”

When the couple asked where their investment might be best used, Lynn Youngs, executive director of the Anderson Center, and Tom Graves, director of operations, suggested an endowment to help students travel to pitch competitions outside the local region. The idea struck a chord with Diane, who loves to travel. “It’s important to me because it’s broadened my life experience,” she says. “We thought that was a great place to invest and feel that the money has been well spent on something we’re both very interested in.”

Today, Diane and Raffi divide their time between their home in Chicago and Diane’s family farm in Maryville. “We love it here,” she says. “The four seasons, the nature, the birds, and wildlife make Tennessee a special place for both of us.”

Longtime friends Mark and Maria Lazzaro say Diane and Raffi have always shown an interest in entrepreneurship. “They enjoyed exploring local businesses when we traveled together, and now they have that same excitement for rediscovering East Tennessee.”
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When Marty Brown (HCB, ’85) took his first accounting class from professor Dick Townsend, he hadn’t decided what he wanted to do after graduation. He credits Townsend’s genuine compassion for his students and skill at teaching complex accounting concepts with setting him on his career path.

“There are UT accounting grads all over the country who have benefited from his kindness and leadership,” Brown, who is now president and CEO of PYA, says.

That legacy is why Brown felt it was important for PYA to make the leadership gift in this fundraising effort for the Richard L. Townsend Chair of Accounting, the first endowed chair for the college’s Department of Accounting and Information Management (AIM).

Townsend has had an impact on many of PYA’s partners and clients, and the company regularly recruits Haslam AIM students.

“We’re so proud of the accounting program and what it has become over these last decades,” Brown says. “The current stewards of that department
have benefited greatly from past leadership.”

As the current head of Haslam’s AIM department, Terry Neal is the first person to hold the new chaired professorship.

“We are very excited that our first chaired professorship in AIM is named after Dick, and we are so appreciative of the incredible number of his former students who have contributed to make the Richard L. Townsend Chaired Professorship of Accounting a reality,” Neal says.

The endowment comes as the result of a grassroots fundraising campaign from Townsend’s former students. In 2009, hundreds of alumni contributed toward an endowment in honor of Townsend’s 42-year career at UT. That effort grew quickly, and in 2015, the campaign committee organized a successful push to fund a professorship. In 2020, a new campaign kicked off to upgrade the professorship to the AIM department’s first chair.

The highest faculty award a professor can hold, a chair requires a minimum endowment of $2 million. To reach this goal, the campaign committee reached out to alumni for gifts of any size. PYA pledged a leadership gift of $100,000, and dozens of alumni contributed $5,000 or more.

“It would be hard to imagine another UT accounting faculty member who has impacted more students—accounting and otherwise—over their career than Dick Townsend,” says Neal.
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Roger D. & Carol F. Schwenke
Elizabeth L. Shanton
Jonathan L. & Caylee Shell
Emilia O. Sherly
Stephanie M. Sieggreen
William D. Singer
Linda S. Skouby
Ray H. Smallen
Charles B. & Robin R. Smith
Spencer S. Smith Jr.
Revonna J. Smith
Peter K. So
Margie L. Sowell
Bob Sowell
S. Blake & Leigh Stinnette
Bobby R. & Pamela C. Stoffle
Robert M. & Tanya L. Stokely
Jevon T. Stassor
William & Diane K. Stumph
Randy R. & Barbara L. Swanson
Doug & Anne Swartz
Richard & Sharon S. Tannahill
Wendy L. Tate
Lawrence C. & Lorrie Taylor Jr.
Jane C. Taylor
Robert J. & Leona S. Thomas Jr.
William & Amy L. Thomas
Jordan & Ashley Tipton
Michael W. & Tami K. Touchstone
Tool Crib
Melissa A. Tribble
Stephen R. & Donna M. Turbyfill
Charles W. & Julie Umsted
Gregory L. Underwood
Dwight H. & Sheila Van Inwegian
Tony & Pamela Vaughn
John M. Wachowicz
Lisa M. Waddell
Donald B. & Janet E. Wake
William L. Waldrop
Matt E. & Elizabeth E. Wallin
Brian & Marianne H. Wanamaker
James C. & Teresa Wardrop Jr.
Kenneth R. & Lisa O. Wayco
John L. & Jean H. Wernicki
Donald D. West Jr.
Jacob L. Wheeler
Michael T. Whittaker
Joseph E. & Susan D. White
William W. & Wanda C. White Jr.
James M. & Linda L. Williams Jr.
Robert L. & Sharon N. Wilson
Jeffrey A. & Jody K. Winslow
W. Miller Wood III
Jeffrey B. Wright
Yazhen Xiao
Paul J. & Agnes L. Yoo
William P. & Louise Young
Alex R. & Ana M. Zablah
Douglas R. & Shana Zink
William & Allison Zotti

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Larry Pratt (HCB, ’73), CEO of First Savings Mortgage Corporation, donated $140,000 to cover reduced wages of UT athletics staffers who took a pay cut because of COVID-19.

Steve P. Henry (HCB, ’81) was announced as president of Lenoir City’s House Hassan Hardware Co.

Fred Clelland (JD/MBA, ’90) joined the Chattanooga law firm of Warren & Griffin, P.C.

Russ Wise (HCB, ’91) is now assistant principal overseeing curriculum at Bearden High School in Knoxville.

First Bank & Trust Company appointed Jimmy Millaps (HCB, ’83) vice president and commercial loan officer in Morristown, Tennessee.

Scott Marshall (HCB, ’93) is now a business development consultant with Emovi, a Montreal-based medical device company developing products for knee joint assessment.

Scott McDaniel (MBA, ’96) was appointed chief executive officer of Oneida Hospitality Group, a leading provider of commercial foodservice and hospitality solutions.

Inspired by their daughter Annie, Pete (HCB PhD, ’94) and Betsy Brewer are in the process of opening an Asheville, North Carolina, Howdy Homemade, a Texas-based chain of ice cream shops that employs special needs workers.

Guaranty Home Mortgage Corporation (GHMC) announced the addition of Craig Parrish (HCB, ’95) as vice president of human resources.

Serenity Carr (HCB, ’00) and her husband, Joe, have seen rapid growth for their baby food company, Serenity Kids Baby Food.

Matthew Sibole (HCB, ’99) has been named the new chief financial officer for Classic Brands, a leading designer, distributor, and manufacturer of sleep products, accessories, and furniture.

Eric Ostermeier (HCB, ’97), founder and managing director at Southbridge Access, along with other Southbridge executives, congratulated Haslam PROMBA students for completing month-long consulting projects focusing on Chilean companies in the spring semester.

Matthew Kendall (ProMBA, ’99) joined Honeywell as chief technology officer for healthcare.

In March, Harvard Business School presented a webinar with Chad Foster (HCB, ’00), author of Blind Ambition: How to Go from Victim to Visionary.

Garrett Lewis (HCB, ’00) was selected for the newly created role of chief operating officer for VCA Animal Hospitals in Los Angeles.
François Nader (PEMBA, '00) was recently honored by the Lebanese government for their work in developing the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

Stephanie Thomas (HCB, '00) has been appointed to the AWESOME (Achieving Women’s Excellence in Supply Chain Operations, Management & Education) advisory board.

Midwest Communications, Inc., promoted Michael Brody (HCB, '01) to vice president/marketing manager of its Knoxville cluster, which includes Classic Rock WIMZ, AC WXJB, Adult Hits Jack FM, and Classic Country Duke FM.

Bechtel Nuclear, Security and Environmental, Inc., promoted Stanley Odom (ProMBA, '02) to manager of internal audits.

Jeremy Stephens (MBA, '02) joined the Leadership Blount County (Tennessee) class of 2021.

Chris Case (ProMBA, '03) received his professional engineering license from the state of Indiana.

Kathleen Gooch (Macc, '04) has been named managing director of KPMG’s business tax services practice in Nashville.

General Mills promoted Amanda Leuthard (ProMBA, '04) to senior supply chain planning manager for North America.

Melissa Kestner (ProMBA, '06) received a promotion to IT manager at Luke & Associates, Inc. in Rockledge, Florida.

Spencer Mercer (HCB, '07, Macc, '09), a CPA and senior manager with Kraft’s tax services group, joined the team at KraftCPAs PLLC’s Chattanooga location.

Stuart Cooper (ProMBA, '08) celebrated seven years of tenure, in multiple roles, with C Spire Business.

Jim Kitchen (EMBA-SL, '09) is an entrepreneur and passionate traveler who has visited every country in the world and has his sights set on a new frontier: space. In the meantime, he’s written a book on his travels: A Bigger World.

Jared Hill (PROMBA, '08) was promoted to executive director of operations with ionogen.

Kathleen Gooch (ProMBA, '04) has been named managing director of KPMG’s business tax services practice in Nashville.

Allustro promoted Stephen Guerrette (HCB, '11, MBA, '15) to vice president of North American value-add product sales, scrap, and risk management.

Monica Jones (PEMBA, '11) has been named chief medical officer for Erlanger East and Erlanger North Hospitals in Chattanooga. (Erlanger Health System).

Stacy L. Leeds (EMBA-SL, '10) has been appointed Foundation Professor of Law and Leadership at Arizona State University. Leeds will be part of ASU Law’s Indian Legal Program.

Pegasystems spoke to Esra Turan Taylor (PhD, '10) about the transformation she led as SMB marketing director of Etisalat (Etisalat Misr), the largest telecommunications corporation in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) of Arab states.

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General Mills promoted Amanda Leuthard (ProMBA, '04) to senior supply chain planning manager for North America.
OrthoBethesda, a premier provider of orthopedic services in the greater Washington, DC, region, appointed Emil Engels (PEMBA, ’12) to the newly created position of chief executive officer.

Maryville promoted Jane Groff (ProMBA, ’12) to administrative services director.

Jessica Post (HCB, ’12) joined the Yakima, Washington, school district as chief strategy officer and a COVID Response Fellow, connecting senior talent across the US with school districts to provide high-level support to senior leaders.

Comcast promoted Ralph Silvan (ProMBA, ’12) to VP of strategy and operations.

Rhonda A. Stewart (MBA, ’12) has been named the new executive director for the Western Tidewater Free Clinic in Suffolk, Virginia.

The Lipscomb University College of Business appointed Hannah Stolze (PhD, ’12) director of its Center for Transformative Sales and Supply Chain Leadership and associate professor of supply chain management.

Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC which manages and operates the Y-12 National Security Complex and the Pantex Plant, promoted Megan Houchin (ProMBA, ’13) to director of lean six sigma.

Trey Klatt (MBA, ’14) and Kesha Waters (HCB, ’18) have joined the Leadership Blount County (TN) class of 2021.

Michael E. Stevens’ (PEMBA, ’13) Scottsdale, Arizona-based primary care practice joined MDVIP, the leading network in personalized healthcare.

Carter Lawrence (JD/MBA, ’14) was appointed to lead the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance.

HCA Healthcare named Monique Butler (PEMBA, ’16) chief medical officer of its North Florida division.

Samir Harb (ProMBA, ’16) is celebrating 10 years at Pilot Flying J in July.

Tiffany Nelson (EMBA-HL ’16) is now the executive director of the Georgia Rural Health Innovation Center in the Mercer University School of Medicine.

Kindred, UT Medical, and Tenova promoted Garrett Rich (ProMBA, ’17) to rehab director at the new Rehab Hospital Tri-Venture.

At the digital American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (AAAAI) annual meeting, Michael Tankersley (PEMBA, ’17) presented tips on preparing for telehealth visits to reduce confusion and stress for patients and staff.

Plastics News featured Rachel Vickers (MBA, ’14), global strategic sourcing leader for Avient Corporation, as one of their rising stars of 2021.

Caleb Alexander (HCB, ’15) has been appointed as the new CFO for CapWealth Advisors LLC, one of Financial Times’ 300 Top Registered Investment Advisors for 2020.

Heather Leisy (PEMBA, ’15), director of preventive medicine for HopeHealth, helped lead a virtual vaccine town hall in the spring in Florence, South Carolina.

Cambrey Little (EMBA, ’15) is now chief growth officer for Lirio.
Benjamin “B.J.” Wilkerson (HCB, '17) joined Crye-Leike’s Downtown Chattanooga branch office as a licensed realtor.

Chavez Golden (ProMBA, '18) will serve as an adjunct professor of supply chain management this fall.

Logan Hale (HCB, '18) has been named president of Winsupply’s newly opened location in Seymour, Tennessee.

Ranjit S. Hundal (EMBA-HL, '19) is joining the executive management team of Huntington Hospital in Pasadena, California.

In an interview with the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), Billy Spencer (HCB, '18, '19) expressed his gratitude for his experience in the UT chapter and encouraged all HR students and new graduates to get involved with SHRM.

Erik Hargis (ProMBA, '19) has a new role as senior manufacturing engineer lead with Navistar in Huntsville, Alabama.

Tom Dorsey (EMBA-SL, '19) launched his business, RocketCert, which was the focus of his Organizational Action Project (OAP).

Mihir Patel (PEMBA, '19) and Ruby Sahoo (PEMBA, '19) were recently named to the Society of Hospital Medicine Senior Fellows Class of 2021.

John Ergen (ProMBA, '19) now works for Clayton Homes Technology division as a business analyst lead.

Erich Gertz (EMBA-HL, '19) was recently featured in an EMBA Council blog post encouraging younger executives to consider an EMBA.

Gerhard Schneibel (ProMBA, '19) was named director of communications for the UT Office of Advancement Communications.

Connor Clarke (HCB, '20) accepted a position as a corporate strategy analyst with Eastman.

Jordan Ferrell (JD/MBA, '20) joined Baker Donelson in Nashville as an associate in the corporate group.

Brandon Killen (ProMBA, '20) accepted a new position with AbbVie Inc. as a clinical sales representative.

Elana Ladd (HCB, '20), a graduate of the Heath Integrated Business and Engineering Program (IBEP), is now a sales management associate for PepsiCo in Columbia, South Carolina.

Josh McMillan (ProMBA, '20) started a new role as an IT project manager with TVA.

Nanika Sudheendra (MS SCM, '20) spoke to Poets&Quants about why she chose Haslam and how her experience helped her career and personal development. Sudheendra, a Melton Scholar, was recently accepted into the full-time MBA program at Harvard Business School.

Boston Celtics forward Grant Williams (HCB, '19) is the second recipient of the NBA’s Bill Russell Mentoring Legacy Award.

Eastman Chemical Company promoted Cody Wilson (EMBA-SL, '20) to supply chain network optimization transformation lead.

Naomi Anderson (EMBA-HL, '20) is using her degree for the greater good by supporting and advocating for the Tennessee School for the Deaf.

Alex Belianinov (ProMBA, '20) started a new position as a principal scientist in Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Matt Birch (ProMBA, '20) is now global product manager for Morningstar’s selection and due diligence services.

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’20s

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While listening to podcasts as a college freshman, Devin Wilkinson found some motivation of his own. Shows produced by other business schools were popular ways to introduce the student body to successful and interesting alumni. He got to work on a similar podcast for the Haslam College of Business.

Wilkinson and a few fellow students developed a business plan and pitched it to the college’s Office of Student Engagement, where director Mark Willoughby was impressed. “They’d compiled a list of speakers and a mocked up script for the first interview,” he says. “It was pretty remarkable.”

With backing from college leaders, Wilkinson and a small team of students assembled the project. “There are a lot of moving parts, with a team of students behind the question creation, planning, and editing, and two university offices involved in production,” he says. “The first episode included some trial and error because we had to get all our branding right, but that was really educational for me.”

The initial episode of Project Inspire, featuring UT alumnus Clay Jones, released in February 2021 after a few months of planning and production. Since then a new episode has released every month, featuring interviews with Haslam alumni James A. Haslam II, Wilma Jordan, and Don Frieson. “The goal is to encourage our listeners with stories and life lessons,” Wilkinson says. “The speakers usually talk about their own experiences, giving students the opportunity to get a head start in their careers.”

Besides Wilkinson, the podcast’s student team includes Nicholas Brodeur, David Carlton, Brayden White, Morgan Lewis, and John Turner. They meet weekly to work on current episodes and review ideas for future speakers.

A finance major set to graduate in spring 2022, Wilkinson already has a plan for making sure Project Inspire continues after he’s gone. “Our idea is to switch the host every semester, to divide the responsibilities and keep the project going as a team effort,” he says. “Eventually, we’d also like to expand it to include in-person events with audience questions and create some bonus episodes.”

While Wilkinson plans to pursue a career in investment banking after graduation, he thinks his love for podcasting will stick around. “I’ll still do something with it as a hobby, if not my full-time job,” he says.

Meredith Hulette, senior director of advancement operations at the college, has worked closely with Wilkinson and the other students to launch Project Inspire. “They have taken time to research their subjects and prepare intelligent, articulate questions,” she says. “We’re proud to connect successful alumni with the students for this project.”

The Project Inspire podcast can be found on any podcast streaming platform.
I am grateful for the scholarships I have received because they allowed me to focus on my studies and stay involved in the student community. I wouldn’t be where I am today without the support of alumni.”

Your gifts are transformational.
Supporting the College Fund supports students like Chloe.
giving.utk.edu/haslamfund
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On campus classes begin August 18!