

M MITCHELL MAGAZINE

USA MITCHELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS | FALL 2021



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Another fall,
another turned
page...

WALLACE STEGNER

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Dr. Charlene Dadzie is tipping
the scales of social justice
to serve others.

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USA UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
MITCHELL COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS

From the Dean

DR. ALVIN WILLIAMS



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STAY CONNECTED, FOLLOW
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 University of South Alabama
Mitchell College of Business

POINT OF TRANSFORMATION

This issue of the *Mitchell Magazine* covers a range of themes – Mitchell Scholars, alumni, internships, new programs, Ph.D. students, MCOB Centers, block chain, etc. Collectively, these themes led me to visualizing the Mitchell College of Business as a ‘point of transformation.’ We attract students, faculty, staff, friends and resources from around the world. They study, learn, research, and engage using the MCOB as a ‘point of transformation’ that creates and delivers value. We transform inputs — people, programs, processes — into outputs that contribute benefit and significance to the broader society and economic system.

**WE TRANSFORM INPUTS —
PEOPLE, PROGRAMS,
PROCESSES — INTO OUTPUTS
THAT CONTRIBUTE BENEFIT
AND SIGNIFICANCE TO THE
BROADER SOCIETY AND
ECONOMIC SYSTEM.
DAILY WE MUST ASK THE
QUESTION WHETHER WE
ARE DOING OUR BEST TO
TRANSFORM THE RESOURCES
IN THE BEST POSSIBLE
FASHION.**

Daily we must ask the question whether we are doing our best to transform the resources in the best possible fashion. Are we good stewards of the resources entrusted to us? Our clarion call is to work tirelessly to ensure that we create and maintain the most capable, relevant, ethical, and socially-responsible transformation model possible.

The students, alumni, faculty, staff and friends featured in this issue represent prime examples of the MCOB ‘transformation model.’ As we fine-tune our model based on market input, we invite all of you to share your vision of the MCOB and our path forward. Thanks to all of you for expending the extra effort to make us a better place to learn, work, and create.

MITCHELL SCHOLARS

Business is Booming

**ABRAHAM MITCHELL DOUBLES
SCHOLARSHIP INVESTMENT**





MACY ADAMS

C.C. ANNULIS

LUIS DEL POZO

KIERA EARLS



GARRETT EPPS

JAY GREENE

STEPHANIE HUYNH

MACY ADAMS

MAJOR: Accounting

UNIQUE FACT: Macy is a huge Taylor Swift fan and says she would spend her life savings to see her perform.

Coming from a small town, Macy Adams initially wanted to move far away for college. However, after touring the South Alabama campus, she knew that South was the perfect fit. “When I found out I had been chosen as a Mitchell Scholar, it felt like everything fell into place,” she said. “The scholarship meant that I could attend South without worrying about finances, and the additional opportunities the Mitchell Scholars program offered meant that I would get the best possible education.” The valedictorian of the Edgewood Academy in Elmore, Alabama, was highly engaged in her high school’s organizations. However, Adams’s involvement in academic clubs and sports was not enough, she was also class president, was dually enrolled at Troy University and worked at a local accounting firm. After her graduation from South, Adams plans to get her Masters in Accounting and sit for the CPA exam. She aspires to work as an accountant in the music industry and travel the world.

C.C. ANNULIS

MAJOR: Marketing and Real Estate

UNIQUE FACT: C.C.’s full name is Cambre Catherine; she was named after her two grandmothers.

The University of South Alabama’s values, community impact and the business program’s excellent reputation are only a few reasons C.C. Annulis decided to call South her new home. “When touring the College of Business and meeting faculty, I felt welcomed and at home,” she said. “Their encouragement during this first meeting shows that support and mentoring are an integral part of the culture at South.” She decided this kind of environment would be the perfect fit for her to grow and continue her education. Annulis has a passion for helping others. During her senior year, she earned over 100 hours of community service. The marketing and real estate major hopes to open her own real estate firm, as well as a non-profit organization where she can help young girls achieve their goals.

LUIS DEL POZO

MAJOR: Entrepreneurship

UNIQUE FACT: Luis has skydived from 17,000 feet and will run his first marathon in December.

Originally from Morelos, Mexico, Luis Del Pozo moved to the U.S. during his sophomore year in high school. “Moving to the U.S. has pushed me in

unexpected ways,” he said. “Learning to adapt to the culture and language was essential to continuing my education.” After moving to Mobile, he immediately began looking for colleges. Del Pozo was impressed with the variety of academic and financial resources in the Mitchell College of Business. During high school, Luis participated in tennis and cross country. He also volunteered in the recovery efforts following Hurricanes Sally and Zeta by cutting and removing trees. Following graduation, the entrepreneurship major plans to open up his own coffee distribution business along the Gulf Coast.

KIERA EARLS

MAJOR: Economics

UNIQUE FACT: Kiera has lived in eight states.

For Kiera Earls, the University of South Alabama had everything she needed to be home away from home. It’s the right distance from her hometown, Robertsdale, Alabama, and offered her the opportunity to become a Mitchell Scholar. South provides the right academic and financial balance. Becoming a Mitchell Scholar, provides her with the opportunity to further her education without having to worry about her financial situation, but more than that, “being a Mitchell Scholar provides me with opportunities and connections that

go above and beyond what I imagined.” The graduate from Robertsdale High School was involved in the National Honor Society and cheerleading, all while taking advanced classes, earning 12 dual-enrollment credits, and maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Earls’s vision for the future is clear. The economics major plans on earning a master’s degree and Ph.D., while working as an economic research assistant.

GARRETT EPPS

MAJOR: Business Administration and Marketing

UNIQUE FACT: Garrett plays four instruments; guitar, clarinet, alto saxophone and tenor saxophone.

Garrett Epps not only loves South’s proximity to his grandma’s house, But its wide selection of scholarships, events, amenities and its beautiful campus that motivated him to apply. He was also impressed with South’s welcoming nature, “Out of all the colleges I visited,” “South Alabama was by far the most welcoming and interactive.” During his time at Sparkman High School in Huntsville, AL, Epps was an active member of various honor societies, sports teams and the Sparkman Wind Ensemble. He was also a participant in the prestigious Sparkman Medical Academy, and once built his own computer. Epps graduated early from high school with honors and an overall GPA of 4.6. Now at South, the marketing

and business administration major hopes to find a good job in the marketing and advertising industry, before eventually starting his own company.

JAY GREENE

MAJOR: Finance

UNIQUE FACT: Jay can drive a stick shift.

Jay Greene, a Birmingham native, was immediately fascinated by the culture and environment of Mobile. “The beautiful landscape of coastal Alabama, the smiling faces of pedestrians, the pleasant faculty — all these things and more contributed to my fascination with what South seems to be all about – community,” he said. Greene graduated from Briarwood Christian School with honors, while also being a member of multiple honor societies and organizations. He participated in varsity cross country, track and field and led the drum line as a co-captain in the marching band. Outside of school, Greene was classically trained on the piano and achieved the highest rating in the National Federation of Music Clubs Solo Festival for 12 consecutive years. In the future, the finance major hopes to attend law school to earn his Juris Doctorate to eventually become a financial or estate lawyer.

STEPHANIE HUYNH

MAJOR: Business Management

UNIQUE FACT: Stephanie’s senior superlative was “Most Likely to Quietly Take Over the World.”

Stephanie Huynh, a Mississippi native and Gautier High School valedictorian, was instantly drawn to South’s location and appearance. However, it was at USA Day when she realized that South was the perfect fit. “The amount of certainty that the ‘We Are’ mantra holds is as encouraging as it is daunting, and it only furthers the sense of community that I felt on campus”. While at Gautier High School, Huynh was heavily involved in all kinds of different activities, like the choir, yearbook staff, cross country team and Key Club. She earned recognition as an All-Mississippi Student Journalist, MEC Star Student, PEO Star Scholar, and DAR Good Citizen. Huynh is now pursuing a degree in Business Management, and hopes to further her education after graduation with a Masters in Business Administration. She aspires to open her own cafe or diner one day.



BAILEY JENKINS

JARED JONES

BRICE KNOTTS

CHARBEL MAWAD

CADE MEYERS

ELLA MIMS

MADDIE MITCHELL

BAILEY JENKINS

MAJOR: Business Management

UNIQUE FACT: Bailey's love for the show *Dance Moms* inspired her to become a competitive dancer during middle and high school where she competed in 10 competitions.

South cares, and so does Bailey Jenkins. The Pensacola native earned 100 community service hours at Tate High School, while working at various part-time jobs and serving at her local church. By graduation, she passed five AP exams, acquired 36 credit hours and graduated with a 5.17 GPA. When touring South, Jenkins was immediately attracted to the welcoming and encouraging atmosphere and quality education. "During my first meeting with some of the faculty and staff at the Mitchell College of Business, I could tell they genuinely wanted to see their students succeed," she said. "I loved that the professors are highly qualified and experienced in their fields, and they are very dedicated to preparing us for our careers and life after graduation." After learning about the unique programs offered at the Mitchell College of Business, her decision to attend South was solidified. After graduation, the business management major hopes to manage a small business firm while giving back to the community through helping students with learning disabilities.

JARED JONES

MAJOR: Economics and Finance

UNIQUE FACT: Jared's favorite quote is: "All of our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them" - Walt Disney.

South accommodates every student's needs. For Jared Jones, they are the proximity to his hometown, Seminole, Alabama, and the compelling nature of Mobile. Jones graduated from Robertsdale High School with a 4.2 GPA and an ACT of 32. During his time at Robertsdale he was a member of the National Honor Society, vice president of Key Club, and a member of varsity sports teams as well as the arts club. Now at South, he is majoring in Economics and Finance with the goal of starting his own business in the future. Eventually, he wants to leave a positive effect on as many families as possible.

BRICE KNOTTS

MAJOR: General Business

UNIQUE FACT: Brice has visited 35 of America's national parks.

Brice Knotts was born and raised in Mobile, Alabama, and was not immediately set on South. After touring the Mitchell College of Business, he learned about its unique programs and opportunities. "The other business schools could not compete with everything that MCOB had to offer," he said, "so it made my decision quite easy." At his high school, St. Luke's Episcopal School, Knotts was part of various organizations and amassed over 100 service hours. He also played varsity soccer and became the Wildcats' all-time leading goal scorer. He now coaches youth soccer and hopes to help kids grow and be successful in the sport. In the future, Knotts hopes to run his own business, such as a car dealership, or a business based around visiting national parks.

CHARBEL MAWAD

MAJOR: Accounting

UNIQUE FACT: Charbel is fluent in three languages.

"I was unsure about USA, because I did not know much about the University or the Mitchell College of Business," said Charbel Mawad, "but that all changed once I took an on-campus tour". He is a native of Mobile who at first wanted to move as far away from home as possible. He realized what opportunities were available at the Mitchell College of Business and changed his mind. At McGill-Toolen Catholic High School, Mawad was involved in various community service organizations, while earning 20 credit hours and a 31 score on the ACT. He was also voted by his classmates onto the homecoming court his freshman year. Now, the Accounting major is planning on graduating from South before going to law school to become a tax lawyer.

CADE MEYERS

MAJOR: Finance

UNIQUE FACT: Cade has exquisite pitch, which allows him to learn any song by ear.

Cade Meyers knew exactly what he wanted his college to look like. "I decided that I wanted college to give me the tools to succeed in my career goals, while allowing me to form lifelong friendships and connections with those around

me," he said. "I believe that South has a unique and fantastic business program that sees my potential and invests in me. I do not intend to let this investment go to waste." Before attending South, he won four running state championships in high school, while maintaining a 4.0 GPA and scoring a 35 on his ACT. Meyers is also an Eagle Scout and loves stock trading. The finance major is interested in becoming a stockbroker. Before he graduates from South, Meyers hopes to start and maintain a successful business.

ELLA MIMS

MAJOR: Marketing or Management

UNIQUE FACT: Ella is the lead singer of a local band, *The Azaleas*.

Staying close to home for college was the best decision for Ella Mims. After graduating from Baker High School, the Mobile native saw South from a new perspective. "I have a huge support system down here," she said, "with friends and family who have already helped me a lot in adjusting to being in a new environment." Staying close to home also gives her the opportunity to pursue her music career. Receiving the Mitchell Scholarship was the final factor in her decision to attend South. During her time at Baker High School, Mims was involved in various choirs, as well as student organizations. She also volunteered for the Delta Dogs, a local non-profit organization that provides care for pet

owners in need. In her spare time, Mims writes songs and performs at local venues. After graduating from South, she hopes to pursue a management or marketing career in the music industry.

MADDIE MITCHELL

MAJOR: Finance

UNIQUE FACT: Maddie served as the 2020-2021 Alabama FCCLA State Vice President of STAR Events.

Maddie Mitchell discovered South through a Family, Career and Community Leaders of America project at Cold Springs High School, north of Birmingham. She became more and more interested in what the University has to offer. In the end, it was the amount of support and assistance, as well as the opportunity to become a Mitchell Scholar, that convinced her to attend South. "The opportunities the Mitchell College of Business had to offer and the Mitchell Scholarship," she said, "were the key factors that contributed to my decision to attend South." Now majoring in finance, Mitchell hopes to become a Certified Financial Planner and work as a financial advisor. At Cold Springs, Maddie Mitchell represented her school and community at several conferences, including the Electric Cooperative Montgomery Youth Tour and the National Leadership Conference for FCCLA. She was also a member of various honor societies and served as the FCCLA State Vice President.





CAROLINE SCHAFER



LIZ ULRICH



CHARLIE WINE

CAROLINE SCHAFER

MAJOR: Accounting

UNIQUE FACT: Caroline's family has had four yellow labs, all of them named Bo.

"Like a family away from home," that is how Caroline Schafer describes South. After touring South for the first time, she was so delighted with the beauty of the campus, the close proximity to the beach and South's faculty, she decided to transfer from the University of Southern Mississippi. "I felt so welcomed and could see all that the college had to offer," she said. "It was clear to me that the professors would support and coach me." During her time in high school, at Our Lady Academy in Bay St. Louis, she was a member of various honor societies, while achieving a GPA of 4.24 and an ACT score of 31. Schafer is now an accounting major, working towards becoming a Certified Public Accountant. After graduation, she wants to earn a Masters in Accounting and work as a forensic accountant for the FBI.

LIZ ULRICH

MAJOR: International Business

UNIQUE FACT: I have been to 37 states and nine countries

Coming all the way from Rockford, Illinois, Liz Ulrich was impressed by South's welcoming nature. Even though she always wanted to travel south for college, Mitchell College's staff and business program set it apart from other universities. "I knew I could be extremely successful with all the opportunities South presents to its students," she said. At Rockford Lutheran High School, Ulrich participated in sports teams and various social organizations. Outside of school, she spent her free time volunteering at the Rockford Food Pantry and Noah's Ark animal shelter. She also took dual enrollment classes at Concordia University, Chicago, and worked at a local insurance agency. Ulrich is now an international business major with plans to work as a management analyst for a large international business and travel the world.

CHARLIE WINE

MAJOR: General Business

UNIQUE FACT: Charlie is an Eagle Scout.

After touring South, Charlie Wine's mind was made up. "Knowing that I would not be just another student, like all the other universities I visited, was refreshing," he said. Wine accepted the invitation to become a Mitchell Scholar, which he sees as an honor. At Tate High School in Pensacola, Wine made his presence known in and out of the classroom. He played the trumpet in the band for eight years, while maintaining a 4.4 GPA. Outside of school, he spent 12 years with the Boy Scouts of America, earning the title of Eagle Scout. At South, he plans to continue his musical career as part of the Jaguar Marching Band.

IN ADDITION TO FINANCIAL AWARDS, EACH MITCHELL SCHOLAR RECEIVES A LAPTOP COMPUTER, THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF ABE MITCHELL.



EVERY
DECISION
HAS AN
IMPACT.



REACH YOUR DESTINATION. **GO SOUTH.**

At first glance, numbers seem straightforward. But early in his accounting studies, Andrew learned that they have a lot more to say. His career path requires digging deeper to find meaning and relationships that inform accurate and effective business decisions. **Andrew's choice to attend South meant he didn't have to go far from home to learn from leaders in companies from around the world and discover all the places his degree can take him.**

SouthAlabama.edu

USA UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH ALABAMA

Suit-able Majors

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT
IN BUSINESS

ACCOUNTING

Accounting is the language of business. Students explore branches of the discipline, including tax, audit and analytics, on the way to such careers as financial analyst, controller, tax manager and auditor. Many graduates pursue certification as a CPA, CFE, CMA or CIA.

"I decided to major in accounting because it teaches you how to record and understand history in fiscal terms, objectively measure an entity's performance, and the practice greatly enhances your analytical skills. Accounting is a necessary skill set if you want to fully understand the known mechanics of the financial world."

-CHRISTOPHER MERCER

ECONOMICS

The economics program prepares students for professional careers in managerial positions, government, administration, education and others. Positions in business economics and graduate study require knowledge of economics and the application of economic tools to analyze problems for decision-making.

"One thing I am particularly thankful for as an economics major is the knowledgeable and caring professors within the Mitchell College of Business. Dr. Urvashi Jain, is one such professor, who is particularly invested in her students even outside of the classroom. I am lucky enough to be working with her to reestablish the Economics Club, and her motivation to help her students is definitely contagious. Another notable professor within my major is

Dr. Chris Lawrey. Through the Jaguar Investment Fund, I have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Lawrey in a setting different from most classrooms: the John B. Saint Financial Analysis Center. After having him as a professor for Investments, I felt inspired to apply for the JIF as an economist. Dr. Lawrey is a great example of an approachable professor who encourages students to work to the best of their abilities while providing the guidance and assistance to do so."

-IAN MONTES DE OCA

FINANCE

The finance program is designed to provide an understanding of the various areas and principles of finance. Students will develop a body of specialized knowledge and analytical techniques that are used in the acquisition, allocation and management of financial resources.

"Being vice president of the Financial Management Association has given me countless networking and internship opportunities. Through these opportunities I was able to obtain an internship at Airbus. My finance classes within MCOB have prepared me immensely for all that I encounter in my internship. For example FIN 410, Intermediate Business Finance, provided me with a lot of knowledge of the math side of finance, such as market securities and capital budgeting, that has proven invaluable working for a major corporation like Airbus."

-JORDIN D'AVERSA WILLIAMS

HR

Managers have become aware of the significant impact on the bottom line of effective utilization of the human resources in an organization. As a result, the human resource manager has become a key person on the top management team. Human resource management provides students with the skills and knowledge to become a proficient practitioner in this leading organizational field.

"My two favorite classes at MCOB are Employment Law and Organizational Staffing. Knowledge of law and its importance in the workplace is an absolute necessity for a career in HR. Employment Law allowed me to learn and truly retain how to handle legal issues that may arise in the workplace as an HR professional. Especially in today's society, workplace equality and knowing how to protect your employees from discrimination is crucial going into a career in HR. Organizational Staffing embodies HR practices and shows how to properly staff an organization from recruitment to managing turnover. I have been able to bring skills I learned from Staffing into my internship and it has truly supplemented my HR work experience. Recruitment is one of my favorite areas of HR, so learning all of the best strategies and practices for optimal success has been incredibly rewarding."

-JENSEN GRADDICK

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

International business majors learn global cultural differences and business etiquette. The curriculum requires proficiency in a foreign language and strongly encourages studying abroad. It covers management, marketing, economics, finance, accounting and business law.

"MCOB has made me a better student and more knowledgeable about diversity. From my coursework to conversations with professors and other staff, I have been able to absorb so much knowledge not just about business but also about different countries and cultures. My classes have equipped me with the knowledge to work with international firms. My professors and experiences outside of the classroom have prepared me with the knowledge to thrive in international sectors."

-QAMYA RICHARDSON

MANAGEMENT

Management offers courses designed to give students a solid foundation in the field of management and will enable them to become effective managers, problem-solvers, and decision-makers in the world of business, industry, and government. Emphasis is placed upon problem recognition and anticipation, problem solving and managerial decision-making. The curriculum gives students insight into the means for improving the productivity and efficiency of modern organizations.

"I have taken several classes, such as Operations Management and Labor Relations, which I have been able to relate back to my current internship at APM Terminals in Mobile. It's exciting to realize that I can apply what I've learned in class to situations I've experienced at my internship. After graduation, I am eager to utilize and put in practice the knowledge that I have acquired to become successful in work and life!"

-MCKENNA ROYER



JENSEN GRADDICK



QAMYA RICHARDSON



JORDIN D'AVERSA WILLIAMS



MCKENNA ROYER



MARKETING

Marketing provides a way for companies to communicate to competitors, customers, and vendors. Students learn digital marketing, data analytics and market research. They also acquire the increasingly demanding technical skills required to excel in today's rapidly changing business environment.

“After considering multiple options for different fields within the Mitchell College of Business, I know I made the right decision when choosing marketing. My creative interests and desire to work in collaboration with people led me to see that this was a perfect fit. I pushed myself out of my comfort zone in the first two years to gain an understanding of the different fields of business. I did this by meeting with and observing professionals in accounting, finance and marketing. This was eye-opening to show me the real life of someone in that field. After seeing all of the creativity and personable traits required of the marketing professionals, I was inspired to pursue just that.”

-CAITLIN CROWNOVER

REAL ESTATE

The real estate program is designed to educate students about the myriad of aspects of the real estate industry and to provide a solid foundation for taking advantage of the numerous career opportunities available in real estate and related industries. Students who complete the Real Estate concentration will develop the specialized qualitative and quantitative tools necessary to prepare them for the unique demands and complexities associated with real estate careers.

“My favorite class with the College of Business is FIN 444 Real

Estate Valuation. I love Dr. Reid Cummings as a professor and enjoy his real-life experience that he integrates into each class. With this appraisal class it introduces you to the financial side of real estate instead of just the sales portion. I was also able to be the first student in the Mitchell College of Business's Jaguar Realty and internship program, which allowed me to obtain my real estate license while pursuing my bachelor's.”

-HANNAH SCEARSE

SUPPLY CHAIN AND LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT

The supply chain begins with acquiring goods and services from vendors and extends through delivering finished products to customers. Students learn the skills necessary to streamline the coordination and collaboration with all of the global partners along the way.

“The supply chain industry is growing exponentially, and being in a port city, with a school like South, I am confident of the future ahead. I am excited to see the growth of this major and look forward to its impact on campus.”

- MICHAEL PIERCE

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is key to economic growth. The entrepreneurship concentration is designed to create an innovation-focused mindset that produces entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial leaders in all aspects of business including: starting businesses, working in financing careers, innovative educators, franchise owners, economic development officials and social entrepreneurs. The concentration allows students to choose a combination of courses that best match their interests and entrepreneurial opportunities.

“Navigating Entrepreneurship has exposed opportunities to help other entrepreneurs in the community better their organization by practicing what I am actively learning in classes. The professors have such a diverse network within the community to pair with and learn from. In addition, the Coastal Pitch and Venture competitions offer opportunities to students to compete for money to invest into their new businesses with valuable feedback from successful investors!”

-ERICA LUKE

GENERAL BUSINESS

The general business program gives students a variety of skill sets across the business discipline and the flexibility to learn anywhere. Students gain knowledge and expertise in a variety of areas, including management, entrepreneurship, analytics, marketing and finance.

“You have such a wide array of classes you have to take. It wasn't all finance classes or all accounting classes. So it gives me more flexibility in applying for jobs.”

-MARINA BLANKENSHIP

CAITLIN CROWNOVER



HANNAH SCEARSE



ERICA LUKE



MICHAEL PIERCE



MARINA BLANKENSHIP



Investing in Service

DISCIPLINE IS
PAYING DIVIDENDS

A campus tour, a prestigious scholarship and Mobile’s rich military all made deciding on a college a simple choice for Ethan Flowers. “When I toured South, the campus really felt like home,” Flowers said. “I saw how much the professors really wanted to get to know their students.”

Flowers is one of only eight Mitchell Scholars in his class, and the scholarship, named after University benefactor Abe Mitchell, solidified his decision. “Having the opportunity to learn from and interact with high achieving individuals, really sold me.”

Growing up in the south-central Alabama town of Brantley, Flowers was in the ROTC program while in high school. His loyalty and commitment to his country remained as he pursued a degree in finance. “I knew I wanted to be successful in business,” he said, “but my sense of service was still strong — I wanted to give back to my country.” Flowers joined the Army ROTC program

at South in 2021. “It added a year to my education, but I’m happy to be here.”

A familiar challenge for many college students was no match for his training. “The freshman 15 is real, and it’s followed by the sophomore 20,” Flowers said. “To use finance terms, it grows exponentially, so I was severely out of shape and that challenged me to get in shape to meet Army regulations.

“In ROTC they train us to be the leaders for the Army and for America’s future. Seeing the overlap in leadership required for various challenges and projects in both the Mitchell College of Business and my experience in ROTC has been very impactful. Both organizations approach different types of problems with similar, as well as differing philosophies.”

Flowers’s out-of-classroom activities extend beyond ROTC. He has completed five internships, at Austal USA, Omega Properties Inc., the Jaguar Investment Fund, Vanguard Pacific and Project GRIP.

He was able to study abroad in France and, on campus, has been involved with the Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization, Financial Management Association, Mitchell Ambassadors, Mitchell Scholars and South Sports intramurals.

“One of my hidden secrets is that I aspire to be an SEC football referee on the weekends,” Flower said. “Building a network in sports through South has really been fun and beneficial.”

Post graduation, Flowers said, he will either join the active military or immediately begin his business career while serving in the National Guard.

“Ultimately my goal is to get into professional sales and transition to the passive side of real estate investments,” he said. “I’m weighing my options carefully, but that’s the great thing about the Mitchell College of Business. I have professors and connections who have walked this path and can help me make that decision.”





The Mitchell College of Business is dedicated to providing experiential learning and professional development opportunities to every MCOB student. This mission has been supported by the implementation of a required internship completed in a student's junior or senior year. For students Bennett Shell and Amber Walker, internships fueled their interests and introduced a new perspective on what the future might have to offer. Shell, a baseball player studying management, spent his summer on Capitol Hill in Washington., while Walker, an international business student, gained a new vantage point of the music industry in Nashville, Tennessee.

Originally from Florida, Shell's journey at South began when he committed to play baseball in his sophomore year of high school. "I always wanted to study business and there were great programs available," he said. "I have had unbelievable professors, teachers, and mentors."

His internship was an opportunity to bridge his interests with the professional skills and business insights he has gained during his undergraduate career.

"I've always been in love with politics," said Shell. "I grew up reading the news and watching all of these elections. During this internship, I found a new love for it."

He set his sights on working with Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy. "I thought he was an unbelievable bipartisan politician," he said. "I wanted to work with someone who saw both sides of the story."

He landed the internship and traveled straight from the NCAA regional baseball tournament to Washington. After arriving in Washington, he received a mentor to guide him on education policy. Together, they worked on specific legislation for dyslexia and personal data protection in public school systems. Shell, while attending meetings, taking notes and conducting research, was shocked at how close to the process he was able to get.

"The most surprising thing about the internship was the access that we had," Shell said. "I got to walk around the Capitol, attend closed meetings and go into hearings and onto the floor while they were voting. I even went to a meeting with the Ambassador from Puerto Rico. I never imagined that in the last week of my internship Mitt Romney would be saying, 'Hi, Bennett.'"

After graduation in May, Shell plans to go back to Washington for the 2022 election cycle and work on a campaign.

An Alabama native, Walker knew South was the place for her after a University tour her sophomore year of high school. Attracted to the size, location and welcoming feel of South Alabama and the surrounding area, Walker applied to the University as a pre-business major. Accepting a highly competitive position as a Mitchell Scholarship recipient solidified her decision to attend South. On campus, Walker quickly settled into studying international business.

"The cultural focus was really interesting. We learned about respecting people even when you might not understand where they are coming from," she said. "I loved all of the international business coursework, and especially liked my marketing classes."

Similarly to Shell, she approached her internship as an opportunity to connect interests and aptitudes with the skills she had cultivated throughout her three years at the Mitchell College of Business. Having enjoyed her marketing classes and the cultural emphasis of the international business curriculum, Walker explored one of her long-held interests — the music industry.

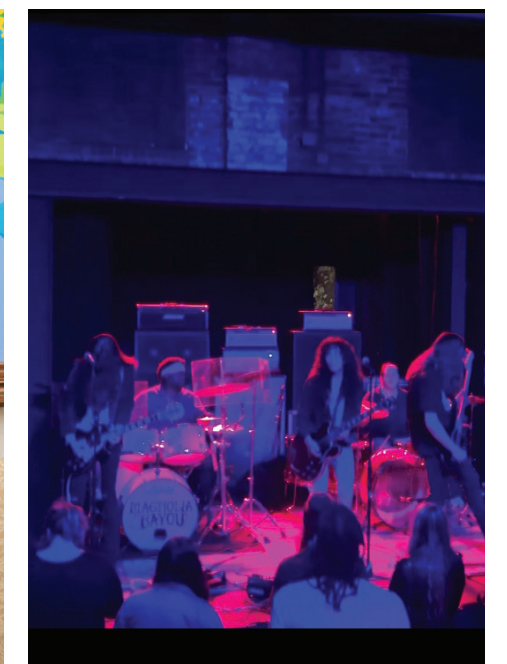
"I looked into companies that I would



AMBER WALKER



BENNETT SHELL



specifically like to work with," she said. "I have been interested in a focus of work called artists and repertoire, or A&R for short. A&R is the intersection of management and marketing, a sort of marketing and branding for artists."

After cold-calling and emailing music labels in the Nashville area, Walker landed an internship with a label on Music Row in Nashville called Artists & Repertoire. She spent the summer greeting musician clients, drafting client proposals, attending meetings and photoshoots, doing research on music licensing, and helping review a song

during a recording session. Walker is now approaching graduation confident that she enjoys marketing in the music industry and looks forward to the possibility of moving back to Nashville to pursue a career in A&R.

Shell's and Walker's internships provided the opportunity to utilize their skills in pursuit of their professional aspirations prior to graduation. The Mitchell College of Business, in recognition of the value of experiential learning, remains dedicated to connecting our outstanding students to the workplace.

If you are a student looking for an internship opportunity or a business looking for innovative student workers, contact Megan Bennett, internship coordinator today mebennett@southalabama.edu

PICTURED TOP CENTER, GRETA VAN FLEET CONCERT IN NASHVILLE; TOP RIGHT, CEDRIC BURNSIDE AT THE CITY WINERY IN NASHVILLE; BOTTOM CENTER, BENNETT SHELL WITH LOUISIANA SENATOR BILL CASSIDY; BOTTOM RIGHT, THE NAKED GYPSY QUEENS AND MAGNOLIA BAYOU IN NASHVILLE.

THE NEW COVID-19 RETAIL LANDSCAPE

Brent Barkin, chief executive officer of Shoe Station, recently did a follow-up interview to his 2018 Mitchell Magazine interview, “The Past, Present, and Future of Retail.” Barkin addresses the 2018 “Future of Retail” in sharing how Shoe Station is weathering COVID-19 and dealing with a future that no one expected.



WITNESSING THE FAILURE OF SO MANY RETAIL INSTITUTIONS DURING THE COVID SIEGE, TO WHAT DO YOU CONTRIBUTE TO SHOE STATION’S “STAYING POWER” IN THE VERY COMPETITIVE SHOE MARKETPLACE? WHAT DID THE COVID-ERA CONSUMER TEACH SHOE STATION EXECUTIVES?

“I think we experienced the ‘staying power’ as you call it for a few reasons. We had the resources to weather the storm, we watched out for our people, and we became as flexible as we possibly could given the time and circumstances.

First, and this goes back many years before COVID, we have always maintained our company’s resources in a responsible manner. Our expansion since 1984 has always been measured and calculated, we have rarely if ever used borrowed money to do so, and we have kept a strong reserve in the business. All of these factors allowed us to continue paying our bills and our payrolls even while our doors were closed for as long as six weeks in some cities.

Second, I think we did the right and responsible thing by closing our stores when we did. This was even before some of our state governments mandated that we close. Our opinion at the time — and continues to this day — was that doing the right thing is the right

fit for our community, our employees and our business. At the same time as we closed our doors, we kept those employees willing to do so working behind the scenes, checking with the local authorities to make sure we could do so. While the stores were closed to the public, our employees — masked and socially distanced — were doing everything from straightening and re-straightening shoes to checking all of the boxes, to cleaning the stores by the most stringent standards. Our desire to do the responsible thing for our community while keeping as many employees on the payroll was the correct move.

Third, we learned to be flexible. This flexibility took place in so many forms I will only mention a few of them here. We negotiated with our real estate partners and suppliers. We adjusted hours once we were able to reopen. We initiated curbside pickup and buy online/pickup in store. We shifted our product mix and suppliers. We altered our promotional cadence and the way we marketed. In short, we questioned many of the tried-and-true practices we had been doing for so many years simply out of routine. This was in many cases the best lesson that we could have learned from COVID — that we didn’t have to do things the way we had always done them simply because that was how they had always been done.”

A SHOE STATION BILLBOARD IN MOBILE RECENTLY PROMOTED THE “46,000 PAIRS OF SHOES” IN YOUR INVENTORY. WHAT DOES THIS NUMBER TELL US ABOUT SHOE STATION CUSTOMERS? WHAT DOES IT SAY ABOUT YOUR OVERALL RETAIL STRATEGY IN UNCERTAIN/UNSETTLING ECONOMIC TIMES?

“I think we have been incredibly lucky with our customers and the Mobile market. We are known for selection and the sheer amount of inventory we carry. Sometimes it can be overwhelming. During this day and time, however, of inventory shortages in the automobile, appliance and construction industries, footwear has not been immune. We have had a hard time getting our customers exactly what they are looking for, and that just typically is not the case with Shoe Station. However, because of our wealth of suppliers — 150+ by my last count — we have found resources to keep our stores not just full but full with the breadth and depth of quality brands that our customers are used to. The billboard is simply a reminder: Hey, we are still here and still have shoes! At least that was my intent.”



SUCCESSFUL RETAILERS ARE CONTINUOUS LEARNERS. WHAT FIVE LESSONS DID SHOE STATION LEARN DURING THE PANDEMIC THAT ARE LIKELY TO STICK AROUND FOR A WHILE?

“1) As my father would say, “Keep your powder dry.” Have extra resources in reserve just in case. We knew this, but while we were closed for 4-6 weeks in some locations, it became obvious how important this was.

2) People do matter. We stuck by our people, kept everyone employed, tightened hours but didn’t just let massive amounts of people go because it was the easy thing to do. We did the right thing, and it has paid dividends.

3) Be flexible, be flexible, be flexible. You cannot simply sit on your hands and watch events unfold because you did the same thing you did last week or last year. Important during a pandemic; just as important when there is no pandemic.

4) There is nothing worse than not knowing what you do not know. The last year and a half has taught me that podcasts, webinars, Zoom meetings, conferences, industry articles — all of them — have something to teach each one of us about what we know and what we have no clue about. Information is indeed power, and that power comes from a myriad of sources.

5) Don’t forget about family. There is nothing like being in quarantine during a pandemic to show you how much you are missing your family and loved ones’ lives. It seems like the last 17 months have gone by in a flash, but at the same time, there are many moments I got to spend with my wife and children that I would not trade for anything.”

BUSINESS NEWS STORIES ARE REPLETE WITH WORKER SHORTAGE SCENARIOS. HOW HAS SHOE STATION’S PEOPLE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVOLVED TO REFLECT THE EVER-CHANGING NATURE OF THE EMPLOYMENT POOL?

“We have simply re-discovered how valuable our people are, and how if you stand by them, they will stand by you. We have benefited from significantly lower turnover than our competitors during this entire time. At the same time, we realize that we cannot simply wait around for our employees to get offers that push them to leave. We are proactively raising salaries in many situations where we recognize that the marketplace is paying people more. We have also reinforced with our managers that hiring must be a continual, around-the-clock, process that lasts all year. People who are looking for work can find work, but we need to let them know that we can be a place for them for today, five years from now, or a career if they so choose.”

IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY A GROUP OF GRADUATING SENIORS FROM THE MITCHELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS THAT EXPRESSED A STRONG INTEREST IN STARTING THEIR OWN RETAIL VENTURE, WHAT PIECES OF WISDOM MIGHT YOU SHARE?

“I would tell them that this area — well, honestly, the world — needs more local, independent retailers. They are the lifeblood that keeps innovation and local flavor in our community. They buy things that no national chain would buy, but that the people in the area love and can’t feel and touch online.

That said, retail is not easy. The majority of people who start businesses often do not have the resources to

properly fund the business, or they misunderstand their markets and competition. Your projections for the business must include resources to set up the business and stay in business for months with next to no revenue. You must have a marketing budget so that people know who you are, where you are and what you do. Don’t pick a bad location just because it is cheap. Research about as much as you possibly can before you even consider opening a business. You can use other competitors as your ‘influence’— copy what they do that works, ignore what doesn’t. The best business to start is one you are familiar with. If your family has been farmers for years and you grew up around farming, consider something that is related to agriculture. Don’t just open a bar because it sounds like fun.”

THE SHOE STATION ACQUISITION REPRESENTS ANOTHER MILESTONE IN THE EVOLUTION OF THIS RESPECTED FAMILY-BASED RETAIL ORGANIZATION. HOW WILL THIS LATEST STRATEGIC MOVE AFFECT THE FIRM’S PRESENCE IN THE MARKETPLACE, COMPETITIVE POSTURE, BRANDING, AND OVERALL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION?

I feel this move only benefits both organizations. Shoe Carnival has national reach; Shoe Station has tremendous regional presence in five states with the ability to grow. The resources provided by our parent company in sourcing, HR, real estate, and vendor partnerships will only allow us to flourish and bring the Shoe Station name to more and more communities. We are thrilled with the prospect of the brand my father started becoming a household name through the region.



AMOD AMRITPHALE

A CHANGE OF HEART

FROM MD TO MBA

Originally from India, Amod Amritphale came to the U.S. for an internal medicine residency at the University of Nevada School of Medicine. Amritphale had the desire to become a physician after seeing his friend collapse in the sixth grade. “The [rescue] team’s effort inspired me. Seeing if we work as a team, we can really save someone’s life – that was kind of a trigger point.” Following his residency, Amritphale accepted a cardiology fellowship at Louisiana State University Health

Sciences Center in New Orleans, followed by an international fellowship at Oklahoma University before finally moving to Mobile. Now at the USA Health University Hospital, Amritphale keeps himself busy at his cardiac cath lab, his cardiovascular research studies, the Women’s Heart Health program and the pursuit of his MBA. After 10 years of working as a physician, Amritphale saw a gap between the medical and business health administration sectors. That inspired him to go back to school. Being

on call every other night, Amritphale chose to pursue his degree over the course of two years. Now in the last year of the program, he is especially grateful for the understanding of professors, who work with him and around his busy schedule. After graduation, Amritphale hopes to bridge the disconnect between healthcare administration and medical execution by contributing a physician’s leadership perspective to help hospitals make better business decisions.

Maxing MAcc

NEXT LEVEL ACCOUNTING

Sarasota, Fla native Alexander Rodman decided he wasn’t quite ready to leave South. After receiving his undergraduate degree in accounting, Rodman came back for one more year to pursue a Master in Accounting in preparation for the CPA Exam. When not in class, Rodman works as a graduate assistant for the Mitchell College of Business and has served as the lead supervisor of the University’s Volunteer Income Tax

Assistance grant program, VITA, for three consecutive years. While the material is challenging, Rodman has been helped by a supportive network at the Mitchell College of Business. “First I would like to thank Mrs. Tiffany Deroy for teaching a great intro class and for helping me find an interest in accounting. Dr. Terry Grant inspired me to become more involved throughout college, especially with clubs such as Beta Alpha Psi. Dr. James Rich

and Dr. Russ Hardin helped me become a leader for the VITA group and were mentors who I can look up to and ask questions.” After graduation, Rodman said he looks forward to starting his career with PwC as an audit associate, “I’m excited to kickstart my career with a top firm, and I feel South has prepared me with the skills and knowledge to help me stand out.”



ALEXANDER RODMAN

PhD{ata}

PAVING THE WAY THROUGH
BUSINESS ANALYTICS



After five successful years at a public accounting firm, Lindsay Givens returned to her roots in Magnolia, Arkansas, as an instructor of management at Southern Arkansas University, where she specializes in teaching statistics and analytics courses. It was there she decided it was time to pursue her Ph.D.

"I know for a fact that I want to stay in higher education because I love what I do," she said. "I want to make a career of it and have some upward mobility, and a doctorate is the way to make that happen." It was important for Givens to find a program that would fit into her busy schedule without forcing

her to leave her job. "I started looking for AACSB accredited non-traditional programs. I was having a hard time finding something that felt like a good fit, but then I found the Mitchell College of Business and the new business analytics concentration."

Business analytics not only aligned with Givens's career path, it also was tied heavily to mathematics. "I've always been a number cruncher, I just really love helping people learn things and figure out complicated concepts."

In May, Givens started the Ph.D. program as part of the inaugural business analytics class. "It's only been a

semester and a half, but even coming in with a pretty solid statistics background, I have already learned so much," she said. "I've been nothing but impressed with the program and the amount of detail that our professors give us. I've already made some good friendships with everyone in the cohort." After finishing the Ph.D. program, Givens plans to progress through her career and teach in a tenure-track position with more research opportunities. "I'm looking forward to contributing to the body of knowledge in the future, rather than just reading about it."

MITCHELL MOMENTS

The University of South Alabama Mitchell College of Business has launched a podcast, "Mitchell Moments," an idea proposed by one of the college's Ph.D. students. Dr. Joe Hair, the Cleverdon Chair of Business and director of MCOB's Ph.D. program, was searching for new approaches to communicate the availability and uniqueness of the program, which allows for students to continue their careers while earning their degree.

"ONE OF THE STUDENTS IN COHORT SIX HAD PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AS A PODCAST HOST, AND ALSO IN WORKING WITH A PODCAST PRODUCER, SO THE PH.D. STUDENTS RAN WITH IT." —DR. JOE HAIR

"MCOB Ph.D. cohorts six and seven were asked to brainstorm ideas for promoting the program. Several people suggested a podcast as a possible alternative," Hair said. "One of the students in cohort six had previous experience as a podcast host, and also in working with a podcast producer, so the Ph.D. students ran with it." That student was Stacy Wellborn and the producer was her husband Johnny Gwin. The two immediately went to work mapping out the concept.

Podcasts have only been around for about 15 years, but have

become a common way for people to consume information and their entertainment.

The first "Mitchell Moments" podcast, with Wellborn as the host, was released August 24, 2021. Its target audience is potential Ph.D. students seeking advice and tips on choosing and succeeding in a Ph.D. program.

"Hosting the podcast has been a great experience. I have enjoyed spending time with faculty and students to hear their stories," Wellborn said. "It has been inspiring, encouraging and heartwarming in so many ways – especially talking with other students and being in the dissertation phase of earning my Ph.D. degree in business and hearing how others have successfully navigated this journey."

The Business Administration Ph.D. program has three concentrations: business analytics, management and marketing. It is designed as a three-year, non-traditional program that allows individuals to continue working while pursuing their doctorate. Students visit campus for long weekends three times during the semester, while completing remaining coursework online. It is expected that all program requirements will be completed in 36 months.

"Mitchell Moments" podcast can be found on the "Mitchell Moments" website, or wherever you find your favorite podcasts.



Mitchell Moments PODCAST

A MOMENT WITH DR. JOSEPH HAIR

Ph.D. Program Director

A MOMENT WITH JEN ZOGHBY

Ph.D. Student

A MOMENT WITH DR. BILL DISCH

Global Instructor

A MOMENT WITH DR. GIA WIGGINS

Alumna and President and Founder of Morale Resources

A MOMENT WITH NICOLE BEACHUM

Recent Graduate

A MOMENT WITH DR. ROBYN L. BROUER

Ben May Distinguished Professor of Management

A MOMENT WITH JUSTIN SCOTT

Ph.D. Student

A MOMENT WITH DR. TORSTEN PIEPER

USA Global Scholar

A Champion For Change

TIPPING THE SCALES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
TO SERVE OTHERS THROUGH RESEARCH

For Dr. Charlene Dadzie, assistant professor of marketing and quantitative methods, championing social justice isn't just a research focus. It's her life's work. Growing up in a bi-national American-Ghanaian household in Atlanta, Dadzie's parents first took her to Africa when she was 10 years old.

"Seeing first-hand what it is like to live in a place like Ghana has always impacted me," she said. "When I went in 1995, I began to understand how most of the world lives — less infrastructure, lower incomes and major differences in people's living standards.

While volunteering back home in Atlanta, Dadzie began to recognize similar discrepancies in living standards. With a keen awareness of the problems and inequalities around her, Dadzie has leveraged high levels of education — earning a master's degree in industrial and labor relations and a Ph.D. in marketing — to bridge the gap between the academic community and policymakers to promote large-scale, long-lasting change.

Following her education and work at General Electric and Accenture, Dadzie transitioned into higher education and joined the Mitchell College of Business in 2016. Dadzie said her corporate experience was impactful, but she saw greater value in contributing theoretical insights to students that could then be applied to any organization. The combination of education and research has proved to be a well-balanced fit that is allowing her to advocate for a future of greater inclusion in the academic, public, and private arenas.

Dadzie notably received the Social Justice Research Grant in 2021, which supported local research on Africatown, a north Mobile community settled

by descendants of Africans brought over on the Clotilda, the last-known slave ship to arrive in the United States. Choosing Africatown due to the evident socioeconomic and class disparities that remain along the Gulf Coast, Dadzie's research uses a photographic method of identifying and documenting the personal experiences of community members in order to better communicate the current state and needs of the community. The findings of her research — low levels of access to healthy food, healthcare, services, and parks — confirmed the need for better consumer accessibility and inclusion locally. Dadzie also has collaborated with faculty in South's psychology department to study the Jag Pantry, an organization for students in need of food or hygiene products. The primary goal in their research was to increase health services to individuals experiencing food insecurity at the University of South Alabama.

Dadzie said her passion for education is an integral part of her approach to research and advocacy. "A key value that I have in terms of research that I do is to look at any participants or informants as partners and recognize that I can learn from community members," she said. If I have skills that can benefit them, they can also learn from me."

She has taken several of her research papers and studies to the American Marketing Association's Journal of Public Policy and Marketing and their Marketing and Public Policy Conference, where she has shared findings with academics and policymakers from around the country.

Dadzie's research also has brought her back to her roots in Ghana, where she returned to conduct interviews

shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic. She is studying the short-term, long-term and geographical spatial implications of climate change on subsistence producers such as cocoa farmers and fishermen in the Global South and how financial service systems might be designed or redesigned to better promote financial inclusion for urban micro-entrepreneurs.

"Globally, a lot of the world's inhabitants are people who are engaged in farming or, more increasingly, micro-small-scale entrepreneurs who are city-dwellers," Dadzie said. "They aren't of interest to many traditional financial institutions like banks because the scale at which they earn income on a daily basis is so low that their ability to save is quite low. A cocoa farmer who is saving \$5-10 after a harvest season isn't financially attractive to financial institutions. So alternative financial mechanisms now like mobile payments and banking and, in the past, using checks to pay farmers, have all helped increase financial inclusion."

Since her most recent trip to Ghana, Dadzie's research has continued stateside with her advocacy for globally disadvantaged groups. Her aim is to provoke thought through education and connect the necessary entities, and people, to establish policies on national levels that impact large, underserved consumer segments, both at home and abroad.

"I want policymakers to have more tools in their toolkits to think about the policies that they make," she said, "It's also important for businesses to think about sustainable development. The United Nations and governments across the world are also thinking about these issues and potential solutions."



Getting Down to Business with the Band

MARCHING IN-STEP
WITH HUNTER RENCHER

Sophomore accounting major Hunter Rencher's love for music and marching band started from an early age. When introduced to the band in sixth grade, he quickly was drawn in by the inclusive atmosphere and began playing the trumpet. In high school, he noticed the color guard spinning rifles. "I saw specific people on the weapons line and how cool they were, and I knew from that moment I was going to be a part of that," he said.

Rencher continued to play trumpet while practicing his color guard skills. He also took on a leadership position as drum major of the Fairhope High School Buccaneer Band during his junior and senior years.

"I wanted to be a drum major. I wanted to conduct. I had always had a burning passion for that too," he said "So, I would do marching season in the fall as drum major and then for indoor season, during the spring, I would do Winter Guard on the weapons line."

After high school, Rencher was considering which university to attend. He was leaning in another direction when he heard about the Mitchell College of Business from a friend.

"I instantly wanted to know more," he said. "I was heavily persuaded by all of the

scholarship opportunities and the different concentrations that the Mitchell College of Business had to offer. It took one visit, and I told my parents 'I'm going across the bridge.'" The University of South Alabama became his home not-so-far-away-from home. During his freshman year at South, he joined the Jaguar Marching Band, auditioned for the color guard and made the weapons line. He says joining the band gave him an, "Immediate family on campus, and I didn't feel so lonely, right off the bat, starting college."

At the Mitchell College of Business, Rencher landed on accounting as his major. He knew he wanted to be challenged and in a career that would be in demand. Then he took an Accounting 211 course taught by Ellen Madden, senior instructor.

"I watched and listened to her talk about the accounting field, and I saw how her eyes lit up with excitement as she got to share her passion for accounting with us," Rencher said. "Even as early as an 8 a.m. class, professor Madden always kept class lively with intriguing back stories she's experienced from working in the accounting field. I knew then accounting was for me."

Right On Track

A STUDENT ATHLETE'S GUIDE TO SUCCESS

Success in business and on the track are not too different. Both require hard work and dedication, qualities most student athletes inherit from daily practice and competitions. Mitchell College of Business athletes start their days with early runs or weight room sessions, and end them with long afternoon practices. In between, they go to classes and study, which leaves little time for social life.

Balancing a full academic load and collegiate sports does not always come easy.

So, how do college athletes manage to stay on top of their classes and studies while juggling practice and competition, day in, day out? It comes down to the skills learned from being an athlete. "Track has taught me self discipline and time management skills. These are transferable skills I can

apply to all aspects of my life," said Nic Glass, an accounting major and track and field athlete.

Just like other students, college athletes learn how to persevere when faced with challenges. Sydney Baker, a business administration major and teammate, faces challenges by keeping a positive attitude, "I think a big challenge student athletes go through is keeping a healthy positive attitude about everything in their life, because not every day and every practice is going to go well," she said, "but having a 'happy-go-lucky' attitude will help."

MCOB athletes encourage incoming students to never give up. "You're expected to mess up, so use it to make yourself better. Also, go to class. Just showing up to your classes makes them a lot easier," Glass said.



NIC GLASS



SYDNEY BAKER



KIRA BENKMANN

NIC GLASS

Classification: Freshman

Major: Accounting

Hometown: Cullman, Alabama

Event: Decathlon

Aspiration after college: Glass plans on putting his accounting degree into practice in his hometown of Cullman.

Why South?: "I chose South for the track program, location, tuition and the Mitchell College of Business. MCOB is an excellent college and prepares its students."

SYDNEY BAKER

Classification: Sophomore

Major: Business Administration

Hometown: Oneonta, Alabama

Event: Javelin and Hammer Throw

Aspiration after college: Baker hopes to further her education in medical school and pursue a career in dermatology.

Why South?: "I love how close South is to the beach, and I want to open my own business!"

KIRA BENKMANN

Classification: Graduate Student

Major: MBA – General Management

Hometown: Mahlow, Germany

Event: Hammer Throw

Aspiration after college: Benkmann hopes to find a job that supports her creative skills and allows her to travel the world to experience different cultures and businesses.

Why South?: "I chose South because it has a good reputation, both academically and athletically. I feel like the MBA program, including my graduate assistantship position, is preparing me well for the future."

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

FROM SOUTH ALABAMA TO THE BIG D:
A NON-TRADITIONAL JOURNEY TO SUCCESS

"I was 19 years old when I took a break from school and started working for an electrician. I was making \$5 an hour. By the time I finished, I was making \$27 an hour and that's how I bought my first truck." Growing up in Pascagoula, MS as a "B" average student from a blue collar family, alum Noah Roche's unconventional story is one of hard work and resilience. While regularly working 50-65 hours a week as a waiter and graduate assistant, Roche earned his undergraduate degree in Finance in 2013 and a Master's of Business Administration in 2015 from South. Now a treasury consultant at the Deloitte office in Dallas, Texas, Roche is working with one of the largest retailers in the U.S. His story echoes the value of drive, creativity, and the purposeful combination of natural aptitudes with education.

"TELL PEOPLE WHERE YOU WANT TO GO, AND THEY'LL GIVE YOU THE WORK TO HELP YOU GET THERE...BE WILLING TO SACRIFICE AND PUT IN THE WORK; NOT EVERYONE IS WILLING TO PUT EFFORT, TIME, AND ENERGY INTO GIVING BACK AND WORKING HARD. PUT THE TIME IN."

—NOAH ROCHE

Roche's strong will and resilience have propelled him to an impressive, albeit unorthodox, path of success. Shortly after high school, he bounced between community colleges and a semester at the University of Alabama before returning home, where he took a low-paying job as an electrician's apprentice. Uncertain about what direction to pursue in life, he decided to pack up and go back to school. The Mitchell College

of Business at the University of South Alabama was waiting and ready to afford opportunities for growth.

While at South, Roche leveraged all of the resources available to him and excelled as an MCOB student. Balancing a full-time class load and working full time, was an active member of the Financial Management Association (FMA) and Southerner. In graduate school, Roche continued to challenge himself outside of college, taking risks and pursuing experiential learning opportunities. After taking out a small loan and flipping a condo, he rented out the living space to friends and enjoyed the benefit of a project well-done and minimized living expenses. Roche also focused his energy on building lasting relationships with peers, faculty and professionals. He noted that the mentorship of Dr. Alvin Williams was particularly impactful as the two developed a strong relationship founded in a common enjoyment of learning. Of Roche, Dr. Williams reflected saying,

"Noah worked as a graduate assistant in Marketing. He was smart, a quick learner, engaging, enjoyed defending his points of view and developed rapport with others easily. We enjoyed many conversations about everything in the world, and we both probably left more knowledgeable than when we started. While Noah was a finance major, he possessed marketing-like qualities, the combination of which has propelled his professional success. There was never any doubt that he would land in corporate America and carve a success path anchored in his South Alabama roots." Roche and Dr. Williams still maintain contact today, now as both professionals and friends.

Approaching graduation from the MBA program, Roche readied for the workplace and set his sights on a consulting career. When IBM visited the Mitchell College, he took initiative and made contacts that eventually led to an entry level position. Since, Roche has embodied confident diligence and a willingness to adapt, taking job opportunities with high-growth potential and levels of responsibility at top firms including Ernest and Young and Deloitte.

"WHILE NOAH WAS A FINANCE MAJOR, HE POSSESSED MARKETING-LIKE QUALITIES, THE COMBINATION OF WHICH HAS PROPELLED HIS PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS. THERE WAS NEVER ANY DOUBT THAT HE WOULD LAND IN CORPORATE AMERICA AND CARVE A SUCCESS PATH ANCHORED IN HIS SOUTHALABAMA ROOTS."

—DR. ALVIN WILLIAMS

Today, Roche is innovating in a globalized marketplace on projects for major clients at Deloitte. He aspires to continue growing his skill set, building connections around the globe and giving back to the community. He offers sound wisdom in reflection of his experience, "Tell people where you want to go, and they'll give you the work to help you get there...Be willing to sacrifice and put in the work; not everyone is willing to put effort, time, and energy into giving back and working hard. Put the time in." His message rings true and clear: immense success is possible if diligence precedes. Noah Roche has worked for such success and doesn't show any signs of stopping.

Link by Link

UNDERSTANDING
BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY
BY ERMANNO AFFUSO

In the current age of innovation, blockchain technology has been receiving substantial media attention. While talking to students and other business community members, it seems there is still some confusion associated with the attempt to generalize concepts like cryptocurrencies, bitcoin, blockchain platforms and smart contracts.

The first question to ask is, “What is blockchain?”

Blockchain is a distributed and inflexible database that can store, manage and update a list of information and data records (e.g., transactions) in an open, unique and secure way without the need for a centralized ledger. Each record can be thought of as a block linked to the previous and next block through a uniquely complex password, comparable to a fingerprint. This list of records becomes a blockchain and is distributed into the network. The information stored in the blockchain is secured through a complex algorithm of mathematical cryptography called “hash function.” Think of each node of this computer network as a decentralized ledger that uses a cryptographic algorithm to validate each record — finding each block fingerprint and linking it to the previous block. All nodes in the network have to reach a consensus to validate the entire chain. This whole process of blockchain validation is called “mining.”

Suppose a third party attempts to alter one list record (i.e., one block in a ledger). In that case, the entire blockchain is compromised, and the modified block will be immediately replaced with the original block distributed among the other ledgers.

Blockchain has the potential to solve significant problems in economics and contract theory, such as information asymmetry and adverse selection, which occur when market actors have different information about a product, affecting market efficiency. Hence, blockchain may reduce the trust gap among stakeholders and eliminate the need for centralized ledgers for institutions such as financial businesses or public notaries.

“How can blockchain improve business processes?”

Suppose increased profitability and transaction security are the primary goals of businesses in a digital economy. In that case, blockchain can ease this process through four main objectives, according to Valeria Portale, director of the Blockchain & Distributed Ledger Observatory of Milan Polytechnical University. The first goal is exchange value: businesses can use blockchain-secured crypto assets to increase payment efficiency by cutting the costs of intermediaries. For example, JPM coin is a blockchain project by JP Morgan that uses a stable digital version of the US dollar to reduce the inefficiency of

international wholesale payments. The second goal is information transparency and data security. To mitigate information asymmetry, IBM developed a blockchain project called IBM Food Trust. The project’s scope is to record information on each production step of the entire food supply chain in a secure and immutable way. The third goal is data coordination. Several companies are using blockchain-based protocols to share data and to better coordinate the actors of business processes.

Coca-Cola uses the Baseline protocol, based on the Ethereum blockchain, that synchronizes the internal systems of multiple companies. For example, if a supplier has insufficient stock, third-party suppliers can fulfill the shortage without affecting the buyers’ delivery expectations. Finally, the fourth and more ambitious goal is business process reliability, which consists of executing entire business processes on blockchain to ensure traceability and verifiability. These blockchain projects aim to code the whole business process in smart contracts through a blockchain platform like Ethereum or Cardano. In 2019, Santander launched the first end-to-end blockchain bond from issuance to maturity.

Blockchain is still at its embryonic stage; however, based on endless potential business applications, sooner rather than later, this technology could revolutionize the way we do business.

“THIS TECHNOLOGY COULD
REVOLUTIONIZE THE WAY
WE DO BUSINESS.”

—ERMANNO AFFUSO



Program Updates

CREED BECOMES SABRE

The Center for Real Estate and Economic Development at the University of South Alabama has evolved and with that evolution comes a name change. The department has been rebranded the South Alabama Center for Business Analytics, Real Estate, and Economic Development, or SABRE.

Using its academic and technical resources, SABRE actively seeks to build strategic public and private partnerships to promote the growth and development of the coastal region by providing cutting-edge resources for businesses and institutions.



MELTON CENTER

The Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation celebrated its 5th anniversary with a newly branded logo design.

Minority Business Accelerator Program
The Fall 2021 Minority Business Accelerator was a 10-week program provided by the Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in concert with the Mobile Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Administration. Seven minority business owners participated. Businesses included new roofs with a lifetime warranty, an online radio station/media empire, freelance photography, hair salon, website and media design, air conditioning, and credit repair services. It concluded on November 10th with an online pitch presentation by each participant. **Candice Huston** took first place, winning \$10,000 in seed money for her business, InspireU.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP SERIES

On October 14th, the Mitchell College of Business welcomed **Jake Gosa** as the first in-person ELS engagement since the pandemic began. Gosa is an alum of the Mitchell College ('73), member of the inaugural Alumni Fellow class ('17) and recipient of the USA Distinguished Service Award ('20). Throughout his visit, Gosa imparted wisdom about the importance of lifelong education, strong values and integrity, vision, and balance. Gosa spoke to graduate and undergraduate classes on topics including strategy, leadership, managing people, and the importance of a companies' vision, mission, and objectives.

BLUE CHIP INVESTMENT GROUP

On Monday, November 15, 2021, the Jaguar Investment Fund presented to the Blue Chip Investment Group. Each year the JIF prepares and presents to the group, which consists of 25 local women all from various backgrounds. The group meets monthly to build and discuss possible investments for the group's portfolio. This year, the JIF presented their various class projects, recent purchases, ideas as well as identified trends in various market sectors.

NEW PROFESSORS

This fall, the College had the opportunity to welcome three new faculty members to the MCOB team.

- Robyn Brouer**, Ben May Professor of Management
- Ray Wu**, Assistant Professor, Management
- Adam Harper**, Assistant Professor, Economics, Finance, and Real Estate

TOP PROF

Congratulations to Jay Hunt, management instructor, for being named "Top Prof" by the Sally Steadman Azalea Chapter of Mortar Board Honor Society for the seventh year in a row!

SENIOR SEMINAR

On Tuesday, Nov. 16th, 2021, the Mitchell College of Business welcomed radio personality **Cam Marston** as the Senior Seminar speaker for Fall 2021. Marston, a leading expert on the impact of generational change and host of the podcast "What's Working with Cam Marston," uncovers the trends influencing today's workplace and marketplace. Marson spoke to Mitchell College of Business seniors about the generational and demographic trends they should expect as they prepare to enter the workforce. He taught students key phrases to use in interviews, as well as the importance of understanding of corporate culture and processes. He challenged students to consider whose role it is to provide happiness in the workplace. Most importantly, he stressed that even through technology, pandemics, unrest, etc., the basics still matter – human nature, eye contact, genuine interest and a strong handshake.

NATIONAL BUSINESS WOMEN'S WEEK

NBWW provides an opportunity to call attention to women entrepreneurs, facilitate discussions on the needs of working women, share information about successful workplace policies, and raise awareness of the resources available for working women in their communities. This year, the College featured 22 amazing women who are not only leaders at their job, but leaders in the community. Speakers came from a wide range of industries such as **Unity Fibre**, **John Deere**, **AltaPointe Health System** and **APM terminals**.



SABRE SUMMIT

On November 18, 2021, the South Alabama Center for Business Analytics, Real Estate and Economic Development, SABRE, hosted the inaugural Business Analytics Summit. The Summit brought together over 130 attendees from academia to various business industries to start building a coastal analytics community. Industry professionals, students, staff and faculty had the opportunity to receive insights into the world of data analytics and exchange knowledge with fellow data analytics enthusiasts. At the summit, attendees were able to listen to 14 business professional speakers from different industries such as:

- Michelle Crowe**, the Chief Marketing Officer of e-worc, **Brent Dudley**, President of 68 Ventures, and **Brian Mooneyham**, VP, Analytics, Decision Support and Data Visualization, Operations at Wells Fargo.



ROBYN BROUER



JAY HUNT



RAY WU



CAM MARSTON



ADAM HARPER



SABRE SUMMIT

3 People | 3 Questions



GWEN PENNYWELL

Interim Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

A novel called *The Only Woman in the Room*. I've always been a fan of Hedy Lamarr movies. When I learned that her patents are a foundation for today's wireless technology, I wanted to know more.

WHO IS INSPIRING YOU?

My daughter. Diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis Type I at birth, her life has been a series of surgeries, medical procedures, and developmental delays. Yet, she starts each day with an inner strength and determination that I find awe-inspiring. She can find joy in minor things. She reminds me to focus on what is truly important and take the time to enjoy the journey.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE DAY?

10:30 PM. I know it sounds sappy, but my dad and I watched Perry Mason together every night. When I went off to college, we kept the tradition up. Now that he is gone, I continue to do so. It comes on at 10:30 PM. I love the show and the memories it evokes.



SAM PENQUE

Finance and Pre-Medicine Major

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Currently, I am reading *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie. This book has a lot of good life lessons that will lead anyone to success.

WHO IS INSPIRING YOU?

The person that inspires me the most is my father. He always figures out how to fix something or make a situation better. He is reserved and cool even when the times are tough. I hope to be half the man that he is.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE DAY?

Mornings are my favorite part of the day. It can define whether the day will be good or bad. Whether you will be ambitious or not. Whether you will be smiling or not. I do the same routine every morning: I wake up and make my bed, work out, read for thirty minutes, and have the same breakfast as every other morning.



JANA STUPAVSKY

Assistant Director, SABRE - South Alabama Center for Business Analytics, Real Estate and Economic Development

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

As a mother, full-time employee, and a Ph.D. student, time and energy for casual reading have been scarce lately, but if I find both, I typically choose one of the three books, depending on the mood: 1. *Avoiding Data Pitfalls* by Ben Jones 2. *Hold on to your Kids* by Neufeld and Mate 3. Any cookbook with lots of pictures by Nigella Lawson.

WHO IS INSPIRING YOU?

Typically, those I meet who are less fortunate than me, particularly in terms of family, relationships, or health. Those who, despite everything, choose to stay positive and humble. There are many reasons to complain nowadays, but attitude is a choice and those who choose to stay positive and optimistic despite difficulties, inspire me and I seek out and enjoy their company.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE DAY?

Since quiet early mornings with my husband are rare now, we enjoy later mornings, when we walk my oldest child to school. It's a 15-20 minute pause in the middle of a busy morning, when others rush and we enjoy ordinary things, like greeting the same people on their morning walks, finding sticks, poking bushes with them, watching progress on a house being built on our route or admiring pretty front yards.



INVEST IN THE COLLEGE



LUIS DEL POZO

ENTREPRENEURSHIP MAJOR
CLASS OF 2025



Receiving the Mitchell Scholarship will have a compounding impact on my growth as a student and future entrepreneur in three major ways: Financially, it removes the factor of student debt, allowing me to focus on funding, experimenting and developing business ideas. Second, it will provide exceptional networking opportunities where I can learn from successful and knowledgeable people. Lastly, it will give me access to crucial mentors and knowledge in multiple fields thanks to internship opportunities. —LUIS DEL POZO

SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
DRAMATICALLY IMPACTS THE
LIVES OF THE STUDENTS IN
THE MITCHELL COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS. YOUR SUPPORT
MAKES US WHO WE ARE
TODAY AND DIRECTLY
AFFECTS TOMORROW'S
BUSINESS LEADERS.

THREE AREAS OF PRIORITY FOR THE COLLEGE INCLUDE:

STUDENTS

The enrollment, education and graduation of outstanding students is of paramount importance to the Mitchell College of Business. Employers and other external constituents benefit from inspired graduates entering the workforce. In order to attract these students, the Mitchell College must offer competitive scholarships. The Mitchell-Moulton Scholarship Initiative matches any endowed undergraduate scholarship gift dollar-for-dollar.

ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT

Advances in technology, changes in classroom design and active-learning teaching methods have drastically changed the educational environment. In order to maximize learning outcomes, the Mitchell College must incorporate these advances into the classroom. Join us as we embark on a campaign to update (classrooms and other) Mitchell College of Business learning environments.

THE INTERNATIONAL EMPHASIS PROJECT

Our students will enter an increasingly complex and competitive global economy. Research and experience show that students who participate in global immersion opportunities are better prepared for competition in the global economy. The goal of our international emphasis project is to ensure the affordability of study-abroad opportunities for all interested students.



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