Kenzie Carlson has always had a knack for event planning. As a child growing up in Brentwood, Tennessee, she created elaborate plans for imaginary parties, complete with invitations. In high school, she put her skills into practice, planning parties for friends and even organizing prom. As she fine-tuned her logistical skills, she discovered that she really loves coordinating events. Entering the accounting program at the Haslam College of Business, she set her sights on the behemoth of the event planning world: weddings. “They’re such big events with so many details,” Carlson says. “I loved the challenge and was all in.”

While earning her accounting degree, she continued to pursue her interest in event planning through an internship with a Knoxville-based wedding planner. She also got involved with Delta Sigma Pi (DSP) Professional Business Fraternity, using her organizational skills to dramatically improve Haslam’s chapter. This year, Carlson was selected as DSP’s 2020 Mid-South Regional Collegian of Year, one of the highest honors the fraternity bestows on a collegiate member.

Last year, Carlson launched her own wedding planning business, aptly titled I Do... Weddings. “I started by offering free services to a few brides, just to get my feet wet,” she says. “Then I did a little advertising, launched my website, and got a couple of inquiries.” Since then, Carlson’s business has grown along with her conviction that wedding planning is her passion. “Long term, this is definitely what I want to do.”

Carlson’s study of accounting dovetails well with her event planning work. Originally, she saw it as a skill she could apply to event planning, but she’s grown to love it for its own sake. “I’m definitely interested in public accounting and the experience I can gain from it,” she says. “That’s why I decided to do the Master of Accountancy (MAcc) program.”

This summer, Carlson plans to do a remote summer internship with RSM US, LLP in Chicago before entering the MAcc program at Haslam. She envisions working in public accounting after graduation while continuing to operate her wedding business. “My dream is to divide my time between accounting and wedding planning,” she says. “And I’d like to be in Knoxville because I love the city and the wedding industry here.”
Spring 2020 marked the launch of the final course in the Haslam Prepared series, BUAD 405, which focuses on students’ impact after graduation, specifically emphasizing community engagement, servant leadership, and alumni involvement. As part of the course, students initially were slated to complete 10 hours, but this requirement was adjusted to five because of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Four Haslam students—Kara White, business analytics, Carly Mangum, supply chain management, Alexander Owens, finance and Cooper Atteberry, supply chain management—competed in the Heavener International Case Competition in Gainesville, Florida. Eddie Armbrister and Mark Collins coached them for the competition.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Haslam hosted 60 fifth graders from Emmett Elementary School in Bristol, Tennessee, for an interactive day of learning and fun in the fall. The students met with Mark Willoughby, director of student engagement at Haslam, Stephen L. Mangum, dean of the college, and Lane Morris, Haslam’s associate dean of undergraduate studies and student affairs. The visitors also posed for photos with UT mascot Smokey and members of the Spirit Squad.

Haslam’s First-Year Experience in Cuba students tried out their fancy footwork learning to salsa, spoke with locals at Cuba’s only English bookstore, and learned about how private businesses function in the Cuban economy.

The first Haslam Serves initiative, a college-based service activity at Beardsley Farm, engaged students in volunteer opportunities around the community.

Haslam students on the First-Year Experience program in Costa Rica observed how coffee gets from fruit to cup and how the process impacts the environment and economy.

The Spring Haslam Student Organization Fair, which engages undergraduate students in business-focused student organizations and opportunities in the college, took place January 14–15.

Haslam student leadership groups (ambassadors, presidents’ council, student advisory council, and the diversity advancement program) visited Pilot Headquarters and interacted with James A. Haslam III in February.

Career Events

Several on-campus and virtual career events were held for students during the semester, including:

- Career Leadership Academy (JANUARY 10)
- Supply Chain Management Career Expo (FEBRUARY 3)
- Spring Job and Internship Fair (FEBRUARY 4)
- National Collegiate Sales Competition Virtual Career Fair (MARCH 31)
- SEC & ACC Virtual Career Fair (APRIL 2)
- CFP Board Online Career Fair (APRIL 2)
The Management Society of the University of Tennessee received the 2019–2020 Haslam Student Organization Event of the Year award for its Meet the Employers event.

**PHILANTHROPY**

$1,500

The Management Society donated more than $1,500 to its philanthropic partner, Mobile Meals of East Tennessee, helping to ensure home-bound seniors continue to receive meals during the COVID-19 pandemic. The group completed a productive year, including holding its executive board strategic planning retreat at the Amazon Fulfillment Center in Chattanooga, a member excursion to the Radio Systems corporate headquarters, two professional development workshops for its members, and visits by six corporate guests as part of the Management Society Speaker Series.

First-place winners of the fall 2019 Bi-annual Organizational Behavior Case Competition included Madelyn Bomar, Mallory Gafford, Matt Andzulis, and Paige Breke. The spring competition was conducted online with video presentations. The winning group included Claire Benson, Keith Fowkes, Mykal Phinney, and Keenan Sudderth.

UT’s Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) chapter had two winning teams this year at the state SHRM conference. A team of four undergraduates and a team of four graduates took first place in the SHRM Games in Chattanooga for 2019-2020.

For the ninth year, UT SHRM was awarded the Superior Merit Award Chapter by National SHRM. The organization volunteered more than 260 hours to non-profits this year including Pedal for Alzheimer’s, Fantasy of Trees, Samaritan’s Purse, and Junior Achievement. Members also participated in Junior Achievement for the ninth year with some 20 students volunteering in elementary and middle school classrooms teaching business skills to students.

More than 50 human resource management (HRM) students completed internships throughout the fall and spring semester in the East Tennessee community.

Eight HRM undergraduates took the SHRM certification course and passed their SHRM-CP.

The Global Supply Chain Institute’s new recruiting event, the Supply Chain Management Career Expo, drew 192 students, who had an exclusive opportunity to network with 19 Supply Chain Forum partners.

**SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT**

NEXXUS WELCOMED CASSIDY HUNSUCKER, GLOBAL DEMAND MANAGER AT ELO TOUCH SOLUTIONS AND UT ALUMNA, FOR A DISCUSSION ABOUT YOUNG WOMEN’S PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE FIELD OF SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT.

The Masters in Supply Chain Management program held a webinar in March for potential students to gain information about how the program jump-starts students’ careers and broadens their expertise in the emerging supply chain field.

The Department of Supply Chain Management held its Student Engagement breakfast on February 12.

The Management Society of the University of Tennessee received the 2019–2020 Haslam Student Organization Event of the Year award for its Meet the Employers event.

**MANAGEMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
Genesee Semon’s Beachy Clean, a company offering non-toxic cleaners in reusable bottles, won first place in the spring 2020 Vol Court Pitch Competition. Second place went to Dalton Maddox for Napsack, an idea for bags created to safely store outdoor gear. Third-place winner Hoanghna Vo pitched Vo Tech, a mobile application offering users the option of contacting emergency services through the use of a passphrase.

The Graves Business Plan Competition produced six start-up business winners in fall 2019. Joshua Friday’s Slide & Ride, a safety device for rodeo riders, placed first in the lifestyle business category. AltFair, created by Wilson Garrett, Hugh Gentry, and Jace Smith, won first place in the growth business category. The company’s software aims to streamline the exchange of data between students and companies during career fairs.

Second place in the lifestyle business category went to Coonhound Camping. The company provides full-service camping setups in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and surrounding areas. The company is co-owned by Jeremy Piper, Christopher Mikulec, and Michael Richards. Yeat, a new type of food delivery service developed by Frank Gao and Ashley Chena, won second place in the growth category.

Two student startups that participated in the Graves Business Plan Competition, Andy’s Beekeeping and Abled Magazine, were named to the national Student Startup Madness pitch competition in February.

The department awarded 27 scholarships totaling more than $50,000 for the upcoming academic year. Among these, the Pearl and Edward Moore Scholarship for Overall Achievement was awarded to Braeden Sheppard and Julia Wiant. Nicholas Delos Santos, president-elect of the Economics Club, won the J. Fred Holly Scholarship for Service to the Department.

Mustafa Ali-Smith, a December graduate with a degree in public administration and a minor in political science, was named one of six Torchbearers by the Chancellor for 2020. The Torchbearer award is the highest honor the university bestows upon undergraduate students. Mustafa is the fifth economics student to be named a Torchbearer in the last five years.

The Economics Club hosted faculty presentations from other colleges and held twice-monthly meetings surrounding student-led discussions of current issues ranging from the economic impact of automation to analyzing the rise in the cost of living attributed to increasing urbanization. Nine students accompanied Ken Baker and Ben Compton on the annual Washington, DC, trip. The members met with research economists from the Federal Reserve, USAID, the Council of Economic Advisors, and the Pentagon.
diversity and perspective back to the university.

McGehee’s role also involved processing applications and assisting with legal documents necessary for students to study in the United States. As he worked on planning and development for the program, he became interested in marketing strategy. “That type of planning drew me to supply chain,” he says. “I saw how analytics were driving the decisions we made, and I knew I was interested and wanted to develop those skills further.”

That’s when McGehee decided to apply to the Haslam MBA program. Now approaching graduation in December 2020, he has appreciated the small cohort, atmosphere of collaboration, and the diversity of professional backgrounds in the full-time program. His fellow students who hail from nonprofit, government, and military backgrounds as well as supply chain, have challenged him to approach problems in new ways and ask more intelligent questions.

In the future, he envisions a position as a global sourcing planner for a coffee company. “Cultural consciousness and sustainability are driving demand in the coffee industry, and I don’t think we’re at the peak yet of what companies are going to offer,” McGehee says. “It would be exciting to be part of an industry I’m passionate about, utilizing my skills in supply chain management and cultivating international connections.”
**AMAzе volunteers** gained real-world marketing experience to build their skills and resume during spring semester by working with four corporate partners to enhance the partners’ marketing strategies. The student-run group, which operates through UT’s chapter of the American Marketing Association (AMA), welcomes members from all majors. Anyone from freshmen to graduate students can join.

**ACCOUNTING & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

As the culmination of a semester-long project, students in Lauren Cunningham’s MAcc class had the chance to get feedback from UT alums and recruiters from Coulter & Justice, DHG, Pugh CPAs, PwC, PYA, and RSM. The students practiced interacting and talking with professionals using common audit language, simulating what it would be like to “debrief” an audit partner on their fieldwork and preliminary risk assessments.

Led by faculty advisor Amelia Hart, UT’s Beta Alpha Psi chapter won the Innovation Category at the 2020 Southeast Regional meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, which came with a cash award. The chapter also won third place in the overall Best Practices competition. Thirty institutions competed across three categories in the competition sponsored by Deloitte.

**TOP 10 PUBLIC ACCOUNTING PROGRAMS**

Department of Accounting and Information Management graduates ranked in the top ten of all large public accounting programs in the most recent rankings of first-time pass rate of certified public accounting (CPA) exam candidates.

**BUSINESS ANALYTICS & STATISTICS**

Kara White from Haslam and Tyler Caldwell and Juliette Easley from the College of Arts & Sciences competed in the Hanes Case Competition at Elon University, placing fourth overall.

Melton Scholar Sabrina Churchley’s research with Bogdan Bichescu into how hospitals can reduce the number of patients leaving their local service area for surgeries won third place at the 2020 EUReCA symposium.
IN MARCH 2020, the COVID-19 crisis began impacting every aspect of society in the United States, forcing schools, restaurants, and non-essential businesses across the country to close their doors. Faced with a campus-wide shutdown at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, the Haslam College of Business rose to the challenge. The college’s technology experts worked to ensure the smoothest possible transition for students and faculty members as all classes moved online after spring break.

Mark Collins, director of the Office of Technology-Enhanced Education, surveyed each department to find out which faculty members needed technical assistance and stayed in contact to ensure they received it. Collins and his colleagues have continued to work overtime, creating training videos and other materials to ease the burden on faculty and students. The college used Respondus, a secure online test administration tool, for exams this semester. “We’re committed to providing the best experience for students while protecting the integrity of the assessment process,” says Collins.

“Throughout this challenging period, we’ve been impressed with the can-do attitude of both students and faculty. It’s Haslam at its finest.”

The college’s technology experts worked to ensure the smoothest possible transition for students and faculty members as all classes moved online after spring break.

Educators who already had online teaching experience came alongside those who were new to the medium. Training sessions were held to show people how to use the platform and troubleshoot problems. Brian Stevens, senior lecturer in business analytics, says shifting a classroom from physical to virtual is challenging, especially on such short notice. “It’s harder to read students’ faces and non-verbal communication when you’re teaching online,” Stevens says. “You have to find new ways to engage, and it’s tough.”

Student Amber Heatherly admits that the shift has been challenging. “I love being in class and able to go up to the teacher and ask questions,” she says. “Switching to online has been hard for me because I don’t get that interaction.” Yet Heatherly appreciates the efforts of college and university faculty, staff, and administrators to make the best of a difficult situation. “We know this wasn’t anyone’s choice, and they have done a great job keeping in touch with us and staying involved.”

Even while adhering to social distancing guidelines, student Andrew Wind is finding ways to bridge the gaps. “I’ve been able to create online study groups and host virtual quarantine parties, and it’s been great to connect with my classmates that way,” Wind says. He has also seen classes become more streamlined as time goes on. “Faculty members are getting better at using the technology,” he says. “A few of my courses are more difficult to translate to the online format, but for the most part, I’ve realized that many courses can work just as well online.”
The inaugural Career Leadership Academy was presented, promoting professional development for Haslam undergraduate and graduate students through interaction with employer partners and alumni. Various companies designed and facilitated a total of six career seminars that showcased specific career paths to approximately 50 students. The seminars allowed graduate and undergraduate students to work together on interactive activities for a given topic and learn more about relevant skills for a specific career. Alumni also took part as guest speakers during TedTalks-inspired presentations. (Read more on page 38.)

Graduates of Haslam’s MBA program saw their average starting salary leap by 27 percent between 2018 and 2019. The 2019 MBA graduate starting average pay was $99,108, up from $77,995 in 2018, representing a record $21,113 increase. Master’s of Business Analytics (MSBA) graduates took home an average of $83,034 this year, an increase of nearly 7 percent.

As determined by Poets&Quants, Haslam MBA student average GMAT scores over the last five years have jumped 41 points, to 657. That rise marks the biggest gain in average GMAT of any school in the ranking, which makes the Haslam MBA program the leader in average GMAT score increase among Poets&Quants’ Top U.S. MBA programs between 2014 and 2019.

BIG ORANGE COMBINE
Nine UT students, including six from the Haslam College of Business, spent the week of Super Bowl LIV in Miami working the Super Bowl Experience and Game Day. Debbie Mackey, distinguished lecturer from Haslam, and Ashley Smith, student life director for the Thornton Athletics Center, led the trip. Known collectively as the Big Orange Combine, the students who made this year’s trip were: Alyssa Andreo (sports management), Erin Gilroy (supply chain management), Wade Sluss (human resource management), Mariah Smith (kinesiology), Troy Smith (sports management), Mary Jo Swearengen (human resource management), Waverly Whiston (accounting), and Tyler Young (business analytic and statistics and supply chain).

SMITH GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SCHOLARS

The 11th Greg & Lisa Smith Global Leadership Scholars class graduated 24 members in 2020. Caroline Jones and Connor Clarke received the Class Leader Award. Members of the class distinguished themselves highly in their time at UT:

- **FIVE ARE CHANCELLOR’S HONOR PROGRAM MEMBERS**
- **ONE IS A CLS SERVICE MEDALLION RECIPIENT**
- **FIVE ARE HASLAM BUAD 100 PEER MENTORS**
- **ONE IS A HASLAM SCHOLARS PROGRAM MEMBER**
- **TWO ARE HCB AMBASSADORS**
- **THREE ARE SCM SCHOLARS OF DISTINCTION**
- **FOUR ARE CUM LAUDE**
- **THREE ARE MAGNA CUM LAUDE**
- **ELEVEN ARE SUMMA CUM LAUDE**

Lauren Latture was named the 2019 Smith Global Leadership Scholars alumna of the year.