It’s been said that one of the surest ways to find joy during challenging moments is to do something good for someone else. I find this to be true in all times, not just in difficult ones. We often “find ourselves” when we “lose ourselves” in the service of others. This adage has manifested in myriad ways for the Haslam College of Business over the course of the past year as we, as a community, have worked our way through the challenges of the pandemic. These challenges have further brought the Haslam community of students, staff, faculty, alumni, and partner organizations together in ways that might not otherwise have been possible. We are stronger for it.

Exemplifying this spirit, the college’s namesake family stepped forward in the fall of 2020 to make a second landmark investment in business education at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The gift will continue to impact the lives of students for decades to come. No strangers to philanthropy, the Haslam family—led in this endeavor by Natalie and Jim, Dee and Jimmy, and Crissy and Bill—understands and appreciates the value of top quality academic programs, well trained students, and impactful research on the economic and social well-being of our state and region. Learn more about the ways their confidence in the college is making a difference in scholarly and applied research in Making Research Connections (pg. 24).

Philanthropy also can impact the greater community by energizing college efforts to tackle national challenges. In one recent example, students and faculty, enabled by private giving, partnered with other universities to address the pressing and timely real world problem of hunger. The Food Supply Chain Coalition (pg. 6) pairs Haslam students and faculty with their counterparts at the University of Wisconsin and Arizona State University and with representatives from Google and Ryder Corporation. The work, focused on the three main areas of the food supply chain, shows the potential for both scalability and long-term impact.

In another example highlighted in this issue, alumni and friends made an immediate impact in the lives of Haslam students affected by the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Many made their usual donations, or even greater ones, during a challenging year. These gifts to the College Fund directly benefited students whose lives and studies were interrupted by the pandemic. You can read more about how the college, lead by Haslam’s International Programs and Study Abroad office, not only brought students home safely, but continued to provide quality international business education under difficult circumstances in “International, Interrupted” (pg. 18).

We are thankful for all those who give back and forward to the Haslam College of Business through their time, talent, and treasure. As we move forward in 2021 with hope, we are proud to be Tennessee Volunteers and remain committed to making positive impacts on global well being through our Volunteer community.

With gratitude and joy,

Stephen L. Mangum
DEAN AND STOKELY FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP CHAIR
HASLAM COLLEGE OF BUSINESS