

The Bottom Line

News from the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business

Fall 2021

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Message From Dean Theodore Richardson



Although I had hoped that the fall 2021 semester would be unaffected by the pandemic of the last 20 months, COVID-19 persists in our daily lives. Despite the challenges the pandemic presents, our university administration, faculty and staff have welcomed students back to campus for in-person instruction and, thanks to our excellent Pandemic Response Team, have made the fall semester a success. I personally thank the administration for excellent leadership, our faculty and staff for dedication to our students, and the students themselves for adhering to university safety protocols.

weVENTURE Women's Business Center continues to support entrepreneurship with over \$1 million in Small Business Administration and local grants, serving more than 1,000 clients. Faculty and staff are welcomed to use weVENTURE's services, as we continue to support entrepreneurship at a high level in the college.

The Bisk College of Business Advisory Board continues to support the college's efforts in strategy, marketing, curriculum development, fundraising, mentorship and advocacy for our students.

I look forward to a successful rest of the semester and thank everyone, including our students, as we continue to deliver an excellent-quality business education.

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

Panthers on the Rise

JOHN HULL '82 MBA

John Hull '82 MBA, deputy director of the Tennessee Department of General Services and head of the State of Tennessee



Real Estate Asset Management Division, was recently honored with the Distinguished Deputy Award from the National Association of State Chief Administrators. He was selected in part for helping lead the Alternative Workplace Solutions program implemented in 2016 and for the several high-profile projects completed under his leadership, including the Tennessee State Museum, the State Capitol Cupola restoration, the new Tennessee State Library and Archives Building and more.

DEBORA JOHNSON-ROSS '90 M.S., PH.D.

Debora Johnson-Ross '90 M.S., Ph.D., was recently named vice president of academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Wartburg College. She was



previously director of the Mayor's Scholars Program at Baltimore City Community College and senior vice president of academic innovation at BridgeEdU. Debora has dedicated her life to education and has taught across the world at places like the University of Buea in the southwest region of Cameroon as a Fulbright scholar. She earned her acquisition and contract management master's degree from Florida Tech's Hampton Roads/Fort Eustis Education Center in Virginia.

MONIQUE PICOU '93 MBA

Monique Picou '93 MBA recently became vice president of product, technology strategy and global server operations at



Google. Before starting her new position at Google, Monique served as the senior vice president of supply chain flow for Walmart and as senior vice president chief of strategy and supply chain at Sam's Club. In 2019, she returned to Florida Tech and received the Bisk College of Business Outstanding Alumni Award at the Homecoming gala. She was also a keynote speaker at the 2020 weVENTURE Women's Business Center IMPACT Summit. Throughout her career, Monique has sat on the board of directors for United Way, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, GS1 UK and the Cranfield University advisory board. She was a state-appointed board director for Workforce Development for Families with Dependence and a member of the State Economic Development Board. She is also a former instructor of economics and math for the University of Phoenix.

STACY CUMMINGS '00 MSM

Stacy Cummings '00 MSM, a career member of the Senior Executive Service at the U.S. Department of Defense, recently won a 2021 Wash100 Award for



her work modernizing acquisition and implementing digital transformation initiatives for the federal sector and its industry counterparts. Currently, Stacy is the acting undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment. As such, she

is responsible to the secretary of defense for all matters pertaining to acquisition; contract administration; logistics and materiel readiness; installations and environment; operational energy; chemical, biological and nuclear weapons; the acquisition workforce; and the defense industrial base. She earned her MSM degree in information systems from one of Florida Tech's Maryland education centers.

JULIA CROUSE REGAN '11 MBA

Julia Crouse Regan '11 MBA, co-founder and CEO of RxLightning, a firm that digitizes and automates the prescribing process for specialty pharmaceuticals,



crystalized her business idea in mid-2019 and in short order completed financing and investor support. RxLightning announced a partnership with IllumiCare in 2020 that puts its technology in the hands of 150 hospitals across the country.

RYAN BAILEY '15, '17 M.S., '18 MBA

Having earned bachelor's and master's degrees in biomedical engineering and an MBA, Ryan Bailey '15, '17 M.S., '18 MBA, is working on his fourth Florida Tech degree: a DBA.



Ryan is a product manager at Alertgy, a research and development firm in Melbourne, where he is developing a wearable, noninvasive continuous blood glucose monitor. He's passionate

about helping others reach their full potential, as well as contributing to the growth of the Space Coast's innovation and technology sectors.

In the future, he intends to start "an investment/venture fund leveraging emerging industry and market predictive analytics built from disparate data sources to time and filter opportunities."

As an undergraduate student, Ryan helped found the men's lacrosse team, won the senior design competition as part of Florida Tech's first biomedical engineering class and met his now wife, Tyler Heckman '16, '17 MBA, '19 M.S.

FEDERICA PALA '19

Federica Pala '19 is working with two other Florida Tech students to build a startup called Make-Print. The team recently completed



the idea stage accelerator program at Groundswell and is looking to define a growth-sustainable business model to start raising venture capital. Originally from Italy, Federica first came to Florida Tech to pursue a business administration degree and is now working toward an accounting and financial forensics master's degree and an MBA. During her undergraduate years, Federica was on the women's rowing team, winning several major competitions and soaking in the early-morning sunrises at practice with the team.

MOLLIE KAPLAN '20, '21 MBA

Mollie Kaplan '20, '21 MBA, first came to Florida Tech to pursue a business administration/entrepreneurship degree, after which she decided to continue her education in the Fast Track MBA program. She also played on the women's lacrosse team. Today, she works as a business development representative at Precisely.



"I was fortunate enough to get a top education while continuing to play the sport I love at the collegiate level. Overall, I have had the most incredible experience at Florida Tech and am beyond grateful for the memories that I will always cherish and the opportunities that I have gained from attending this university," Mollie says.

MARCOS COSTA

Marcos Costa, an MBA student, is founder and owner of Desvendando os Astros, an online astrology



business with over 750 clients and more than 100,000 social media followers. Aside from his interest in and experience with social media and digital marketing, Marcos has about seven years of international business experience, having worked for international companies in Brazil, his home country. After working as a marketing assistant in Florida Tech's university marketing office for the past year, Marcos recently accepted a new remote position with a startup digital marketing firm in Chicago.

"I am excited about the possibilities that will unfold once I earn my MBA degree. When I graduate in the fall of 2021, I plan to use the knowledge, experience and skills acquired during the MBA program to expand my business and help other organizations and entrepreneurs market their businesses online," he says.

Doctor of Business Administration Program Update

Florida Tech's Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) program is currently enrolling students in Cohort 7, which will include more than 20 students who will return to its original on-campus format.

RECENT DBA STUDENT AND ALUMNI PUBLICATIONS

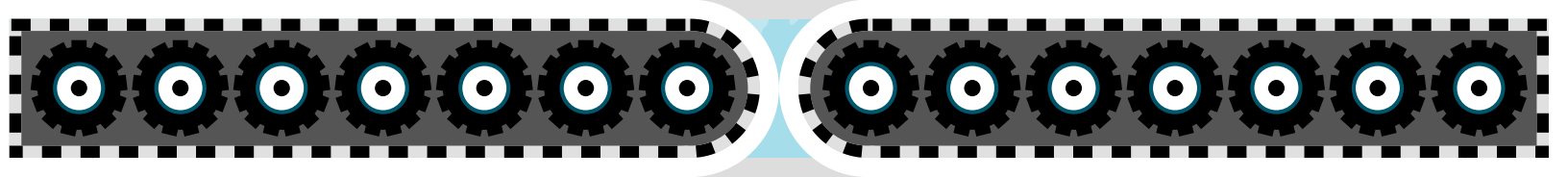
Jonathan Reed '20 DBA:

"Leveraging Strategic Agility in the Pandemic Environment" in *IGlobal Journal of Entrepreneurship* and "Strategic agility in the SME: Use it before you lose it" in *Journal of Small Business Strategy*

John Hill: "Impact of Organizational Slack on Innovation Outcomes" in *Journal of Management and Engineering Integration*

MOVING AT WARP SPEED

By Ryan Randall



America started to feel the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. As the country worked to figure out how to deal with the virus and its implications, the Trump administration launched Operation Warp Speed (OWS) in May. The mission of this critical national program was to accelerate the development, manufacturing and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and medical countermeasures. At the end of February 2021, Operation Warp Speed was transferred into the responsibilities of the White House COVID-19 Response Team.

Among its leaders, and in additional key roles, were three Florida Tech Panthers and Bisk College of Business alumni:

Gen. Gustave Perna '92 M.S., the chief operating officer for the COVID-19 Vaccine and Therapeutics Operation; Col. Robert Mikesh '07 M.S., information technology lead of the mission; and Darrell Rawlings '05 M.S., vice president of pharmaceuticals for McKesson, the leading distributor of vaccines and project leader for the company's COVID-19 vaccine program.

We spoke with the alumni via email in March about the program and their work within it.

What are some of the daily tasks you are involved in?

Perna:

As chief operating officer, I co-lead the partnership between the Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Defense to accelerate the development, manufacturing and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics to the American people. I am responsible for providing unity of effort between the various federal and U.S. government agencies, industry and academia, and focusing the collective whole-of-America team on the ultimate goal of saving lives and moving our nation past this pandemic.

Mikesh:

My daily role is focused on coordinating across our government and industry partners to develop an interconnected information technology (IT) architecture that supports our mission to deliver safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics to 64 jurisdictions across the country. This level of IT architecture to support public health and immunization campaigns has been a complex challenge that has never been done before, involving over 100 disconnected information systems that need to connect to other systems or exchange data. This myriad of systems tracks everything from vaccine allocations to order processing, transportation, in-transit visibility and inventory to the administration data, which record the vaccination events.

This interconnected architecture allows us to "see ourselves" and track the vaccine from the manufacturing line to the point of vaccine administration with a shared goal: to get shots in arms as quickly and safely as possible. We first had to develop the architecture, and now that distribution has begun, we're focused on maintenance and enhancements.

Rawlings:

As the vice president and enterprise program lead for McKesson's COVID-19 vaccine program, I'm responsible for the overall program effectiveness related to our efforts to support the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and related

“ By mid-February, these efforts—and so many more—led to more than 70 million doses of vaccine and 800,000 courses of treatments delivered at the right time, to the right location, in the right quantities and condition, through six winter storms, with a 99% success rate. ”

—Gen. Gustave Perna '92 M.S., chief operating officer for the COVID-19 Vaccine and Therapeutics Operation



GEN. GUSTAVE PERNA

Chief operating officer for the COVID-19 Vaccine and Therapeutics Operation



COL. ROBERT MIKESH

Information technology lead of the mission



DARRELL RAWLINGS

McKesson vice president of pharmaceuticals

ancillary supplies in partnership with the U.S. government. In order to manage these duties, I'm fully embedded with the U.S. government's COVID-19 operations team in Washington, D.C., to coordinate our company's efforts in real time and enable better efficiency and collaboration between private and public partners.

Are there aspects of this work, or across your career in general, for which Florida Tech helped you prepare?

Perna:

I firmly believe in building from a foundation set from three key components: formal education, training and experience. All three are important to personal and professional development, and all three have contributed to any success I have had. The education I received as part of the master's in logistics management program at Florida Institute of Technology expanded my knowledge and complemented my military training and experience. Formal education is an additional tool in your kit.

Mikesh:

Absolutely. My degree is in acquisition and contract management, and I apply those skills in this job and what I've done during my time in the U.S. Army. Since graduating in 2007, every job I've had has dealt with acquisition projects across the IT and contracting fields and is directly linked to what I learned at Florida Tech. In my current job with the COVID-19 Vaccine and Therapeutics Operation, I've been able to contribute a unique skill set in acquisition and contracting management that only about five of us on the team have.

Rawlings:

Yes. My master's degree in logistics management has played an instrumental role in all the work I've accomplished while at McKesson and for this endeavor. More specifically, the COVID-19 vaccine program is a significant logistics challenge utilizing the resources of both industry and multiple branches of the government. The courses from Florida Tech prepared me to analyze, adapt and partner to find the best solutions possible. Additionally, I've also relied on the [vaccine] program, which allowed me to coordinate with military team members. That



The COVID-19 vaccine program is a significant logistics challenge utilizing the resources of both industry and multiple branches of the government.

—Darrell Rawlings '05 M.S., McKesson vice president of pharmaceuticals

experience has helped me today better understand the discipline and approach often shared among those in the U.S. military that are deeply involved in this effort. Ultimately, my time at Florida Tech, coupled with my years of experience at McKesson, have given me the opportunity to bring value to this effort to vaccinate all Americans.

What is it like to work on Operation Warp Speed with fellow Florida Tech alumni?

Mikesh:

It's an absolute honor to serve with Gen. Perna, and I'm fortunate that this is the second time I've worked with him. He inspires the entire team—and not just the military—across all of our government and industry partners. A fully honest and transparent leader, he's a consummate professional who sets the example for all to follow through his word and deed. He listens to everyone's opinions and input, and everyone on the team knows that he has your back. To date, nearly 70 million doses of vaccine and 800,000 courses of treatments have been delivered at the right time, to the right location, in the right

quantities and condition with a 99% success rate. None of this would have been possible if it weren't for his leadership.

Being able to work side-by-side with Darrell Rawlings is a testament and example of why this experience has been so unique. For background, the operation organized, managed and staffed a Vaccine Operations Center with liaisons from multiple industry and government agencies.

Darrell is our McKesson representative in the operation center working and coordinating alongside military, government and industry partners from the beginning. He's been our central contact for McKesson, the heart of our distribution network and always an exceptional professional who gets the job done. It says a lot about industry that they're willing to 'deploy' one of their own with the military and government for the better part of a year, working the long hours, seven days a week, to support this mission on behalf of the American people. I think it's pretty incredible to have three Panthers working on this herculean mission ... one that I will never forget.

Read the full Q&A at news.fit.edu/alumni/moving-at-warp-speed.

Alumni Spotlight

BASEBALL PLAYER WENT BACK TO SCHOOL PER PROMISE TO MOTHER

Ubaldo Jimenez '21

Ubaldo Jimenez '21, a professional baseball player from the Dominican Republic signed by the Colorado Rockies fresh out of high school in 2006, was featured in a May issue of the *New York Times* for making good on a promise he had made to his mother before going pro: to one day, graduate from college.

After a successful 12 seasons in the major league, including a no-hitter and a World Series appearance, Ubaldo graduated from the Bisk College of Business with a bachelor's degree in business administration/management in a virtual commencement ceremony May 1.

Ubaldo's parents always emphasized education, not allowing him to sign a

professional baseball contract until he finished high school, requiring he skip training to take the national tests for high school seniors and sending him—by bus an hour away—to English lessons every Saturday after baseball practice for two years.

While he may not have enjoyed it at the time, today, a 37-year-old husband, father of three daughters and college graduate with aspirations of one day opening or running a business, he appreciates it.

"When you get older, you thank your parents," he said in the article. "In the Dominican, you live and breathe baseball. But not everything is baseball. There's a life before and after."



Ubaldo Jimenez '21
Photo by Keith Allison

Expert Perspectives

BOB KEIMER, DBA

Space Coast Daily featured Florida Tech's project management MBA program and program chair Bob Keimer, DBA, in its Aug. 16, 2021, issue.

"It's a very hot field, because of how much business has grown globally and become more complex," Dr. Keimer said in the article.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

In an April 2021 article, *Space Coast Daily* featured Florida Tech's international business and study abroad programs. It highlighted the global management and finance program, the international business MBA program, the Bisk College of Business' Spain and Austria study abroad trips and the X-Culture project.

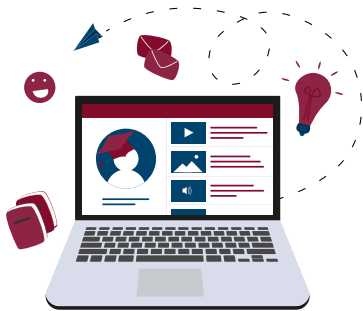
DENISE SIEGFELDT, PH.D.

Associate professor Denise Siegfeldt, Ph.D., business director of Florida Tech's Hampton Roads Education Center, served as co-editor of the *Global Journal of Entrepreneurship* 2021 special issue, "Building Business Resilience and Sustainability, 5 (Special Issue No. 1)."



A+ Accolades

Florida Tech was included in *Fortune* magazine's first-ever ranking of the nation's top online MBA programs. The magazine invited more than 200 online MBA programs to participate, with programs ranked using four components: program score, Fortune 1000 score, brand score and prestige score. Florida Tech, ranked No. 95, was one of just four Florida schools on the list.



SHRM Awards Florida Tech Student Chapter

In July, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) awarded a 2020–2021 Outstanding Student Chapter designation to Florida Tech's chapter for the superior growth and development opportunities it provides to its student members.

The award program, which recognizes chapters based on their operations, programming, professional development opportunities and support of the human resources profession, is designed to encourage more effective student chapters and to distinguish outstanding activities and projects.

“The members of our SHRM student chapters represent the next generation of HR leaders, and it's critical to highlight the instrumental role they play in SHRM's success,” says Johnny C. Taylor Jr., SHRM president and CEO. “The hard work of the Florida Tech SHRM student chapter shows the future of the profession is, indeed, in good hands. I applaud their accomplishments and ability to foster innovative programming, development and interest in HR as we navigate changing workplaces.”

Making an IMPACT

Appreciating the value of lessons learned the hard way is only possible if we give ourselves time to reflect and learn from them. That is why weVENTURE Women's Business Center hosted its annual leadership development conference, the IMPACT Summit, Aug. 27 through Sept. 2, with the overarching theme, “No Pressure, No Diamonds.”

“From the depths of the dark Earth, intense pressure is part of the process to create a gem so precious it radiates light and color in ways even the sun didn't know was possible,” says Kathryn Rudloff, weVENTURE executive director.

The event creates space for female entrepreneurs and professional women across all industries to come together and reflect on the lessons learned from the last year, discuss opportunities for personal, professional and societal growth, and identify the valuable changes that have taken place.

This year, speakers included Angie Sullivan, small business owner at Stumpy's Hatchet House in Cocoa, Florida; Stephanie Lopez, Ph.D., an organizational psychologist and executive coach at Gallaher Edge; and Lauren Hodges, Ed.D., co-founder of Performance on Purposes LLC, and founder of Total Body Training LLC, two performance-coaching companies focused on advancing leadership.

“I have seen countless small business owners over the last year be truly transformed. Their sheer will to carry on, pivot, adapt, respond to the myriad of changes has been so inspiring,” Rudloff says. “And now, as economic recovery is underway here, in Florida, entrepreneurs are emerging from the continuous pressure of the last year to find themselves hardened and more valuable than ever before.”

FEDERAL FUNDING

As the resurgent COVID-19 pandemic rattles the economy once again, Florida Tech's weVENTURE Women's Business Center has received two doses of federal funding that will help it assist more small businesses in their time of need:

Women's Business Centers Resiliency and Recovery Demonstration Grant; U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Women's Business Ownership; \$171,000

Community Development Block Grant; Department of Housing and Urban Development; \$170,000



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SAVING OUR HOME PLANET

Patagonia CEO Ryan Gellert '96 MBA, J.D., Strives to Ignite Positive Change in the World

As CEO of Patagonia Works—the holding company composed of apparel company Patagonia Inc., food company Patagonia Provisions and multimedia company Patagonia Media—Ryan Gellert '96 MBA, J.D., is quietly and effectively igniting positive change in the world. While these industries may seem varied, Gellert thinks of them as tools to deliver against Patagonia's mission statement.

Through the example of Patagonia Provisions, he explains, "We didn't get in the food business because we saw a commercial opportunity in food; we got into the food business because we believe really seriously that the most broken supply chain in the world is the one for food."

Gellert sees past the problem to the opportunity: If his company can solve—or at least improve—this supply chain issue, it would be a solution to the climate/ecological crisis through regenerative organic agricultural practices. And finding a solution to that crisis is Patagonia's primary mission: "save our home planet."

"We're super invested in making great clothing for a purpose and with as small a footprint as we can, but the reality is we're less of a clothing company than we are a big idea just masquerading as a clothing company," Gellert says. "We're just trying to push forward the big idea. Food fits into that,

“ This combination of being very mission-led but doing it from the boughs of business is a sweet spot for me personally.”

Ryan Gellert '96 MBA, J.D.

media fits into that, and whatever comes next will have to fit into that.”

An unapologetic love for business lured Gellert to where he is today.

"I love that business comes with a scorecard. The capitalist system doesn't care if you live or die, so you have to show up every day proving your place in the world. If you don't, if you slip, you cease to exist. This combination of being very mission-led but doing it from the boughs of business is a sweet spot for me personally."

It's no surprise, then, that Gellert spent his Florida Tech days earning an MBA. His fellow MBA students' professionalism inspired him with how they balanced their pursuit of an advanced degree with other obligations.

"It really focused me on taking it seriously and learning as much as I could."



Ryan Gellert '96 MBA, J.D.
Photo: Liz Seabrook, Patagonia Images