

The Bottom Line

News from the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business

Spring 2022

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Message From Dean Theodore Richardson

Welcome to *The Bottom Line* spring 2022 Bisk College of Business newsletter, featuring highlighted achievements of our faculty, staff and students. Although COVID-19 persists in our daily lives, our faculty, staff and administration have led another successful semester of in-person learning thanks to continued adherence to pandemic response precautionary measures.



Our success is demonstrated through our alumni, who continue to support the college as they embark on successful careers, and our students, who demonstrate their excellence through high rankings in college competitions.

I am proud of our successful students and alumni and their support, which enables the Bisk College of Business to enjoy a great reputation in the community. Please enjoy our latest newsletter, and thank you for your support.

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

Panthers on the Rise

MARK CARTWRIGHT

Mark Cartwright, a member of the NCAA National Championship team in 1991, was named the first sporting director of the United Soccer League (USL) following seven years as a sporting director in the English Premier League. He oversees club structures and processes, player development, coaching and club executive training and education across the USL's professional leagues. "If I hadn't left England and traveled to Florida Tech all those years ago, I genuinely wouldn't be in the position I am now," Mark says. "The personal and intellectual growth I achieved at Florida Tech developed me into the person I am today and gave me the drive to succeed."



JEAN-CLAUDE NASR '93 MBA

Jean-Claude Nasr '93 MBA was appointed vice president of growth for Averda, a leading waste management and recycling company operating in India, the Middle East and Africa.



JOSHUA DANDEL '97, '12 MBA

Joshua Dandel '97, '12 MBA, was promoted to director of network operations with Southwest Airlines. Previously, Joshua worked for ATA Airlines Inc. for 10 years and later, Airtran Airways. He initially joined Southwest as a dispatcher, then he became chief of network before this recent promotion.

GEORGE KENNETT '01 M.S.

George Kennett '01 M.S. recently became the 41st inductee into the Commander Naval Installations Command U.S. Navy Fire & Emergency Services Hall of Fame. George started as a firefighter in 1978 and worked his way to fire chief. He retired in 2008 after a 30-year career and is in his 50th year with the volunteer fire and emergency medical services in St. Mary's County, Maryland. George is also in his 15th year as a long-term substitute teacher for St. Mary's County Public Schools.



During his career, he earned several awards, including a Meritorious Civilian Service Medal and performance awards, and he is an Internationally Accredited Fire Officer and Southern Maryland Volunteer Firemen's Association Hall of Fame Inductee. George earned a master's degree in management from Florida Tech.

LEEANNA LAPORTE '15, '18 M.A.

Leeanna Laporte '15, '18 M.A., was promoted to customer operations supervisor at Cardinal Health. She feels her career path has unlimited potential after earning her master's degree in organizational leadership at Florida Tech. "Florida Tech teaches a relevant curriculum that applies to today's professionals. My career path has unlimited potential now that I've earned an M.A. in organizational leadership!"



SCOTT THERIOT '17 M.S.

Scott Theriot '17 M.S. was named general manager of supply chain services for Danos. He credits his Florida Tech degree program for enabling the advancement.



"My experience at Florida Tech was very seamless. The online program allowed me to continue building on my career and apply some of the learnings real time. This enabled me to continue to grow within our organization here, at Danos."

TORI LANE '18 MBA

Tori Lane '18 MBA was recently promoted to associate director of career education for Tulane University - A.B. Freeman School of Business. Tori credits the Florida Tech MBA program with providing strategies to adapt facilitation approaches in her current role during the COVID-19 pandemic. "My MBA program at Florida Tech allowed me a unique opportunity to apply existing business knowledge in an environment that advanced my understanding. The revolutionary approach to online learning also provided me with a toolbox full of strategies to adapt facilitation approaches in my current role during the COVID-19 pandemic."



NICHOLAS DRISCOLL '20

Nicholas Driscoll '20 served in the U.S. Navy for six years before enrolling at Florida Tech and earning his bachelor's degree in accounting. As an undergraduate, he interned at Berman Hopkins CPAs and Associates LLP and passed the Certified Internal Auditor exams. When he graduated in December 2020, he started interning at Ernst & Young, where he has now accepted a full-time position starting in September 2022. In the meantime, he is a full-time student in Florida Tech's master's in accounting and financial forensics program and is studying for his remaining CPA exams—two down, two to go!

"Florida Tech has pushed me mentally into the field of accounting and has set a great knowledge foundation for me to build my career on."



KAYLA HART '20, '21 M.S.

Kayla Hart '20, '21 M.S., has not always seen herself working in tax or even becoming a CPA. But since studying at Florida Tech and beginning work at Richard B. Leffew CPA in Vero Beach, Florida, she has grown to love the seasonal nature of the field and the relationships she is building along the way.

"I'm finding that most fields within accounting are client-facing, and you need to have strong soft skills along with technical skills, which can be challenging to balance," Kayla says. "Looking back, the professors at Florida Tech have helped develop me into the professional I am today."

Now, her next big professional goal is to pass the four parts of the CPA exam, which she hopes to complete by the end of 2022.



Expert Perspectives

JONATHAN REED '20 DBA

"Operational and strategic change during temporary turbulence: evidence from the COVID-19 pandemic"

Operations Management Research: Advancing Practice through Theory

"Lessons from the business impact and response to COVID-19 study published"

Brevard Business News

MARSHALL JONES '19 DBA, '20 M.S.

Law Enforcement Leadership, Management & Supervision 1st Edition

PROFESSOR ANDREW CUDMORE, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN SONNENBERG

"Contextualized Information Adaptation for Marketing with Augmented Reality Displays"

Industry Engineering & Management Systems Conference

Doctor of Business Administration Program Update

THREE STUDENTS GRADUATED FROM THE DBA PROGRAM IN THE FALL 2021 SEMESTER:

William Kelley '21 DBA, "Sales Application Engineer Turnover Intentions: An Exploration of Education, Age and Job Tenure Through the Met-Expectations Perspective"

Jameen Hilliard '21 DBA, "The Impact of a Transformational Leader on Employees Displaying Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Two Medium-Sized Customer Support Organizations"

Kerry Prowell '21 DBA, "Organizational Effectiveness in Women-Owned Small Businesses Within the Defense Sector of Northern Alabama: A Case Study Approach"

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Chandra Talerico, current DBA student, on presenting her accepted manuscript, prepared with professor Abram Walton, at the Academy of Human Resource Development International Research Conference in the Americas.

Stephen Dansky, current DBA student, on presenting his paper, "The U.S. Economy: Present and Future—Some Key Technology Issues to Ponder," at Indian River State College's Center for Applied Economics Community Series Global Economics Panel, "The U.S. Economy: Present and Future."

SECURING FOOD THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

By Ryan Randall



There is an urgent need to develop sustainable agricultural practices and ensure food security at a much higher level than has ever been attempted—or required.

According to a study conducted by Bisk College of Business associate professor Darrell Burrell and others, this leap might only be possible with the rapid development and application of cutting-edge technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI).

Burrell, along with colleagues from Grand Canyon University, Temple University and Illinois Institute of Technology, published “Exploring technological management innovations that include artificial intelligence and other innovations in global food production,” in the *International Journal of Society Systems Science* in 2020. The research offered new data on technological innovations that may help overcome agricultural concerns for meeting a process improvement initiative.

The study analyzed technologies being used to increase food production and included insights from those in the industry. The research found there were several AI-related systems that are used in farming, ranging from drones surveying the crops to solar panels and sunset-triggered irrigation to motion-sensor technology that serves as a digital scarecrow by scaring birds away from crops with a simulated human yell. The paper even looked at robots picking crops.

“The things that I’ve seen in my research are the ability to capitalize on technologies that were maybe intended for one purpose but are now being used for another,” Burrell says. “The ability to use drones to survey your farm actually makes things more efficient. Instead of me having maybe five people inspecting my farm, I could sit in my farmhouse and use this drone to inspect and review what is going on.”

According to the paper, by the year 2050, the world’s population is expected to reach 9.8 billion, and it will hit 11.2 billion in 2100. This upward movement is the most significant hurdle to sustainable agriculture and food security.

Today, about 1 billion people are chronically hungry, and this crisis is a result of inefficient food production and distribution systems and undeveloped agricultural land that is leaving room to grow food for the additional 2 billion to 3 billion people globally expected by 2050.

While the technology has proven beneficial for farmers, there are some challenges in the process. While the tech studied was shown



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—Darrell Burrell, Bisk College of Business associate professor

to be effective, it was used primarily on large commercial farms, where it was generally embraced.

However, the technology elicited some hesitancy from small farming operations, local farmers told Burrell. More comfortable with manual tasks, they were less willing to trust the technology to do the same work.

Burrell would like to see government organizations that support farming provide more funding to allow farmers to utilize existing technology and increase the exposure of what technology can do by presenting it at agricultural conventions and farmers markets.

Another aspect of the work relates to potential security threats. Burrell cited an example in which the irrigation system that is set to turn on when the sun goes down fails to do so because it was hacked, leading to crop loss. Burrell and his colleagues will look at the cybersecurity elements of this technology and its applications next.

“There’s a lot of things that, when we go into the grocery store, we take for granted about our food systems and food security, and I think people really need to understand how important farms are in this country, how this country is built on this whole aspect of farming,” Burrell says.

“ The ability to use drones to survey your farm actually makes things more efficient. Instead of me having maybe five people inspecting my farm, I could sit in my farmhouse and use this drone to inspect and review what is going on. ”

—Darrell Burrell, Bisk College of Business associate professor



Katie Erdman

Student Spotlight

Katie Erdman

Katie Erdmann, a redshirt sophomore volleyball player majoring in business administration with a focus in healthcare management and a minor in sustainability studies, is in her first year at Florida Tech.

“I always knew that I wanted to do something in the health field, and I really appreciate the business side of things,” Erdman says. “My father runs a business, so it’s something I kind of grew up with. Having that ability to tie health care and business is something that I really looked into and enjoyed.”

She is interested in pursuing a career in risk management, dealing with the liabilities and other aspects on the business side of a hospital. She chose to minor in sustainability to round out her business degree with knowledge about important topics, like carbon footprints and greenhouse gases, that are relevant to every industry.

“Introducing—even if it’s just a little bit—of myself to that environmental science field is really going to help my degree be a little bit more versatile,” she says.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted weaknesses in the health care system and has enhanced her desire to make a positive impact on the industry, Erdman says. She hopes that her experience as a scholar-athlete will also help prepare her for her future career, no matter the state of the industry.

“Just like every other athlete, so many things are going to translate into the real world, whether it’s leadership qualities, interpersonal skills or just that drive and that hard work,” she says.

Happenings

WEVENTURE WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER RECEIVES FEDERAL FUNDS TO EXPAND OUTREACH

As the resurgent COVID-19 pandemic continues to rattle the economy, weVENTURE Women's Business Center has received federal funding that will help it assist more small businesses in their time of need.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced in late August 2021 that weVENTURE was one of 14 women's business centers nationwide to receive grants as part of the Women's Business Centers Resiliency and Recovery Demonstration Grant under the SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership (OWBO).

weVENTURE was awarded a \$171,000 grant.

"During the pandemic, our Women's Business Centers have played an integral role in meeting the needs of women entrepreneurs during an especially challenging time. As resource providers, they, too, have been impacted by the changing business landscape and have had to pivot to meet community needs," says Natalie Madeira Cofield, SBA OWBO assistant administrator. "With this funding, we will support WBCs that have established innovative programming to increase outreach to aspiring and active women entrepreneurs nationwide."

The funding will allow weVENTURE to expand its capacity to offer free counseling and other services to entrepreneurs and small-business owners, including the hiring of additional business coaches, increased outreach and support and coaching services in Spanish.

"We are honored to be a valued community resource at the time the community needs it," says Kathryn Rudloff, weVENTURE WBC executive director. "[This grant] will allow us to further assist the small-business community as it responds to and recovers from the pandemic."

WOMEN WHO ROCK

weVENTURE Women's Business Center hosted the 2022 Women Who Rock Awards Ceremony March 22 in honor of Women's History Month.

This year's national Women's History Month theme, "Providing Healing, Promoting Hope," is both a tribute to the ceaseless work of caregivers and frontline workers during the ongoing pandemic and a recognition of the many ways



women are stepping up during this challenging time. In keeping with this theme, each of the six Women Who Rock award categories incorporated this message of healing and hope, as participants and attendees celebrated deserving local female leaders and businesses.

2022 WOMEN WHO ROCK AWARD RECIPIENTS

Excellence in Mentorship

Tammy Robinson
Neighbor Up Brevard

Female Small Business Owner of the Year

Carlisa Amoo-Mensah
4 Your Love Home Care Agency

Women in the Workplace Champion

Stefanie Catania
Catania Product Development

Dr. Mary Helen McCay STEM Award

Carol Craig
Craig Technologies and Sidus Space

Zonta Yellow Rose for Excellence in Community Service

Beverly DeMeyer
Serene Harbor Inc.

St. Francis Reflections Award for Excellence in Caregiving

Dr. Tamara Pawich
Cocoa Beach Child Psychology

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

During Florida Tech's 2021 Annual Day of Giving event Nov. 9, the Bisk College of Business Advisory Board challenged alumni to make 50 donations of any size to the college. If the challenge was met, the advisory board pledged to donate \$30,000 to the college, as well. Alumni stepped up, and the goal was accomplished in no time! In total, 88 donors raised \$15,098 for the College of Business during the event.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Associate professor Denise Siegfeldt received the JoAnn C. Carland Distinguished Service Award at the Institute for Global Business Research fall 2021 conference. Carland was a scholar, researcher and educator in entrepreneurship. She founded an organization encouraging research with a collegial atmosphere and supportive culture, much like the IGBR, which presents the award to “individuals who have provided unwavering support and dedication to the IGBR mission.”



STUDENTS PLACE IN TOP 10 IN IACBE-CAPSOURCE COMPETITION

Three Florida Tech teams placed in the top 10 in the International Accreditation Council for Business Education (IACBE)-CapSource 2021 Fall Student Case Competition.

The three teams were made up of four MBA and six undergraduate students.

- **4th place**—Creation and Innovation Team 3: Alyson Shelton, Aidan Moga and Jaxson Francisco
- **5th place**—MBA Team: Cole Solomon, Natalie Odisho, Daniel Garcia Martin and Julien Remiti
- **8th place**—Undergrad Team 2 Future Business Leaders: William Branca, Veronica Hayward-Mildish and James Robbins

During the competition, students were challenged to bring GENUINO—an Italian startup powered by blockchain technology that connects nonfungible tokens (NFTs) with real-world objects—to the U.S. market.

Teams produced two required deliverables: a five-page executive memo that positions GENUINO as a high-end marketplace in the U.S. NFT sport collectable space and a three-minute video pitch introducing team members and summarizing their creative go-to-market strategy for GENUINO. There were several suggested deliverables beyond the requirements, as well.

With 24 participating teams composed of over 120 students representing 19 universities, teams that placed in the top 10 really took the time to understand the information, submit all the suggested deliverables and provide actionable suggestions, says Jordan

Levy, founder and executive director of CapSource, in the Competition Final Results Webinar.

CapSource, together with IACBE, creates competitions for students to work with real-world companies and produce materials and plans that companies can actually use, says Tim Muth, Bisk College of Business instructor.

“One of the things I was super excited about was that I didn’t know anything about NFTs before this. So, it was very educational for me, and I’m actually signed up for a blockchain class next semester because of it,” Cole says in the webinar.

The three Florida Tech teams won a GENUINO Classic Pack, including five NFTs and a chance to win game-worn items, and because of their outstanding performance, they now have the opportunity to travel to Costa Mesa, California, for the Spring 2022 IACBE Live Case Competition.

“I’m super excited to be able to be a part of this process for GENUINO and for CapSource. I’m also looking for future projects like this through CapSource and for several clubs we have on campus,” Cole says. “It was just a very educational and interactive study for us, and we would love to keep doing it.”

SHANE CHARLES

In September, Shane Charles, who is an accounting senior enrolled in the accelerated master’s in accounting and financial forensics program, was awarded a \$2,500 scholarship from the Florida Institute of CPAs (FICPA)

Scholarship Foundation, which aims to help Florida accounting students reach their educational goals and propel the CPA profession forward.





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Alumni Spotlight

ALUMNA AUTHORS COMPILATION OF INSPIRATIONAL STORIES FROM 9/11

Payton Lynch '20 MBA

Payton Lynch '20 MBA, inspired by her husband who lost his father on 9/11, recently wrote and published *Rise from the Ashes: Stories of Trauma, Resilience and Growth from the Children of 9/11*. The book looks back on 9/11 from the unique perspectives of people affected by the tragedy, sharing how they picked up the pieces and moved forward.

“In hearing their stories, my hope is we discover what it means to bounce forward after tragedy and recognize our past doesn't define us, but it definitely shapes us,” Payton says.

Early media coverage on the book concurs.

“In her book, *Rise from the Ashes*, Payton Lynch, discovers the thread of resilience that is woven through the stories of 9/11 surviving children,” says Lorilee Binstock, founder of Binstock Media Group, host of “A Trauma Survivor Thriver's Podcast” and editor-in-chief at *Authentic Insider* magazine. “Through their heartbreaking and emotional stories, along with Lynch's personal struggles, we are left with an

“ In hearing their stories, my hope is we discover what it means to bounce forward after tragedy and recognize our past doesn't define us, but it definitely shapes us. ”

—Payton Lynch '20 MBA

inspirational piece of work that give us all the tools to thrive after adversity.”

Payton credits Disney's storytelling for teaching her to engage audiences, which she now does professionally through guest engagement as a senior product manager at The Walt Disney Co.

She says her Florida Tech education has helped propel her forward professionally.

“My time at Florida Institute of Technology opened doors for me



Payton Lynch '20 MBA

in my career and beyond. The skills I learned during my MBA helped me to become a strategic leader within my organization as well as prepared me to write my first book.”