

The Bottom Line

News from the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business

Spring 2024

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Message From Dean Theodore Richardson



The spring semester culminated in President John Nicklow's leadership at a wonderful graduation event celebrating the accomplishments of our university's newest alumni. The Bisk College of Business was well represented, with 76 undergraduates, 240 master's and three doctoral degree graduates.

On weekends during the summer, the COB lobby will be completely refreshed with a business-style look and feel. I am sure that students will be impressed with the lobby's new architectural look.

The university's new strategic plan is exciting and invigorates our college's mission with a focus on four key pillars: People of Excellence, Programs Driven by Innovation, Transformative Partnerships and Optimized Learning and Social Environments. A team of business faculty has completed mapping the COB strategy to the university strategy, as we focus on moving "forward together with boundless potential."

Also during the summer, the college will finalize plans to apply for accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, the premier business school accreditation organization.

Student success is important, as we plan future student competitions and events and prepare to offer the very best business instruction for all students.

I look forward to updating you soon with many exciting college events, as we continue to imagine new pathways for business education.

Respectfully,
Theodore R. Richardson III, Ed.D.
Dean, Bisk College of Business



A+ Accolades

The Bisk College of Business and its programs continue to be recognized as some of the best in the nation. Some of our most exciting recent accolades:

U.S. News & World Report

- No. 15 Best Online Master's in Information Technology Programs for Veterans
- No. 31 Best Online Master's in Information Technology Programs

- No. 75 Best Online Bachelor's in Business Programs (out of 185)

Cybersecurity Guide

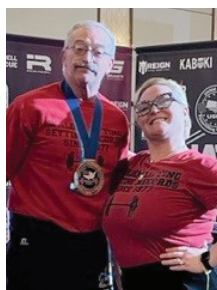
- No. 10 Cybersecurity MBA Program

Panthers on the Rise

COL. JOSEPH "JOE" WALDEN '88 MBA, '89 M.S.

Col. Joseph "Joe" Walden '88 MBA, '89 M.S., won his 16th national championship in powerlifting at the United States Powerlifting Association (USPA) Drug Tested National Championships in Las Vegas.

Walden and his youngest daughter earned back-to-back father-daughter national championships. En route to the national title, Walden set a new world record in the squat for his age group.



ALONDA WOODLEY '09 M.S.

Alonda Woodley '09 M.S. accepted a new position as portfolio manager for the Technology, Innovation and Partnership directorate at the National Science Foundation. In

addition, Woodley has pursued her lifelong passion for real estate by becoming a licensed realtor with Keller Williams Realty Centre in Columbia, Maryland.



JOSHUA ARONOVITCH '12, '14 MBA

Joshua Aronovitch '12, '14 MBA, and his fiancé, Angela Miller, welcomed their daughter, Mia Niccole Aronovitch, into the Panther family March 3, 2023.



MELISSA WILBRANDT '14 MBA

Melissa Wilbrandt '14 MBA joined the Lockheed Martin Space team as a project engineer. Within her new role, Wilbrandt has been empowered to volunteer with nonprofits and looks forward to continuing to put effort into local disability companies.



LEONOL HASBUN '16 A.A., '18, '22 MBA

Leonol Hasbun '16 A.A., '18, '22 MBA, accepted a new position at The Mosaic Co. as a senior diversity and inclusion specialist. Within her new role, Hasbun will work with the diversity and inclusion networks to help facilitate a work environment where employees feel heard and represented.



BEN HOERLEIN '16

Ben Hoerlein '16 became a Society of Actuaries fellow and has been promoted to actuary at Protective Life. Hoerlein's new designation and promotion will allow him to soon become a product pricing lead, as well as to transition to a managerial role.



CHRISTIE LYNES '18 MPA

Christie Lynes '18 MPA won the 2024 WISE Alumna Legacy Award. Lynes has excelled as a market leader at Best Version Media, an award-winning national leader in publications and digital advertising. As the publisher at Best Version Media and owner of Beachside Connections LLC, Lynes has significantly contributed to the Space Coast community by launching esteemed publications.



KATHERINE WEATHERFORD '18 MBA

Katherine Weatherford '18 MBA was promoted to manager, finance product enablement with PayPal.



Doctor of Business Administration Update

Keith Holloway '99 M.S. is wrapping up his time in Florida Tech's DBA program. Part of Cohort 7, which includes six other students, he chatted with us about why he chose Florida Tech, his recent dissertation defense and his life outside of school.

What are you currently working on in the DBA program?

I have completed all of the requirements of the DBA program, including the defense of my dissertation and participating in my final seminar. I am currently working as a research fellow with the business school via the Center for Innovation Management and Business Analytics (CIMBA).

What is your goal for the future?

I intend to continue my work with L3Harris Technologies as a software engineering leader, driving toward an engineering fellowship. I also plan on utilizing my DBA to teach as an adjunct professor so that I can gain experience as an instructor. Finally, I will leverage my learning and degree in scholarly writing, speaking engagements and consulting.

Why Florida Tech's DBA program?

Florida Tech was known to me, as I had graduated with my master's degree from Florida Tech several years earlier. Also, my employer, L3Harris Technologies, has a great working relationship with the school. Beyond these touch points, my primary reason for choosing Florida Tech was the reputation of the school and the value of the degree for my future. There are quite a few DBA and EDBA programs available in the market, and some are offered online. For me, the commitment of flying to Florida and being on-site with my cohort added to the value of the degree, making Florida Tech the best choice.



What do you enjoy most about the program?

I have enjoyed the challenge of extending myself, stretching to reach beyond the skills and abilities with which I began. The program has taught me a great deal about what I can do when I am determined. Beyond learning more about myself, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the faculty, who have poured themselves into the program. Also, my cohort has been fantastic, and I have gained lifelong friends through this program.

When not completing schoolwork, what do you like to do?

As I mentioned earlier, I am a software engineering leader for L3Harris Technologies, advising on and implementing cloud-based software solutions. When I am not working at my day job or on academic pursuits, I can be found in my music studio amongst my synthesizers (I live in Nashville, after all), on a walk with my wife and our little dog or cheering on the Nashville Soccer Club at Geodis Park.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Now that I am looking back, I can say that I am very proud of the work that I was able to accomplish in the DBA program with the help of great faculty and friends. The work was challenging and very time-consuming. However, I can attest that the journey has been well worth it, as it has raised my abilities, confidence and prospects by multiple orders of magnitude.

Student Spotlight Lydia Carroll

Lydia Carroll, a business administration junior and Florida Tech women's soccer player, grew up on the other side of the Melbourne Causeway in Indialantic, Florida.

Transferring to Florida Tech from Eastern Florida State College, she had a perfect 4.0 GPA after each of her first two seasons. We sat down with Lydia to discuss the work she's done in the classroom and what she'll remember about her team's 2023 season.

What made you choose your major, and what do you want to do with it?

Initially, I didn't really know what I wanted to do as a major. I just knew I wanted to continue playing soccer, and so choosing business administration really helped keep my options open. You have so many different options you can do with the major, so that's why I chose it.

Having grown up in Brevard County, what was it about Florida Tech that made you want to stay?

The location, the ability to stay close to my family, to the beach. I love Melbourne. I love Florida, and just being able to see my family on a regular basis and be able to go back home whenever I want to—whenever I can—is really great.

What's something you've learned at Florida Tech about your major that you didn't know before?

I think the classroom has really taught me to network with a

lot of people. I think that's one thing that will help me a lot in my major and maybe with how things are nowadays in the world with globalization and the spread of technology. It's really teaching me a lot on how to connect with people from different cultures and different perspectives.

Given your unique perspective, what advice would you give to a local athlete who might be considering Florida Tech?

I would say to try and enjoy the experience as much as possible. Don't procrastinate; do your work, but also just find the fun things in life while you're here. Make friends. Try to be as social as possible, and just get the Florida experience. Go to the beach, get some sun and just have fun, because this isn't forever, and it goes by really fast.

You got to be a part of a phenomenal run this year in the NCAA Tournament, going all the way to the Final Four. You guys were on the road for quite a while toward exam season. How did you keep everything balanced?

I know a lot of girls, some of them even have full-time jobs, and so a lot of them would be on the bus working. And when we're in the hotels, we do have our practices, our team time, but then we also have some hours of alone time, so that would help. That's when girls would decide to do homework or, if they know that they need to rest for the game, they'd get some rest and just choose what time works for them to dedicate to school.



Want to hear more from Keith?

He is one of the featured speakers in the Summer 2024 DBA Seminar Series: "Business Analytics & Research Integration." Hosted by the Center for Innovation Management and Business Analytics (CIMBA), this virtual event will take place July 27.



SIGN UP HERE

Meaningful Mentorship

The Bisk College of Business' online project management MBA program recently received reaccreditation from the Global Accreditation Center (GAC) of the Project Management Institute (PMI).

In particular, the GAC site visit team highlighted the Project Management Advisory Board's support and contributions to the program, including members' participation in student mentorship.

Advisory board member Michael Garvey, an information technology executive and certified Project Management Professional® (PMP) with more than 20 years of experience, has mentored multiple students during his time on the board.

One of his mentees, Michelle Boutron '23 MBA, is a longtime Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA) who, Garvey says, didn't originally recognize the benefits a project management degree could bring to her professional career.

"Part of my time with her was discussing the curriculum, how to handle situations in project management and how to connect it to her BCBA business," he says. "The other portion of our time included working with her on her goals and how to reach them."

Boutron, who completed her project management MBA while living in Italy, where her husband was stationed with the U.S. Navy for three years, launched a small educational consulting business, Strive! BCS, during her time as a Florida Tech student.

"Initially, I felt overwhelmed. I was drawn to Florida Tech's 100% online program format, which was ideal while living overseas," Boutron says. "Additionally, I sought a program that supported entrepreneurs, offering the convenience and flexibility I needed to balance my studies, grow my small business and

manage personal responsibilities effectively."

Garvey mentored Boutron for about 18 months while she earned the MBA, her second master's degree. As a military spouse often faced with the challenge of starting over every few years that she says can affect self-esteem, morale and career progress, Boutron found Garvey's mentorship particularly valuable.

"Michael's guidance helped me stay grounded and set small, achievable goals," she says. "I'm truly grateful for his advice and support."

Garvey has since lent his expertise to a new group of Panthers, teaching a Cases in Applied Project Management course during the spring 2024 semester, for which he received stellar reviews on student class surveys.

"He encouraged me to engage in networking opportunities, be authentic and embrace transformative leadership," Boutron says.

In fact, when Boutron and her family had determined that they would move to Florida after her husband's retirement in 2024, Garvey even connected her with a local BCBA with whom he served the Girl Scouts of Citrus Council (Central Florida) and who was intrigued by Boutron's goals and strong industry background.

The Boutrons have since made the move to Florida, where she is focused on growing her company using some of the lessons she learned through her Florida Tech coursework and Garvey's mentorship.

"Michael's mentoring has energized me and prepared me to expand my small business. I am eager to participate in in-person, live events and promote the science of behavioral change," she says.

She is also passionate and eager to dive into diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) consulting and organizational behavior management (OBM), aiming to help organizations improve performance and efficiency while fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace culture.

"The most valuable lesson I learned from my mentorship with Michael was to believe in myself and take initiative," Boutron says. "Additionally, I'm thankful for the quality mentorship and classes I received as part of the Florida Tech MBA program."

“Michael’s mentoring has energized me and prepared me to expand my small business. I am eager to participate in in-person, live events and promote the science of behavioral change.”

— Michelle Boutron '23 MBA



At A Glance:

Michael Garvey

- Project Management Advisory Board Member
- Information technology executive
- Certified Project Management Professional® (PMP)



Alumni Spotlight

Amanda Wise

IT MASTER'S ALUMNA CREDITS FLORIDA TECH FOR HER GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT—PROFESSIONALLY AND AT HOME

Amanda Wise '16 M.S. has dedicated her career to giving parents peace of mind about their children's safety. Little did she know that Florida Tech would do the same thing for her.

In February 2008, Wise took a leap of faith and accepted an entry position with Access411. At the time, the company was just a small, family-owned business, but Wise found herself inspired by its mission.

"Access411 is a K-12 school safety company that promotes a positive school climate and culture for students, parents, staff and administration via a web-based platform," Wise says.

The company was created by William Morrison, Wise's father and a former teacher and assistant principal in Baltimore in the '90s, to combat gang members posing as students, instigating fights and selling drugs at his school.

What started as school lanyards with students' Polaroid photos attached has grown into CAASS, a software that creates student ID cards that they use to scan in throughout their day—when they get on the bus, arrive at

school, are marked present in class, arrive at afterschool clubs, etc. The data is then sent to school district leaders and students' guardians through an app.

During Wise's 15 years working for the company, Access411—as well as her role with it—has grown exponentially. The program has now been implemented in over 1,500 schools throughout the nation, including New York City, Baltimore City and District of Columbia public schools.

Today, Wise serves as Access411's director of accounts, a position she largely credits her online information technology master's degree from Florida Tech for achieving.

"The classes at Florida Tech helped me gain so many skills necessary to help drive the growth of Access411, support the schools that we partner with and work on projects, including software rollouts and data integration," she says.

After her son, Shawn Jr., was born, Wise and her husband noticed that he was showing the early signs of autism and needed support. She enrolled Shawn Jr. in a research study and, later,

full-time applied behavior analysis therapy on-site at The Scott Center for Autism Treatment.

A few years later, Wise and her husband welcomed their second son, Kamon, who was also diagnosed with autism and started attending The Scott Center with his older brother.

"The time my sons spent on the campus of Florida Tech transformed my family's life in ways that I simply cannot express through words," Wise says. "Florida Tech challenged my sons and our family to become more than we could have ever imagined."

Q&A

Celebrity who you would like to grab dinner with: Taylor Swift

First job: Working at a bagel shop

Most used app on your phone: Facebook

Favorite thing to do to relax: Ride my bike

Quote you live by: "A woman is like a tea bag—you can't tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water." —Eleanor Roosevelt



Happenings

STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN FSU SMALL BUSINESS CASE COMPETITION



A group of Bisk College of Business students, accompanied by instructor Tim Muth, participated in the second annual Florida State University/SouthState Bank Small Business Case Competition in March.

Hosted at Turnbull III Florida State Conference Center, the competition drew 17 teams from 11 academic institutions throughout the Southeastern United States.

Students Koral Bischer, Joe Bruno, Mikkel Kvinnesland, Jared McColpin, Kyle Russell, Clara Cannon, Ailina Naimzade, Sophia Sichtnik, Peter Voltaire and Matthew Heaphy worked together to create a presentation on how Alabama's Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) could increase ridership and improve operations financially and environmentally. Teams had four weeks to prepare their presentations.

Muth said the competition helped students learn professional skills in ways they could not have inside the classroom, such as developing and communicating financial forecasts, properly presenting recommendations and responding to tough questions.

Students also networked with various company executives who attended.

"They proudly represented Florida Tech and were wonderful ambassadors for the COB," Muth said. "Their presentations were outstanding. They were professional throughout the entire event and received many comments about their positive attitudes."

ALUMNUS NAMED *FLORIDA TODAY* VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



Ramone Hemphill '22 MBA, founder of the 99th Squadron, was named the 2023 *Florida Today* Volunteer of the Year.

A pilot and engineer at Northrop Grumman Corp., Hemphill started the nonprofit with his wife in 2020 to expose young people, particularly minorities, to the vast opportunities in the aviation industry and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields beyond.

Named after the first squadron of the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of African American military pilots in World War II, the 99th Squadron offers a free, five-week course that covers cross-country planning, wing shape and lift, how to read a sectional chart and the function of airspeed indicators, altimeters and other flight instruments, plus much more.

Hemphill, along with three other awardees, received the award at *Florida Today's* 30th annual Volunteer Recognition Awards at the Bernard Simpkins Fine Arts Center on Eastern Florida State College's Cocoa campus.

FLORIDA TECH WINS THIRD AT MBA CASE COMPETITION

Florida Tech's College of Business student team won third place at Florida Southern College's 10th annual MBA Case Competition.

Consisting of students Chad Blasius '23, Kelly McLaughlin and Joe Bruno, the team was challenged with imagining the future of Publix Pharmacy and proposing innovative products, services and strategies to drive revenue and provide expanded health solutions.

"This is a very impressive accomplishment," said instructor Tim Muth. "[The team] beat several large U.S. universities to earn third place. We are so proud of [them]. Go Panthers!"

PANTHERS ATTEND AIB-SE CONFERENCE



Kate Hill '23 DBA, Eric Demirjian '08 M.S., '23 DBA, Kelly McLaughlin and Diann (Isa) Cerda, as well as instructor Tim Muth (pictured with keynote speaker Peter Buckley) represented Florida Tech at the Academy of International Business—Southeast Conference in Atlanta in October.

Undergraduates McLaughlin and Cerda worked on a business challenge involving zipper manufacturer YKK Fastening Products Group, and DBA graduates Hill and Demirjian presented papers.

CATCH UP WITH WEVENTURE

weVENTURE Women's Business Center has had an exciting few months.

In October, the organization hosted the 11th annual IMPACT Summit, a business leadership conference. During the conference, weVENTURE presented its inaugural IMPACT Grants, providing direct funding to three women-owned small businesses on the Space Coast: the Seaside Succulent, Chef's Kitchen South and Vitaglide.

The conference's keynote speaker, Laura DiBella, president and CEO of Enterprise Florida and immediate past Florida Secretary of Commerce, shared her perspective on the state's economic outlook from her unique vantage point as a member of the governor's cabinet and business leadership team.

In addition to the keynote address, attendees participated in informative breakout sessions focused on business communication, management and strategy. The event also featured panel discussions on mental health in the workplace and the duality of strong feminine leadership.

In January, weVENTURE announced a new St. Lucie County-based business coach, Marie Letin, was joining the team, allowing the organization to expand capacity and make services more accessible to small-business clients on the Treasure Coast. Letin, who has over 20 years of experience, will be working as a business coach and resident U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) loan specialist.

In March, the organization hosted the 2024 Women Who Rock Awards. A luncheon at the Hilton Melbourne honored all 68 nominees. Here are the winners of the 2024 Women Who Rock Awards:

- **Small Business Owner of the Year**
Rebekah Coates, owner, Fit4Mom
- **Executive of the Year**
Janie McDermott, vice president, chief human resources office and principal, BRPH
- **Excellence in Mentorship**
Kodey Bogart '22 MSA, CEO, KB Solutions, LLC
- **Women Trending in Tech**
Kimberly Alkire, director of cyber wellness and chief information security officer, Health First
- **Excellence in Caregiving**
Jennifer Barton, founder and CEO, Seniors Helping Seniors
- **Zonta Yellow Rose Award for Excellence in Community Service**
Juanita Jackson, President, Brevard Zetas



weVENTURE executive director Kathryn Rudloff received a 2023 Entrepreneurship Policy Fellowship from the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM). This fellowship provides classes for students to explore the relationship between public policy and the entrepreneurial environment. Fellows receive honoraria to support entrepreneurial research, travel and lodging to attend the APPAM Annual Fall Research Conference, access to mentorship from an experienced cohort of faculty focused on entrepreneurship and policy and ongoing classes.





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Expert Perspectives

Abram Walton, professor and director of the Center for Innovation Management and Business Analytics, wrote and proposed the document "Innovation management: Illustrative examples of ISO 56000," which was published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).



Amitabh Dutta, associate professor of finance, was featured in finance company WalletHub's Q&A on advice, recommendations, mistakes and more regarding money market accounts. He was also featured in a WalletHub article about cheap car insurance in Florida.



Theodore Richardson, Bisk College of Business dean, was quoted multiple times in a *U.S. News & World Report* article about why colleges and universities close.

