

# BUSINESS MATTERS

College of Business Alumni News

July 2016

## New programs, growth for MBA, undergraduate students

Dear College of Business alumni and other friends,

It's a particularly exciting time here at the college as we celebrate our 2016 bachelor's degree and MBA recipients while also looking ahead to the growth the 2016-17 academic year will bring.

In June we conferred undergraduate degrees on approximately 400 students and MBAs on another 96 as we marked our **50th anniversary** of serving our state, region and beyond by providing **Masters of Business Administration** education.

Building on that half-century of advanced business instruction, this coming fall we're adding two new **MBA tracks** to the online/in-person program we offer in Portland. **Innovation Management**, which includes a special Launch Corps component for select, startup students, and **Supply Chain and Logistics Management** will join a hybrid MBA lineup that already includes Business Analytics and Organizational Leadership.

On the undergraduate side, this fall marks the start of our **Innovation Nation first-year-experience** program for new pre-business students. Innovation Nation will unite all of our freshmen in a living/learning community headquartered at the Weatherford and Poling residence halls, where they'll have access to a high-tech makerspace, mingle with visiting professionals and fully immerse themselves in the College of Business' culture of success.

Of course, we couldn't do any of this without your continued support. Thank you very much for all you do for the college, and we hope you have a fun, safe and relaxing summer.

Sincerely,

Mitzi Montoya,  
Sara Hart Kimball Dean  
College of Business



Mitzi Montoya, Sara Hart Kimball Dean of the College of Business, visits with guests June 10 at the college's annual Undergraduate Celebration. The same day, the college held a reception for its MBA graduates.



### IN THE NEWS

Read about alumni and faculty at [business.oregonstate.edu/headlines](http://business.oregonstate.edu/headlines)

**Curtis Tigard, son of town founder, had many candles to blow out: 107 of them**

**OSU program for entrepreneurs expands to Bend**

**Are antitrust laws standing in the way of climate action?**

Connect with us:



[facebook.com/osucob](https://facebook.com/osucob)



[twitter.com/osu\\_cob](https://twitter.com/osu_cob)



[instagram.com/osucob](https://instagram.com/osucob)



[youtube.com/user/OSUBusiness](https://youtube.com/user/OSUBusiness)

**Oregon State**  
UNIVERSITY

## Young alumna gives big thanks to donors

**For Presidential Scholar and 2016 management graduate Annemarie Lewandowski, the delight is in the details.**

That’s what led to the high-achieving student’s decision, while still in high school, to pursue a career as a corporate event planner via a management education at Oregon State University’s College of Business.

“I was in a lot of clubs and organizations and I was Key Club president, and I planned a lot of conventions and meetings,” Lewandowski said. “I love the details and all I have to face to prepare for them. My senior year of high school, I knew I wanted to get into corporate event planning, and I knew I’d need a solid business understanding.”

Representing all scholarship recipients in the College of Business, Lewandowski — whose scholarship is the most prestigious available at OSU — was one of the speakers May 2 at the college’s first Impact

at Work celebration in Portland. The event shone a spotlight on scholarship winners and benefactors who make scholarships possible.

Lewandowski, who already had a post-graduation, project management job lined up with Boeing in the Seattle area when she took the podium at the Portland Hilton & Executive Tower, expressed gratitude for her multifaceted College of Business education — and for the chance to complete her degree debt-free, thanks to donor generosity.

“I’ve learned how to work with people,” she said of her time at OSU, which included serving as a career ambassador in the college’s Career Success Center. “How to communicate with them, how to balance, how to approach difficult situations and hold myself to a high standard of leadership.”



Lewandowski, whose job places her in a region filled with successful College of Business alumni, spent the first part of her pre-senior-year summer studying international business administration in Bad Mergentheim, Germany.

“It was a really good experience being in a different culture in a different country, a whole different system,” she said. “I’m definitely glad I went — it’s one of greatest things I’ve ever done.”

While in Europe, Lewandowski visited

nine nations.

“You cross over into another country for a weekend, the culture changes, the language changes,” she said. “Everything’s so close and so small, but each country is unique. I was the most fascinated with that. Within 20 feet, the architecture style changed, and the people were completely different in their views and opinions.”

Back home in Oregon, Lewandowski worked in Gresham as a business operations intern at Boeing.

She helped project managers on individual projects, and also assisting with a company-wide initiative toward leaner, more efficient meetings and reports.

“It’s something we definitely hear about in all of our classes — lean, lean, lean,” she said. “It was nice to be onsite, implementing it myself, to see what is taught in class come to life.”



### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For a complete list of OSU alumni events visit [osualum.com](http://osualum.com)

**Tuesday, July 12**  
OSUAA Portland Golf Classic  
Langdon Farms Golf Club

**Saturday, July 23**  
Seattle OSU Family Picnic  
Cedar River Cellars  
2-6 p.m.

**Wednesday, Aug. 10:**  
Advancing Women’s Business...  
WeWork, Portland  
5-7 p.m.

## Faculty bring industry experience to Innovation Management MBA

**Amol Joshi, assistant professor of strategy and entrepreneurship, was already bringing a treasure trove of experience and insight to his students.**

Prior to joining the College of Business faculty in 2014, he enjoyed a 13-year career as an engineer, entrepreneur and executive in the telecommunications, electronics, software and semiconductor industries, working with both high-growth public companies and venture-capital-funded startups in Silicon Valley. He'd also spent time in Austria and Denmark in 2009-10, giving commercialization training to more than 50 teams of technical founders of companies that had spun out of government and university research labs.

Then last summer, his innovation management expertise soared to a whole new level when he received a \$50,000 National Science Foundation grant, went through training in the NSF's Innovation Corps program and learned the Lean Startup methodology.

"This is something the

NSF has put a significant investment in, working with more than 1,000 science-based businesses over the last several years," Joshi said. "It's a very proven methodology."

Introducing the Lean Startup concept is one change on the near horizon for the Innovation Management MBA track. Formerly known as Commercialization and offered only on campus in Corvallis, the track will be available in Portland beginning in fall 2016 and ultimately other markets in an online/in-person hybrid model.

"We're making a number of changes based on feedback that we've received from industry and alumni, as well as understanding best practices from leading business and engineering schools around the country," Joshi said. "The biggest thing is to build the program using a proven methodology that's

scalable and applicable to a variety of different businesses, that's designed for speed and flexibility."

Joshi, cofounder and former vice president of sales and marketing of a speech-recognition startup called BeVocal, points out that the biggest problem new companies face is going from proof of concept to first product introduction, crossing what's called the "valley of death."

"The reason is there are a lot of barriers to getting your new technology, product or service into a form that's usable or acceptable to the market," Joshi said.

Overcoming those barriers is where the Lean Startup method, developed and taught by entrepreneur Steve Blank and originated by Eric Ries, comes in.

"The biggest idea is to use the scientific method," Joshi said. "To take the fundamental



assumptions that you have about your business and state them in the form of hypotheses and quickly go out and test them. Meet with potential customers, partners, suppliers, industry experts and try to validate or disconfirm your value proposition — very quickly, in a matter of several weeks or a few months. If you find evidence to support your hypotheses, keep trying to gather more. If don't, then you need to do a pivot, change your assumptions and move on to other ideas. It's extremely well-organized and practically oriented common sense — get out of the classroom, get off campus, get out in the field and talk to people and listen to their input."

In the Innovation Management program,

a key emphasis will be connecting and interacting with OSU alumni, many of whom are experts in their industries.

"I'm excited about working with our alumni as industry mentors and people who can help our student teams," Joshi said. "This is a key element to make the Innovation Management track successful; mentors coach and guide teams with their insights and expertise."

Alumni who are interested in participating are urged to contact Joshi at [amol.joshi@oregonstate.edu](mailto:amol.joshi@oregonstate.edu).

Another change to the program is increased flexibility regarding the types of products and services students will work at bringing to market.

(continued on page 4)

### POINTS OF PRIDE

 27,000+

There are more than 27,000 College of Business alumni in the world.

 \$2.2M

Our Oregon State Investment Group manages a \$2.2M portfolio.

 Top 10

Oregon State University is ranked in the Top 10 nationally for online education by U.S. News & World Report

## Student success: Thrasher pays it forward



### Student success is far from just an abstract concept or talking point to College of Business alumnus Ken Thrasher.

To Thrasher, who benefited from mentorship and encouragement as he rose from low-income childhood to university graduate to chief executive officer of Fred Meyer, student success means investing in young people in ways that improve lives and communities for generations to come.

“We’ve got a beautiful building for the college now,” said Thrasher, who chaired the capital campaign that resulted in Austin Hall, which opened in September 2014. “Now it’s time to really look at the programs and the faculty and student success and continue to raise those bars. We need more kids to graduate — that’s the bottom line.”

Thrasher, who graduated in accounting and finance

In **BUSINESS MATTERS**, our alumni newsletter, we share information about College of Business people, events and engagement opportunities. You are a valued ambassador for Beaver Nation, and we look forward to hearing from you. Please Send your news or story ideas to [businessalumni@oregonstate.edu](mailto:businessalumni@oregonstate.edu)

For questions or more information:

Maria Schell  
College of Business | Oregon State University Foundation  
[maria.schell@oregonstate.edu](mailto:maria.schell@oregonstate.edu)  
503-553-3422 | cell 971-404-6910

in 1971, championed the college’s student success initiative at its Impact at Work event May 2 at the Portland Hilton & Executive Tower, a celebration of scholarship recipients and donors like Thrasher who make those scholarships possible.

He told the audience how, from the time he was a young child, he was raised in a household headed by his single stepmother, a laundry worker with an eighth-grade education. What Thrasher lacked in privilege he made up for in hard work, both in school and at the jobs he held, and that caught the attention of his boss at Import Plaza, legendary Portland businessman and philanthropist Bill Naito.

“I had a good work ethic, and he noticed things like that,” Thrasher said of Naito, a World War II veteran with degrees from both Reed College and the University of Chicago. “He asked me what my plans were for after high school, and I said I’d probably just work. He said no, you should go to college, you have the capacity for it, and he helped me do it. And I had a bookkeeping teacher at Franklin High School, Mrs. Nyland, who said, ‘You know, you’re really good at all of this accounting stuff.’”

“I had a great mentor in Bill and a teacher who engaged me and got me into a career I liked and enjoyed and saw a future in,” Thrasher said. “They helped me earn the successes I’ve had. Without them I probably wouldn’t have ever gone to college. And the kind of role model Bill was, it was about paying it forward, giving back, giving your time and money when you’re able to help other students and other people to be successful.”

Thrasher, now retired from Fred Meyer and the chairman of the board of directors of Alternative Legal Solutions, Inc., has been heavily involved throughout his career in evidence-based programs aimed at helping people pull themselves and their children out of poverty.

“Due to higher birth rates for families living in poverty, not breaking the cycle of poverty for one person now will over five generations result in 200 offspring, themselves likely to be impoverished,” he said. “We can’t afford not to break the cycle of poverty in America.”

In addition to his work for the College of Business, where he’s served on the Dean’s Council of Excellence for more than a decade, Thrasher is either an advisory or governing board member of nearly 10 organizations, including Education Northwest, the Children’s Institute, College Possible and the Oregon Business Council.

AMOL JOSHI  
(continued from page 3)

“In the past the program was mainly designed for students to commercialize ideas that were spinoffs of technologies developed here at OSU, and that will still be an important component,” Joshi said. “But there will be a greater emphasis on students with their own ideas that they want to develop and pursue, and not just in technology areas. It could be a new, innovative business model, or a social entrepreneurship venture; it will be a wider range of businesses.

“And it’s not just about startups,” he said. “These ideas will also be very useful for managers in large companies who are trying to bring more innovative thinking into their R&D organizations. It’s the same approach being used, for example, by General Electric. The big message is to try to improve speed and flexibility to help people make better decisions faster.”

Joining Joshi at the NSF Innovation Corps training was Karl Mundorff, director of the Advantage Accelerator, OSU’s business incubator. In addition to Mundorff and Joshi, the Innovation Management faculty includes Jonathan Arthurs, Tom Dowling, Chuck Murnieks, Evan Smouse and John Turner.