



Ron Stratton, '75, helps students pave the way to success.

P4



Take an Eagle to Lunch introduces the 2013 Silver Eagles Scholarship recipients.

P8



CBA is tapping into alumni, business leaders, program faculty and others to help review the Master of Business Administration program.

P12



Genevieve Mendell, an MBA grad assistant, works with SBDC business consultants doing research for clients, planning special events and more. The SBDC is spearheading the CBA's new initiative: The Center for Entrepreneurship, Sustainability and International Trade, which hopes to create jobs and spur development to boost Wisconsin's economy.



Building Bridges

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Center means business

New campus initiative emerges to bolster state's economy, serve businesses

A new initiative among UW-L's College of Business Administration, the UW System and the state is a one-stop shop to bolster Wisconsin's economy.

The effort addresses the economic difficulties regional businesses face by providing additional resources to more effectively meet their needs and create growth and jobs. The efforts will be spearheaded in the new Center for Entrepreneurship, Sustainability and International Trade, located in 120 Wimberly Hall.

"The center will collaborate with the UW-L Small Business Development Center to provide additional theoretical and practical support aimed at fostering entrepreneurial opportunities, building international awareness and developing best practices for sustainable businesses," explains Anne Hlavacka, SBDC director. "It will enable faculty and other university resources to be deployed to advance growth strategies aimed at commercializing innovation and helping businesses access new markets."

Hlavacka says the center was developed at UW-L because of its importance as a regional resource. "By enhancing its interaction with community and business organizations, the university fulfills its mission of promoting economic development," she notes.

Research and innovation continue to be important drivers of economic development, says Hlavacka. "UW-La Crosse's academic reputation puts it in a strong position to effectively engage faculty, staff, students and community members in research and development



Letter from Dean

Send heat!

This winter has been one of the coldest ones on record in the La Crosse area. As I write this letter in January, it is actually feeling very balmy at 16 degrees Fahrenheit. We just had two days of double-digit minus temperatures, with wind chills as low as minus 33. For those in warmer areas, please send us some warm air when it gets this cold in La Crosse!

As you may recall, last year was very successful. We sailed through our re-accreditation, received a national award for assessment efforts, and were recognized as a leader in assessment by several prominent national organizations.

This year we launched our Center for Entrepreneurship, Sustainability, and International Trade. We were promotionally featured in the Midwest edition of *Forbes Magazine* (Oct. 28, 2013 issue).

We are building enrollments in our new sustainability minor and in our new health information systems management minor. A special Task Force will review our MBA curriculum and make recommendations. Our students continue to be successful and our job placement rates are very high. The plans to remodel the historic Wittich Hall to house the College of Business Administration appear to be on track with an approximate move-in year of 2017.

UW-La Crosse continues to be ranked very highly. It remains the top-ranked comprehensive university in the UW System for the 13th year in a row, according to *U.S. News & World Report's* 2014 America's Best Colleges list of Best Regional Universities in the Midwest. UW-L is also the No. 3 public university in the Midwest among institutions providing a full range of undergraduate majors and master's programs.

The university also has once again been named to *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* list of 100 best values in public colleges in the country in 2014. UW-L is one of only two public colleges in Wisconsin to make the prestigious list.

UW-L is currently conducting a scholarship campaign. If you have not done so, I urge you to consider contributing to the CBA general or scholarship funds. Many of the CBA students help finance their education by working one or two jobs. Any contribution designated to aid them would be deeply appreciated.

During the spring 2014 semester the CBA will be hosting alumni events in Minneapolis, Milwaukee and Chicago. For those in those areas, I hope to see you at one of the events.

Warm regards,

Bruce E. May
Dean UW-L College of Business Administration



Vol. 19, No. 2 | *Building Bridges* is published biannually for UW-La Crosse College of Business Administration alumni and friends.

Direct comments to:

Dean Bruce May
UW-L College of Business Administration
1725 State St. | La Crosse, WI 54601 USA
608.785.8090 | bmay@uwlax.edu

Editor:

Kjerstin Lang

Art Director:

Florence Aliesch

Writers:

Kjerstin Lang
Brad Quarberg, '85

Photographers:

Sue Lee, '82 & '87
Pa Moua-Yang, '11
Hanqing Wu



The College of Business Administration is professionally accredited by AACSB - International, The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and is in compliance with Title IX and Section 504.

LinkedIn



www.uwlax.edu/ba

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse



SECRETS OF THE FED

Speaker sheds light on role of the Fed and state of economy

Narayana Kocherlakota, president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, visited campus in September.

People have a lot of questions for the Fed.

Why do food prices continue to rise? Are we aiming to get back to a pre-recession unemployment rate? Is it a good idea to keep interest rates artificially low?

These questions and more came up during a community discussion with one of the 19 members of a committee charged with shaping America's monetary policy.

Narayana Kocherlakota, president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis and a member of the Federal Open Market Committee, explained the role of the Federal Reserve and answered questions about it during an evening forum and Economic Indicators breakfast in September on campus.

TJ Brooks, chair of UW-L's Economics Department, who moderated both discussions, stressed the importance of the Fed getting out and explaining what it does as decisions the Fed makes affect mainstream Americans. The FOMC will buy or sell financial assets to force interest rates up or down with goals of lowering the unemployment rate and keeping food and energy prices close to a specified target — currently a two percent increase each year. Yet forecasts for employment and inflation imply that the FOMC is failing to provide sufficient stimulus to the economy, notes Kocherlakota.

Q: What has caused food prices to rise so much?

They haven't. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows a 1.4 percent increase in food prices within the last year, which indicates increases are running below the Fed's target of 2 percent, explained Kocherlakota.

Yet prices are going up a lot relative to wages. Compensation growth in the U.S. has been slow over past five years.

"If your compensation is not growing rapidly, even a normal rate of price increase feels like it's very sharp and very fast," he says.

Compensation growing slowly is a sign of problems in the labor market. Many people looking for work creates downward pressure on compensation. The policy treatment is more economic stimulus, he explained.

Q: Is the aim to get back to a pre-recession unemployment rate?

Examples throughout history show simply aiming at low unemployment rates without other economic considerations can create high inflation. Instead, the Fed estimates where unemployment will go in the long term and sets goals based on that. The Fed has adjust-

ed its estimate for unemployment upward from 4.5 to 5 percent at the beginning of the recession to between 5.2 and 6 percent today, indicating permanent damage to the labor market due to the recession. Yet there is room for unemployment to decline without impacting the inflation rate because compensation growth is so slow, he said.

Q: Is it a good idea for the Fed to keep interest rates artificially low?

No. However, the word "artificially" should be defined. It's important to think of interest rate adjustments in terms of how they are meeting the objectives of keeping inflation at a steady rate and keeping unemployment down. He gives the analogy of not planning winter weather wear based solely on the season, but on the actual temperature outside. Interest rates should adapt to the conditions present and not depend on a certain time of the year or how long it has been since they were last at a certain rate.



LISTEN

Listen to more of this Q & A with Narayana Kocherlakota: <http://goo.gl/YVJcAC>
Economic Indicators Breakfast — <http://goo.gl/pwYVf9>



“I have a firm belief that the upper division work I did at UW-L helped lay the groundwork for me to be successful in my career.”

— Ron Stratton, '75

Stratton helps students pave the way to success

Ron Stratton, '75, worked his way through college to graduate in four years with no financial help from parents or student loans. It's a feat that was admittedly easier in the 1970s, he says.

But the large amount of college student debt today — an average of \$26,000 for UW-L students who graduated during the 2012-13 school year — is a problem that Stratton wants to help solve. However, that's only if students are willing to do their part.

Stratton, who majored in accounting, set up a scholarship with the UW-L Foundation for junior and senior accounting majors who maintain employment during college. Stratton's agreement is to match their wages

up to half the cost of tuition and fees for up to four semesters.

“I could work through college in the 1970s and make it through, but I think it's harder now,” says Stratton. “My goal is to help students focus on getting through college in a reasonable amount of time.”

Stratton also went on to earn a master's degree at a larger public university. He chose to direct his giving to UW-L. It's a place where he has fond memories of the close-knit atmosphere and strong teaching staff in the Accountancy Department.

“I have a firm belief that the upper division work I did at UW-L helped lay the groundwork for me to be successful in my career,” he says.

Stratton went on to earn his MBA, pass the CPA exam, and worked for a national accounting firm. He became director of taxes for Tonka Corporation and later developed tax software that was licensed to 100 major companies in the U.S. He continued on the entrepreneurial path by founding a financial services company, growing it and selling it. Today Stratton does some business consulting and organic farming. After enjoying a successful career, he felt it was time to give back.

The Ronald Stratton Scholarship Program Fund is specific in more ways than one. Stratton worked with the foundation to meet several goals. In addition to directing his dollars to students who work, his funds only go to upperclassmen accountancy majors. He has a firm belief that accounting is critical and foundational to succeed in business. He chose to give to juniors and seniors only because these students have a good understanding of how to go to college and have learned enough about themselves to know their career direction. “I wanted to work with people who have achieved their focus,” he says.

He anticipates that the students he supports will also one day be successful, too, and will adopt a similar giving philosophy. So his scholarship includes a request



Share the LA CROSSE experience

Set up your own restricted scholarship to support your goal

UW-L has impacted many people in different ways whether through academic programs, a special faculty or staff member or an unforgettable opportunity such as undergraduate research or study abroad.

Consider establishing a scholarship fund that provides assistance to students in the area that means the most to you.

Learn more: www2.uwlax.edu/scholarship-campaign

Contact the UW-L Foundation staff:

Greg Reichert
Vice Chancellor for University Advancement
p. 608.785.8672 | m. 608.797.2136

Mary Ann Gerrard
Foundation President
p. 608.785.8496

Jeff Meyer
Senior Development Officer
p. 608.785.8502 | m. 608.799.3367

Jay Scott
Development Officer
m. 262.424.7940

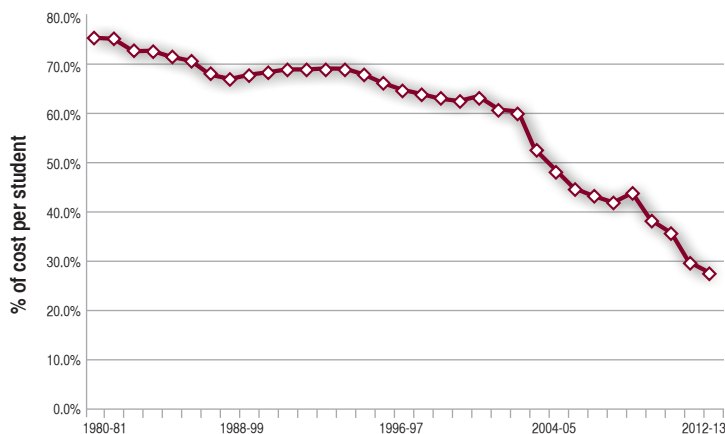
that students sign a non-binding statement to give back two semesters' worth of tuition to the university within the next 20 years. Stratton says such an addendum allows the scholarship to possibly become self-sustaining in the future.

Stratton recommends tailoring a scholarship to meet specific goals.

"I think it's a mistake to throw your money out there and say 'there, I've done something,'" he says. "You need a plan. For this scholarship I had specific goals that I wanted to achieve."

The first two Ron Stratton Scholarship Program Fund scholarships will be announced in spring 2014 for the 2014-15 academic year. Two new recipients will be named each year with the two prior recipients being renewed with the scholarship award.

State support per student as a percentage of educational costs



Tuition Costs

AT UW-L
BY DECADE

1950
\$0

1960
\$0

1970
\$320

1980
\$914

1990
\$1,773

2000
\$2,594

2012
\$8,760



Award-winning SBDC helping state's economy too

UW-L's Small Business Development Center offers broad support, specialized expertise and leadership in developing access to international markets for Wisconsin businesses. The center provides one-on-one small business counseling, classes, networking events and access to numerous development groups including the Inventors and Entrepreneurs Clubs and the 7 Rivers Alliance.

The center received the 2012 Small Business Development Center Service Excellence Award for the Midwest region and for Wisconsin. As the Midwest regional winner, the center ranked the highest among centers in Region 5 of the Small Business Administration, which, along with Wisconsin, includes Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Ohio.



CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Center means business

projects that are likely to foster regional economic opportunities and grow area businesses," she explains.

The university has a strong history of academic and collegiate success among alumni and friends. "The center enables the university to more effectively channel that interest to strengthen the institution and extend its reach in the region and beyond," explains Hlavacka.

Center to offer an array of services

The center's activities have already begun. Tailored programming is scheduled for fall.

The center will have a Web portal to enable businesses and organizations to identify and access key university resources. It also will house an executive-in-residence program to provide faculty, students, businesses and economic development agencies with access to business executives to gain a practical understanding of issues that confront business today.

Many businesses struggle while developing a sustainable business model, says Hlavacka. "The center will promote best practices that enable businesses to be better positioned and create sustainable business operations," she explains.

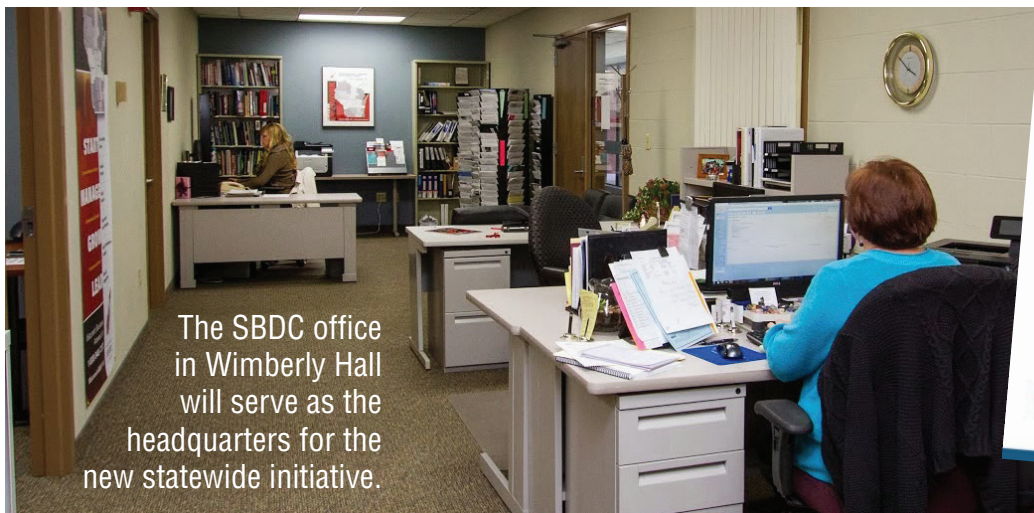


In addition, the center will spearhead a growth acceleration program called "Forward Entrepreneur." The program will enable collaboration with regional economic development resources to provide businesses with support necessary to expedite growth and create jobs.

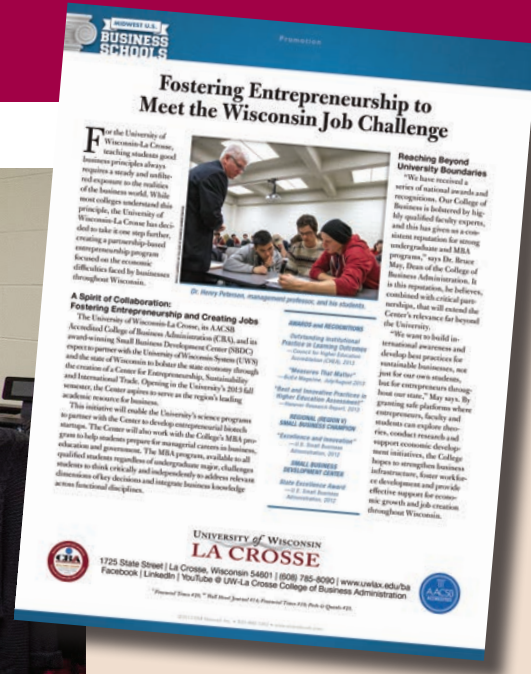
The efforts will extend to undergraduates as well. "Students also will be able to provide assistance to businesses through class projects, research and internships as they pursue their academic and entrepreneurial interests," explains Hlavacka.



SBDC Business Outreach Specialist Terri Urbanek, left, and SBDC Director Anne Hlavacka enjoy working with area businesses.



The SBDC office in Wimberly Hall will serve as the headquarters for the new statewide initiative.



More exposure

Center targeting MBA students, biotech startups, more

The center will also work with the MBA program to help graduate students prepare for managerial careers. Opportunities will exist for students to share their talents with organizations while gaining practical operational insight.

But CBA faculty and students won't be the only ones getting the state back to business. UW-L science programs will help develop entrepreneurial biotech startups.

The center will collaborate with the WiSys Technology Foundation to support research and technology development. The efforts will link campus researchers with business and other resources to increase entrepreneurship, innovation and research opportunities.

Promoting business here and beyond

CBA Dean Bruce May says the college is well positioned to support the center and help with improving state business.

"We have received a series of national awards and recognitions," notes May. "The CBA is bolstered by highly qualified faculty experts, and this has given us a consistent reputation for strong undergraduate and MBA programs."

This reputation, combined with critical partnerships, will extend the center's relevance far beyond the university, May says. "We want to build international awareness and develop best practices for sustainable businesses, not just for our own students, but for entrepreneurs throughout the state," he explains.

The CBA continues to get exposure in noteworthy business publications.

In October, the college was featured in a paid advertisement that ran in the Midwest edition of Forbes magazine.

"It's important for us to continue to have our name out there in order to keep the momentum going on our regional and national exposure," says Dean Bruce May. "We can use this continued recognition to help distinguish us from other programs in the region and in the state."

The CBA was featured in the July/August 2013 issue of "BizEd," a bi-monthly magazine published by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, the leading accrediting body for business schools worldwide.

In March 2013, the CBA was re-accredited by AACSB International, keeping it among the top 5 percent of business programs worldwide.

**Businesses can get involved by contacting the center at:
CESIT@uwlax.edu**



Take an Eagle to Lunch is an annual CBA event.



“I want everyone who has been a donor for this scholarship to know how much it means to us,” Weis told the Take an Eagle to Lunch guests. “It gives us the chance to prepare for our future.”

Kevin Weis, right, a UW-L senior and management major, received the 2013 Silver Eagles Scholarship for \$1,000.



SILVER EAGLES HELP UW-L SENIOR SOAR

Student sticks to career goal thanks to Silver Eagles scholarship

UW-L senior Kevin Weis wants to be a comprehensive financial adviser to help others feel secure about their future. Security — financial or otherwise — is one luxury Weis hasn't had.

Ever since his father was diagnosed with kidney cancer in 2003, life has thrown him some emotional and financial curve balls. The first came when his mother called during his sophomore year in college. Weis' father, who had lived with cancer for seven years, was now lying unresponsive in his chair. Weis sped home to Fountain City, Wis.

“I held on to him and he passed away,” recalls Weis.

The cancer was not only an emotional toll, but it also left the family struggling financially. Weis is now paying his own way through college.

He tries to spend time at home with his mother in Fountain City, but considers such travel expenses a challenge on a meager budget. “I would love to do it more, but can't afford it,” he says.

Recent bone surgery has added medical bills to his student loans and left him laid off for two and a half months. He is working to become licensed as a comprehensive financial adviser with Mutual of Omaha Financial Advisors, but he must await testing and the licensing process before he can start. Weis also has goals to launch his own computer-aided design business, but that too will require an investment in higher-tech software that he can't afford. With his inability to generate income, Weis wasn't sure he'd be able to start his senior year at UW-L.

That's when he was notified he was a recipient of a 2013 Silver Eagles Scholarship for \$1,000.

Kevin Weis spoke on behalf of student scholarship recipients at the annual Take an Eagle to Lunch event Oct. 25 at UW-L. The event is sponsored by the UW-L CBA Silver Eagles Organization and the CBA Board of Advisers. Along with Weis, other UW-L Silver Eagles Scholarship recipients for 2013 included: Ian Bantle, Natalie Meckstroth, Rachel Stark and Matthew Stephani.

"I feel like this scholarship means the world to me," he says. "I tell myself, 'you'll be able make it another six months and not have to move back home.'"

Weis calls himself driven — someone who would have trouble working a job that didn't fit his future goals. The Silver Eagles and the scholarship have helped him continue to look toward that future instead of settling into any job to make ends meet.

"I feel like this scholarship program that the Silver Eagles put on — it's incredible because there are people who are willing to help you who you don't even know," he says. "And that's a great blessing."

Photos by Hanqing Wu

Alumnus shares his business had a happy ending

In business it's not about where you start; it's about where you end, says Jason Parr, '94.

Parr graduated from UW-L's College of Business Administration with a 3.25 grade-point-average after retaking several freshman-year classes. His first job wasn't glamorous — working as an intern for a small Chicago CPA firm.

But Parr went back to law school at night and worked at PwC, one of the four largest international accounting firms, during the day. From 1996 to 2006, he rose from an accountant assisting with tax returns to a business development executive selling services to major corporations.

Parr, who now co-owns a property management business and several real estate investments, was the keynote presenter at the 14th Annual Take an Eagle to Lunch event Oct. 25 at UW-L's Cleary Alumni & Friends Center.

His message was primarily for CBA students. He told them how developing a strong relationship with his boss and gaining skills that became valuable to the organization eventually helped him become a partner-level executive in the company.

"Once you're in the company you want to work at, network and opportunity will become available," he told the crowd. "Never underestimate the power of allies and friends with influence."

After working for PwC for 10 years, Parr left to work full-time at his own business in 2006, JSP Properties LLC, a property management business located in St. Paul, Minn. The company had an annual growth of 25 percent in 2012 and estimates the same for 2013. It is recognized as a market leader in its area.

"I'm 41. When I was 21 I didn't know I wanted to be in real estate," he says. "You eventually find out what you really want to do. I love the corporate world and the benefits, but I also love running my own business."



Jason Parr, '94, owns a property management business, JSP Properties LLC, which is a market leader in the Twin Cities.

9 TIPS FOR UP-AND-COMING ENTREPRENEURS

from UW-L CBA graduate Jason Parr, '94

1. Be persistent in your efforts.
2. Follow up with people.
3. Learn to market yourself. Selling yourself is not natural or easy, but in today's business world, it is needed to advance.
4. Network.
5. Make your plan with your goals, then execute the plan.
6. Never give up on your goals (to succeed truly, there are always obstacles to overcome.)
7. Develop experiences that help differentiate and sell you. (People may be buying a product or service, but really it's about you.)
8. Where you start is often not where you end; embrace this.
9. Act as if: act like the person you want to be in the position you want to be in.



At Pat Stephens' retirement reception Oct. 31, his UW-L Advancement colleagues presented him with a check representing a UW-L Foundation scholarship that was established in his name. The \$1,000 Pat Stephens Scholarship will be awarded to a UW-L student in the spring semester. Stephens is pictured on the left.



Pat Stephens, recently retired director of collegiate gifts for the UW-L Foundation, holds up a donors/prospects card used early in his career to record information using a typewriter. He used the card as one of many props to talk about his 35 years at UW-L during his retirement reception.

'Positive Pat' retires

Stephens contributed to campus, CBA growth and networking

Co-workers call him enthusiastic, a team player, a problem solver and just plain positive to be around. That's UW-L Foundation Director of Collegiate Gifts Pat Stephens or "Positive Pat."

Stephens' positive nature is a plus in the relationship-building profession he's held since 1979 with the UW-L Foundation. In this role he met with prospective donors to help them direct gifts to support the campus and the UW-L student scholarship fund. Stephens retired Oct. 31.

For the last 15 years or more, Stephens has focused efforts within specific UW-L colleges, including the College of Business Administration. He spearheaded CBA events, including the annual Silver Eagles Take an Eagle to Lunch. With former CBA Dean Bill Colclough, he created the CBA annual golf outing, which benefits study abroad scholarships for CBA students. He helped start and continue alumni events in Madison, Milwaukee and the Twin Cities, as well as a CBA Distinguished Lecture Series. For about 25 years he was calling, emailing, and driving hundreds of miles to build relationships and stay connected with CBA alums, says Colclough.

"He was instrumental in my time as dean in terms of developing those relationships and networks that put in place events, activities and relationships that will go on for years ... and that will help the CBA enhance the learning environment for our students," says Colclough who now teaches in the CBA.

Stephens received a plaque in appreciation for his years of dedicated service to the College of Business Administration during the 14th Annual Take An Eagle To Lunch event in October.

"Pat has been a fixture at the university for a long time and contributed so much to the College of Business Administration, especially alumni affairs," says UW-L CBA Dean Bruce May. "Pat knows everybody ... He remembers everyone."

Since Stephens, '71, was a student, he has watched the campus grow from 6,000 to more than 10,000 students today and the number of campus buildings double.

He contributed to that growth. He led fundraising for construction of the Cleary Alumni & Friends Center

and helped secure donations for Centennial Hall and the Veterans Memorial Field Sports Complex. Along with other development staff, he has taken pride building the student scholarship fund payouts from about \$25,000 per year when he started to more than \$650,000 per year today.

"What keeps you going on those bad days is you believe in the cause," says Stephens. "It's helping others by the asks you make. Our office sees hundreds of thank you notes about what these gifts mean to students and families."

A Business Ed-venture

Professor teaches through life stories

In his business law class, Vivek Pande tells this story. He is 18 years old riding a motorcycle up a hairpin mountain road in India at dusk. As he rounds a corner, a man is standing with a gun pointed straight at him. It's a common dacoity in the country's back roads with a modern legal twist — forcing owners to sign their vehicle title over for zero rupees at gunpoint.

Pande doesn't want to die over a motorcycle, but he can't slow down quick enough to even attempt to stop. He blows by the man. After getting about 50 feet away, the gun fires. Pande rubs his back where he feels a sharp pain and his hand comes back red. He wonders if this ride will be his last.

The blood turned out to be from buckshot and Pande wasn't seriously injured. But the experience left him with one more real-life story to share with UW-L students. It's a more entertaining way to discuss the validity of contracts entered into under duress. Moreover, it helps explain how doing business in emerging markets can sometimes be unusual.



Pande has a 700-page textbook for the course. Four pages alone are devoted to the difference between unilateral and bilateral contracts or, as Pande calls it, "gibberish." It's not the kind of thing he devoted time working on as a corporate lawyer in Los Angeles for four years counseling Fortune 500 companies.

"I tell students I come from the real world. This doesn't matter in life," he says gripping the oversized textbook and pulling it off his office shelf.

He's boiled the book down to a 150-page outline coupled with videos he's recorded of business news stories with legal ramifications. "The thing about business and law is legal issues don't come labeled with flashing lights," he says. "That's where business people make legal mistakes. They don't realize it when it happens. Without real life experience, I couldn't teach."

Pande certainly can teach. While teaching business law at Koç University in Istanbul for seven years, and now at UW-L for two and a half, he's consistently earned high student evaluations and he was one of six UW-L professors to receive the inaugural 2013 Provost Teaching Excellence Award.

A former student, Jiheh Ritterling, '12, says she respected Pande as a well-traveled, knowledgeable and personable professor.

"Interested in international business, I went to Professor Pande seeking guidance in exploring my career options. In hindsight, this was one of the best decisions I made as a business student," she says. "He has been the single biggest factor in encouraging me to pursue my dream career and in guiding me through the process."



Vivek Pande pictured on a trip to Azerbaijan, a country neighboring Turkey, in 2003. Pande taught in Turkey for seven years at Koç University in Istanbul before coming to UW-L.

Pande is sometime wryly thankful his parents didn't pay for his college education, which gave him the kind of life experiences that are great fodder for class and made him appreciate the work required for success. It took him nine years to get through college working 80 hours a week delivering pizzas, waiting tables and driving buses. It was humbling to not make ends meet — one summer he slept on a park bench with about 50 cents to his name.

That changed after Pande earned his degree. Being a corporate lawyer was lucrative, but even so, he decided he'd rather teach. It's a job he feels good about at the end of the day.

And that's another story he shares with students.

"Do whatever you want to do in life, but do it well and success will come," he says. "You have to do the work all day and life is too short to be miserable."

Vivek Pande teaches U.S. and international business law and ethics to undergraduate and MBA students.

Master of Business Administration program students in a BUS 730 class in Wimberly Hall.



MBA program review seeks alumni, business feedback

UW-L's College of Business Administration is tapping into alumni, business leaders, program faculty and others to help review the Master of Business Administration program and ensure it's up-to-date.

To continue to offer a high quality learning experience and stay competitive, UW-L's MBA program needs to be periodically reviewed and the curriculum adjusted to new trends in management education, says Martina Skobic, MBA program director.

A task force made up of faculty members will review the MBA program curriculum and prepare any potential recommendations by May 2014. The CBA MBA alumni, local business representatives, CBA Board of Adviser members and other external and internal stakeholders will serve as consultants to the task force.

The first steps of the review process included an online survey of MBA alumni, completed in summer 2013. CBA alumni who graduated from May 2003 to August 2012 were asked about their employment activities, the importance of skills and the effect of the degree

on their career path. Forty three percent of alumni who were surveyed responded. Findings were compared to similar programs at six other universities.

The CBA's recent reaccreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) review team was completed without any significant concern. However, the AACSB developed a new set of accreditation standards in 2013, and UW-L needs to ensure that the program aligns with the new standards, says Skobic.

UW-L's MBA degree was first offered in 1975 and had the last major core curricula revisions in 2002. Since then, the CBA relied on the faculty, Graduate Committee, MBA assessment module, and the dean's office to monitor and engage in course and program assessment. The CBA Graduate Committee has been continuously reviewing curricular objectives and plans for the program, ensuring a rigorous and excellent education.

Continuous revisions have made the program advanced for its time, notes Skobic. For instance, national MBA program trends today emphasize a need for soft skills competency coverage in core courses in addition to functional and analytical competencies that are interdisciplinary and team-taught. Those trends were already part of UW-L's program since 2002.



MARTINA SKOBIC

8 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT UW-L'S MBA

1. Can be completed in one year.
2. Available to all-qualified students regardless of undergraduate major.
3. An evening program that serves both full and part-time students.
4. Online flexibility: Foundation, elective and two core courses can be completed online.
5. Rolling admission policy.
6. Interdisciplinary and team-taught.
7. The only AACSB International accredited program in the region. AACSB Accreditation is the hallmark of excellence in business education, and has been earned by less than five percent of the world's business programs.
8. The intention of the program is to challenge students to think critically about issues and problems organized around three themes: Changing technological environment, globalization and social and environmental responsibility.

PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON UW-L'S MBA

Alumni and area business leaders who would like to provide feedback on the MBA program can contact Program Director Martina Skobic at 608.785.8371 or mksobic@uwlax.edu.

Learn more about UW-L's MBA program and apply online <http://www.uwlax.edu/ba/graduate/gradstudents.htm>

UW-L economics professor talks taxes in *USA Today*

UW-La Crosse Assistant Professor of Economics Adam Hoffer makes a case for not taxing “unhealthy” foods like Big Macs and soda in a column in *USA Today*.



The opinion column “Big Brother declares war on consumption” explains how taxes on foods deemed unhealthy affect the poorest members of society the most because these people don’t have easy access to alternatives.

Co-authored by Hoffer and two professors at Utah State University, the column was published in the online opinion section in August 2013.

According to the article, when taxes increase on the cost of a Big Mac, it may not make economic sense for someone on a limited budget to drive to the nearest “organic” grocery store to prepare the meal at home.

“Because America’s poor are mired in miserable circumstances, the solution is not to increase taxes and raise prices on their relatively few options,” Hoffer and co-authors write. “Instead, the solution should be to make it easier to escape poverty altogether.”

America is experiencing a new wave of “selective” taxation with proposed taxes on products such as soda and Big Macs. If these industries lose their battle with government, pizza, bacon and hot dogs are likely candidates to be next on the chopping block, he explains.

“I believe that economic policy is taking the wrong approach to dealing with consumption-related issue,” says Hoffer. “Restricting choice is almost never the best approach to take and always has negative, unintended consequences.”

Hoffer, who has expertise in behavioral economics and tax policy, researches consumption taxes. He looks for answers to questions such as “How do consumers respond when their consumption is taxed?” and “What are the consequences of those consumer responses?”

Read the full story. <http://goo.gl/nwY9L5>

CBA students collect food during two-week drive

A group of CBA students in Student Advisory Council organized a food drive to benefit the UW-L food pantry and the Hunger Task Force Oct. 28-Nov. 8. Boxes were placed in seven department offices in the college, the CBA dean’s office and residence halls. The group also collected at downtown locations — Howes Diamond Jewelers and the People’s Food Co-op — on the last day of the drive. This is the fifth year the group has organized a food drive. Photo by Hanqing Wu.



UW-L Student Advisory Council students collected donations in Downtown La Crosse as part of the year’s food drive.



UW-L officials anticipate renovation of Wittich Hall will start in 2016. The goal is to reopen the building as the College of Business Administration in fall 2017.

WITTICH HALL PLANS MOVE FORWARD

Regent approval would pave the way for 2015-16 construction

UW-L's Wittich Hall is on track to become the new home of the College of Business Administration. The building renovation project will be included in the 2015-17 capital budget request to be submitted to the UW System Board of Regents in June 2014, says Bob Hetzel, UW-L vice chancellor for administration and finance.

UW-L officials anticipate developing the plan for renovation in 2014, which will involve complete demolition and reconstruction of the interior space while preserving the historic integrity of the building. Wittich Hall, constructed in 1916 as the campus physical education building, is listed on the Federal Register of Historic Places.

A new interior design concept calls for potentially adding a third floor to Wittich between the existing second floor and roof to accommodate existing and growing space needs in the CBA. Space shortages have hindered the delivery of CBA programs for years. That

need for space is anticipated to grow as the college continues to hire new faculty through UW-L's growth plan, and programs in new fields of study such as Healthcare Administration and Business Sustainability have potential to expand. The CBA needs about 40,000 gross square feet to accommodate its six departments, the Small Business Development Center and several student organizations. Wittich Hall with a third floor addition would provide 40,272 gross square feet.

CBA classrooms and offices are currently on various floors, intermingled with other departments, in Wimberly Hall and Wing Technology Center causing the college to lack a strong identity and proper facilities to aid in new student recruitment.

If approved by the UW System Board of Regents, UW-L officials anticipate starting to design the project in July 2015 with construction in 2016 and a goal to reopen the building in fall 2017.

The university had initially hoped that Wittich Hall would be renovated with state funds as part of UW System's facility renewal program; however, due to the state's limited capital resources that is no longer possible, says Hetzel. Because the renovation of Wittich to accommodate the CBA is a strategic priority for the university, UW-L officials are developing a financial plan to fund the cost of the renovation through university resources.

The latest significant renovation of Wittich Hall was in 1971. The partial renovation included removing a pool from the building and constructing an office suite in its place. Today the building is in major need of renovation — not only for cosmetic reasons. The mechanical ventilation and plumbing systems are served by essentially the same infrastructure that was used in the original construction of the building more than 90 years ago. If the building is allowed to continue to deteriorate, it would likely have to be closed to occupancy.



CBA networking event eases freshman transition into CBA

Student Advisory Council members Andrew Glaser, center, and Hannah Vidmar, right, handed out door prizes at the CBA annual “meet and greet” Oct. 4 in Cartwright Center. The event gives freshmen the opportunity to meet faculty advisers, hear from CBA students representing various organizations and majors, win prizes and more. Photo by Hanqing Wu.

For more photos of the event visit: <http://goo.gl/mT1uJP>

UW-L is 1 of 2 Wisconsin schools to make ‘Best Values’ list

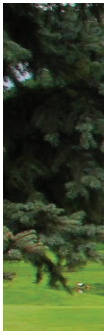
UW-La Crosse is one of only two public colleges in Wisconsin to make “Kiplinger’s Personal Finance” magazine’s top 100 best values in public colleges for 2014.

The leading financial magazine recognizes the 100 colleges and universities nationally that deliver academic quality and affordability.

UW-L has made the list for more than a decade. For 2014, UW-L ranked No. 49 for out-of-state students and No. 57 for in-state students, up from No. 73

and No. 65, respectively, a year ago. UW-Madison, the only other UW System school in the rankings, was No. 8 for in-state and No. 10 for out-of-state.

“We’re very proud to remain ranked among these prestigious institutions,” says UW-L Chancellor Joe Gow. “Clearly we offer a great value for our students by providing them an outstanding education at a very reasonable price.”



CBA golfers earn 2nd at Alumni & Friends outing

The College of Business Administration team earned second place with a score of 15 under par at the annual UW-L Alumni Association Alumni & Friends Golf Outing Aug. 7 at Cedar Creek Golf Club. The CBA team included, from left, CBA faculty member Bill Colclough; CBA Interim Associate Dean Glenn Knowles; CBA Board Member Scott Turnbull, '82; CBA Board Member Jeff Kessler, '81; and past UW-L Alumni Association Board Member Dennis Engh, '71.

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
College of Business Administration
1725 State St. | La Crosse, WI 54601 USA

www.uwlax.edu/ba

UW-La Crosse is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and is in compliance with Title IX and Section 504.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
La Crosse, Wis.
Permit No. 545

■ Volume 19, Issue No. 2 ■ Spring ■ 2014



Narayana Kocherlakota, president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, sheds light on role of the Fed and state of economy.

P3



Retiring Director of Collegiate Gifts Pat Stephens contributed to campus, CBA growth and networking.

P10



UW-L is the No. 3 best public regional university in the Midwest, according to *U.S. News & World Report's* 2014 America's Best Colleges list. And, UW-L was one of only 39 institutions nationally in the magazine's "A Focus on Student Success" for undergraduate research and creative projects.

CBA
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - LA CROSSE

Building Bridges

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse