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Business Futures



COB Film Festival
Celebrates a Decade
of Innovation

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SACRAMENTO STATE
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

MESSAGE FROM DEAN WILLIAM CORDEIRO

GOOD NEWS AND GOODBYES

It's with mixed emotions that I announce this will be my last Business Futures Dean's letter. After 34 years in the California State University (CSU) system and four years at Sacramento State, I plan to retire on July 1. In coming months, the college will embark on the search for a new dean, and I have faith that those assigned to the task will select a highly qualified person to lead the College of Business into the next phase of its evolution.

We've accomplished many things in the last four years and weathered some unprecedented circumstances. I'm particularly proud of the fact that we just received our five-year reaccreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. The reaccreditation process is challenging and time-consuming and required the hard work of many members of our faculty and staff. Receiving it is a signature accomplishment for COB.

We've endured what I hope was the worst of the pandemic and transitioned back to approximately 75 percent face-to-face classes. Transitioning to online education wasn't easy, but we learned a lot along the way, perhaps most importantly the fact that we can temporarily become an online university if extraordinary circumstances warrant it.

We've also recently created two new degree programs, the Master of Science in Finance and the Master of Science in Business Analytics, and revitalized the Business Advisory Council. In the coming months, we plan to launch a degree completion program designed for students who have some previous

college experience and would like to return to complete their degrees.

We continue to hire new faculty members. In fact, we just hired our fifth tenure track faculty and received permission from the provost to hire another six faculty in the next cycle.

Unlike some of our fellow CSU campuses, we aren't experiencing enrollment challenges. Our undergraduate program remains impacted, meaning we have more qualified applicants than available seats in a class. We plan to accept 800 new students in August and we continue to graduate about 900 students a year. We also increased our fundraising efforts, doubling the number of student scholarships we award to over \$250,000 annually.

Looking back over the last the four years, I'm perhaps most proud of the work we've done to formalize our department structure. When I arrived here, we were the only business school among the 23 CSU campuses that didn't have departments. We now have six departments. We also placed all our graduate programs, which were previously scattered across the COB, under one director, established two permanent associate dean positions, and hired more administrative support to keep us organized. Ultimately, we stabilized the college and created a



framework for future success that will continue long after my departure.

I have enjoyed my four years at Sac State and I truly believe we have made a difference. As I prepare to leave the world of education and enter retirement, I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of the students and the college. I couldn't have done it without you.

Sincerely,
Dean William P. Cordeiro, Ph.D.
College of Business

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College of Business

MISSION

Sacramento State's College of Business develops engaged, responsible, and inclusive business leaders who enrich our communities.

VISION

The College of Business aspires to be the educational backbone of the Sacramento business community and an active force in creating a better future.

DEAN

William Cordeiro

ASSOCIATE DEAN
FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

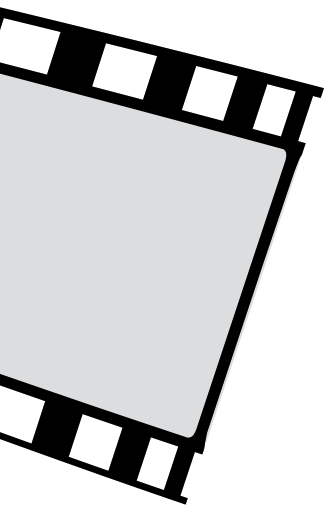
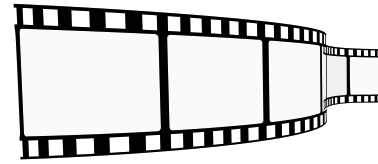
Andrey Mikhailitchenko

ASSOCIATE DEAN
FOR FACULTY SUPPORT

Jaydeep Balakrishnan



A Pedogeological Fusion: Leading with Emotional Intelligence and Filmmaking



Dr. Hakan Ozcelik



Audience enjoys the film festival.

Combining his knowledge of filmmaking and teaching experience with emotional intelligence and leadership theories, Dr. Hakan Ozcelik pioneered the innovative, award-winning Annual College of Business Film Festival on Leading with Emotional Intelligence to teach students at Sacramento State how to lead with emotional intelligence through filmmaking.

The annual film festival program has been recognized with the CSU 2018 Faculty Innovation Leadership Award and several Sacramento State Pedagogy Enhancement Awards and grants.

Ozcelik has extensive research expertise on emotions in organizations and was recently acknowledged with the prestigious University Research Award. About a decade ago, Ozcelik started teaching Human Resources and Organizational Behavior 158: Leading with Emotional Intelligence. Though



Winning student team receives their award.

he recognized that emotional cues and leadership could be learned through books and lectures, Ozcelik took on the pedagogical challenge of providing students an experiential and visual learning experience instead.

"This is what we call studio pedagogy," says Ozcelik. "I'm using the classroom as a studio, where students can use their skills, knowledge and teams to solve real world problems in an artistic manner."

When Ozcelik tells his students that producing a film is a major requirement of the course, they are usually shocked. However, after several successful COB Film Festivals, Ozcelik knows this will build their HR and leadership skills and that his students will be able to add filmmaking to their resumes.

"Filmmaking is based on storytelling, and each theory should also tell a good story," Ozcelik says. "You need theories to solve real life problems in our field. For leadership theory, it's organizational problems. So, I decided to give a different problem to my students every year that they can address and then illustrate that theory."

The COB Film Festival, sponsored by the Dean's Office, occurs once a year during the fall semester. Pre-pandemic, the festival was held on the Sac State campus. "For more than a decade, the Annual COB Film Festival has featured 66 film-projects in live events hosting more than 1,500 guests. Field experts from Wharton School, Temple

University, Yale, Stanford, UC Berkeley, George Mason, and Israel Institute of Technology joined our events as commentators," says Ozcelik.

Post-pandemic, Ozcelik decided to feature the winning film on the College of Business' YouTube Channel, [COB Organizational Wisdom Studio](#). That generated over 3,000 views and a lot of positive feedback from international viewers and the Academy of Management community, leading to



Judges deliberate after viewing the films.

Ozcelik's decision to post more of these films to COB Organizational Wisdom Studio moving forward.

The 2021 COB Film Festival generated a global audience that tuned in from seven different countries to attend the festival live via Zoom. Even with the COVID-19 pandemic in full effect, the COB Film Festival production improved

since the students were able to collaborate and complete their projects entirely online using Zoom or other virtual technology. The Fall 2021 topic was "Should I Return or Should I Go?". The film projects explored how leading with emotional intelligence can help organizations better manage employees returning to the office post pandemic.

"What our students have done is phenomenal," says Ozcelik "They've overcome amazing challenges to produce comedy film projects, virtually, about the pandemic. Through their storytelling and their knowledge and creativity, the students produced beautiful films that are being released to an audience from around the world. These students and these films are way ahead of the curve."

The COB Film Festival would not be as successful without the members of the community that participate and prepare the students for the festival. Dr. Ozcelik enlists experts to hold workshops in filmmaking, film writing, film editing and acting to coach the student groups. Additionally, the festival has developed what Ozcelik refers to as a "fan club" made up of executives, managers, employees, artists, and project alumni who never miss a festival. Finally, a combination of 15 to 18 professors, business executives, and artists judge the films on the spot.

"People who took my class 10 years ago still come and sit in the jury to choose the best film," says Ozcelik. "Some of them work as executives for places like Apple or VSP. Some of them are now part-time faculty at the College of Business. We have this vibrant film festival community that comes together every year to celebrate."

To learn more about the COB Film Festival and the upcoming Fall 2022 festival, send an email to: cba.film.festival@gmail.com.



COB's New Associate Dean of Academic Programs:

Andrey Mikhailitchenko

Andrey Mikhailitchenko was appointed the Associate Dean of Academic Programs (ADAP) in February 2022. Mikhailitchenko started his career at the Sacramento State's College of Business (COB) in 2009 and has been in a variety of roles since joining Sac State as a COB Marketing and Supply Chain Management (MSCM) faculty member. His previous roles included Director of the Center for Small Business, Faculty Director of the iMBA program, MSCM area leader, and MSCM Department Chair.

Mikhailitchenko's primary responsibilities are to ensure everything connected to the teaching process, as it relates to and effects students, runs smoothly. This includes, but is not limited to, student success, admission standards, and university and college-level initiatives. As the ADAP, he collaborates with COB's six department chairs to develop curriculum, new courses, programs, and concentrations. He also continually works to improve the college's academic structure to demonstrate to the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) the college's academic rigor and excellence and achieve reaccreditation, as the COB has for the last 59 years. In addition to these responsibilities, Mikhailitchenko recently accepted and serves as the (interim) Director of Graduate Programs.

Mikhailitchenko grew up in Russia and Ukraine, and received a bachelor of science in business administration with an emphasis on economics and Chinese language in 1984. In China he completed The Translator Certificate in the Chinese language in 1985. Mikhailitchenko made his way to the United States in 1999, where he completed his masters (2002) and doctorate (2008) degrees in business administration. Additionally, Mikhailitchenko speaks Russian, Chinese, and English, allowing him to complete research in different languages. "My multinational experience helps a lot because Sacramento State is very diverse in terms of cultural backgrounds," says Mikhailitchenko.


Prior to starting his career at Sac State, Mikhailitchenko worked as a research scientist in various roles in the Soviet Union. After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Mikhailitchenko decided to start his own business, the Continent Trading Co. Mikhailitchenko was enjoying running a business, but was eager to expand his knowledge, leading him to start his academic career in 1998. "I decided to



become more knowledge-equipped to manage the company, and to build a theoretical background in managing business," he says.

One degree at a time, he achieved that goal. Once Mikhailitchenko received his doctorate in business administration from Nance College of Business Administration at Cleveland State University, he decided to retire from the practical business industry and shift to academia.

"It was an interesting challenge for me because transferring to academia was a combination of practical business and theoretical perspectives," says Mikhailitchenko. "I have a strong practical business perspective and I believe this benefits the students I teach and the research and community service I am doing."

Mikhailitchenko enjoys the enrichment academia brings to his life. He feels at home in Sacramento and is still able to visit with family and maintain business relationships in various countries. "I have visited more than 50 countries and hundreds of cities, and in my opinion, Sacramento is the best city on earth to live and work in," says Mikhailitchenko. 

Dean's Award Winner Emily Gonsalves **Rising from the Ashes**

Emily Gonsalves overcame some major setbacks — including a serious car accident, lack of reliable internet for online learning during COVID-19, and a fire that nearly burned her family farm to the ground — to become one of COB's top students. In recognition of her fortitude, she was recently recognized with the 2022 Dean's Award.

Emily Gonsalves is a small-town girl at heart. In the 1980's her grandparents moved from the Bay Area and purchased a small family farm in the town of Rumsey, about seventy miles north of Sacramento. Gonsalves grew up on that farm and spent her days taking care of animals and enjoying the freedom of wide-open spaces.

After graduating from a small high school, Gonsalves attended Woodland Community College while she figured out where she wanted to focus her studies. She eventually settled on accounting.

Gonsalves transferred to Sacramento State in Spring 2020. Her first few months on campus were an adjustment. "Going to Sac State was very new for me," she says. "Even though I'm still within the greater Sacramento area, there are no big cities near me. For example, the closest hospital is an hour away."


She was on campus at Sac State for about two months when everything changed again, and COVID-19 sent students home. While remote learning meant she got to spend more time on the farm, it also presented challenges because internet connectivity is limited in her area. She frequently traveled twenty miles to the public library to use the nearest available Wi-Fi. However, because the library was also closed due to the pandemic, she spent hours working from her car outside the library, downloading course materials and taking online exams. "Trying to use your calculator, take notes and use your laptop and your textbook in the car — I don't recommend it," she says.

That wasn't her only major challenge during college. Gonsalves was in a serious car accident in 2017 two weeks after beginning courses at Woodland Community College that left her with life-long impacts. Following that, her family farm nearly burned to the ground during the Rumsey Sand Fire in 2019. The family had to evacuate quickly, leaving everything — including her beloved animals — behind. Gonsalves' family lost several cars, outbuildings, barns, and farm equipment, but fortunately the house and most of the animals were spared (sadly, one dog was never located).



Despite her many challenges, Gonsalves has worked hard at Sac State and maintained a 4.0 GPA. In recognition of her hard work, she was awarded the Dean's Award. "When I received the confirmation email I cried," she says. "I couldn't believe I got it. This award is a culmination of all my efforts, and it confirms that I achieved what I've been working toward."

Last summer, Gonsalves began working at Cache Creek Casino as a revenue auditor to gain experience in accounting. She will graduate in May and plans to continue her job at the casino while she works to become a CPA, and perhaps a CFO eventually.

Until then, she spends her free time around the farm taking care of the animals, which include horses, cows, pigs, ducks, chickens, turkeys, dogs and about 30 barn cats, and enjoying life on the farm. "I love the farm and I try not to let life get overly complex," she says. "I like to keep things simple." 

COB's Outstanding Senior: Merline Monsy

Merline Monsy believes we all have what it takes to become the hero/heroine of our own story.

Monsy moved to America in December 2017 with her parents and her brother. Her parents are from India, but Monsy was actually born and brought up in the Middle East where her parents worked.

In 2018, Monsy was accepted to Consumnes River College (CRC). As an international student, Monsy had to pay higher tuition than many of her cohorts and worked full-time to pay for her education.

Once she completed her associates degree at CRC, Monsy considered offers from several colleges. But when she visited the Sacramento State campus, it was love at first sight. "As soon as I stepped onto campus, I knew I was home," she says.

As Monsy prepared to transfer to Sac State, she received an invitation to join COB's Business Honors (BHON) program. "I didn't know much about the program at the time, but getting into it was a blessing in disguise because I feel like I have a second family here now. My cohort is amazing."

Monsy transferred to Sac State's College of Business to focus on accounting. "I've always loved numbers," she says. "I was that person who was really good at math, so when it came to choosing a major, accounting was my top choice."


Monsy says her BHON professors have been especially impactful during her time at Sac State and were always willing to take time away from their regular schedules to help students in need. "It's easy to get overwhelmed in the BHON program, because it's not easy," says Monsy. "But the professors provide a great support system, and that means a lot to the students. Whenever students, including myself, started to feel like we couldn't do it, the BHON professors helped us focus and stay on track."



Monsy was recently awarded COB's Outstanding Senior Award. "When I found out I won I was really excited," she says. "I feel like this is not just an award, it also motivates me to move forward with my goals. I feel like I have a responsibility now to go out there in the world and be a model for what Sac State can bring out in students. It also reminds me that with determination and perseverance, you can accomplish anything."

Monsy will graduate in May and has already accepted a full-time position at Deloitte. She also plans to start an

organization to help anyone who is struggling to gain access to a college education.

"From the beginning, Sac State was a second home and a comfortable place for me to go to learn and to grow as an individual," she says. 

Lydia Anderson

Working Professional, College Student, Mom

Lydia Anderson is a working professional who realized she needed a boost to continue her career trajectory. She found that boost at the Sacramento State's College of Business.

Anderson was born in Athens, Greece, and teetered between living in Maui and Greece from 1987 to 2003. In 2004, she moved to Sacramento to set roots. Anderson was admitted to Sacramento State in 2008 but had to drop the program for personal reasons. Anderson began working at Vision Service Plan (VSP) in 2006 and in 2014, she was promoted from a business analyst to CRM product owner. After being passed over for a couple of promotions, Anderson realized she had hit the ceiling on how far she could take her career without a degree.

Anderson rejoined the College of Business in 2018 as an undergraduate student in the business administration program while working a full-time job at VSP. "I was a sponge, absorbing everything. I was taking classes that directly correlated with my day-to-day work, having discussions with my professors at school and my mentors at work. Everything correlated and it was great," she says.

Anderson was able to expedite her academic career when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, allowing her to take more classes online and summer classes. In addition to her studies, Anderson also has a 3-year old daughter, Amara, adding full-time mom to the list.

"They say if you want something done, give it to the busiest person, and that is definitely me," says Anderson. "I don't procrastinate because I don't have time to procrastinate. If I have five

free minutes, I'll find something to knock off my to do list."

The classes that were the most impactful for Anderson were Management 117: Business, Ethics and Society with Dr. Pooria Assadi and General Management 170: Fundamentals for Business Strategy with Dr. Marc Fechner. The general management class was helpful because Anderson

wants to move into management, and it taught her how to manage people and how to make decisions that strategically benefit a company. "So often, people are promoted to management because they are good at their job, but just because you're a good salesperson does not mean you're going to be a good sales manager. I want to think strategically about what the best decision is," she says.


The business ethics class taught Anderson that business is not black and white, companies make mistakes, and sometimes there is no right decision. "We were reading news headlines every week and applying the principles we learned, assessing what they did wrong, what they could have done better, and what we would have done. It was so relevant to business today," she says.

Anderson is excited to graduate in May 2022. Going back to Sac State and finishing her degree has given her a second wind and reminded her how much she loves learning. "I'm sure I'll eventually be signing up for one of those



information sessions about getting your master's degree at Sac State," she says.

After graduation, she plans on taking a break and spending more time cooking and traveling with her family and spending time in her garden. Anderson also plans to look into available career options at VSP now that she has a degree to back up her experience and skills.

"I'm so happy I removed this roadblock of not having a degree. Life isn't a straight path, and education doesn't have to be either. It's never too late to go back to school and finish a degree," says Anderson. " 



Jeffery Yazel

Marching to His Own Drummer

Jeffery Yazel was born and raised in Sacramento. After high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas in the 1st Infantry Division. He was later deployed to Afghanistan to conduct direct combat operations supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

After his tour of duty, Yazel worked for a few different corporations but realized he was hitting a ceiling without a college degree.

"I had several good managers that moved up to higher positions while I was working with them," says Yazel. "They were good role models, and they were all pushing me to go back to school. So that's what I did."

Yazel used his military benefits to enroll at Cosumnes River College, completing his associate degree before transferring to Sacramento State. Yazel has always had diverse interests, and at Sac State those interests flourished. He started with a concentration in general management, then realized he had an interest in finance, so he declared a second concentration in finance. Over

last summer he realized he also had an interest in marketing, so he declared a third concentration in marketing. At the same time, Yazel started pursuing an A.A. degree in psychology at Sac City College and pursuing his real estate license. Yazel completed 66 credits at three different colleges in 2022 alone and still maintained a high GPA.

"I have a lot of different interests, but they're all tied toward being a sharper tool when it comes to corporate management and being an executive or entrepreneurial track, or perhaps a little bit of both," he says.

Yazel credits some of the professors he's had at Sac State for sparking his interest in different areas of business.


"There's such a rich diversity when it comes to professors at Sac State — where they are from geographically, all the extra fringe knowledge that they bring. It's pretty incredible and it makes you realize you can do so much more."

Yazel also volunteers with UNIQUE Programs, a Sac State group that brings innovative, quality entertainment to

campus. As a student volunteer he helps plan, promote and produce UNIQUE events, from comedy shows to concerts, lectures, performing arts and multicultural programs.

"I have a background in event promotion and music, I play multiple instruments and I produce on the side," he says. "It's fun working with UNIQUE because I get to showcase a bit of my talents and work on my public speaking, sales pitches, and promotion skills. But most importantly, it's fun to bring people together, especially after a pandemic."

Yazel will graduate in Spring 2022. Following graduation, he hopes to work for a leading organization with a mission and values he can get on board with.

"Once I'm passionate about something, I go full throttle," he says. "The sky's the limit in terms of where I might work. I just want to find somewhere where I can provide value to the company and to the world." 

Kyler Key

From Dishwasher to General Manager

Kyler Key started working as a dishwasher at Poke Noke, a popular Sacramento fast-casual poke eatery, during his senior year of high school.

Following high school, Key attended a local junior college to play baseball for a few years but continued to work at Poke Noke. Following a few unforeseen events – including a car accident and the COVID-19 pandemic – Key transferred to Sacramento State's College of Business to major in finance, put his baseball career behind him, and focused more closely on his job at Poke Noke. "After that, I moved up really quickly at the restaurant. I went from shift lead to manager to general manager," he says.

Today, Key serves as general manager of Poke Noke while he finishes up his final year at Sac State with a double concentration in business finance and entrepreneurship.

"I helped the owners of Poke Noke open a new store in Folsom, and that made me realize that I liked the entrepreneurship aspect of business in addition to finance, so I decided to double major."


Key says one of the other best things about working at Poke Noke is that both the owners are alumni of Sac State. "They've been able to guide me and give me advice that has helped me along the way," he says.

Key also found that working fulltime while attending Sac State's College of Business allowed him to apply a lot of the things he learned in class to his day-to-day work operations. "That's been really beneficial," he says. "The variety of classes we have to take has been really helpful on the job."

Key says the thing he likes best about being a young general manager is having an impact on the employees he manages. "A lot of the people that work here are in high school, so I get a



chance to mentor them and share some of my life experiences and try to instill the right values in them. Even though I'm only 22, I've had a certain amount of life experience so I'm able to help them and provide some guidance."

Following graduation Key hopes to work in sales, particularly in a role where he can help small businesses. "Small businesses are the backbone of our country," he says. "After seeing how much they had to go through with the COVID pandemic, I want to try to help them in any way I can." 



MSBA PROFILE

Florenze Almalel Mastering a Love of Data

Florenze Almalel was born in the Philippines and moved to the United States at the age of 12. After completing high school in the small city of San Dimas, Calif., Almalel received his undergrad degree from UC Santa Cruz in business management with a minor in information management.

"I was kind of lost after college because business management is a very broad major and I didn't know which direction I wanted to go," he says. "The only thing I knew is I definitely wanted to work in technology."

Almalel's first job after college was as a data imagery editor for Apple Maps. He also worked for Tesla. But both jobs involved working on proprietary software and learning skills that weren't necessarily transferrable to other companies and projects.


In 2021, Almalel enrolled in a data analytics bootcamp and learned new skills with broader applications. "I fell in love with how I could use data, translate it into critical information, and present it to people that needed the information. That's a fascinating concept to me," he says.

Looking to expand on those types of skills, Almalel applied to be part of the inaugural cohort for Sacramento State's Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA) program. The MSBA program focuses on using quantitative approaches and

core technologies to improve decision making and business performance. Because the program is 100 percent online, Almalel could attend classes from his home in the Bay Area and maintain his fulltime job.

At press time, Almalel was halfway through the 21-month program. "The professors are always willing to listen," he says. "As an undergrad I was always afraid to go to my professors. But in the MSBA program, the professors are really approachable, and they all have had life experience so they can guide us in the right direction."

Almalel says the program has also given him a new appreciation for figuring out problems using trial and error. "As an undergraduate I just wanted the answers," he says. "The MSBA program has helped me become more patient and analytical and to work through problems and puzzles methodically so I can see the big picture."

Almalel changed jobs while enrolled in the MSBA program and now works at Meta (aka Facebook), where he optimizes and analyzes data as part of his job. But once he graduates in May 2023, he hopes to work for a smaller technology company. "I'd like to work somewhere where I feel like my contributions are really felt," he says. "I want to be an important part of the team. I don't have to be a CEO, but I want to feel like I make a difference with the company." 

EMBA PROFILE

Sandra Anderson

Where the Rubber Meets the Road

Sandra Anderson has worked in the electric utility industry for 22 years. In 2018, she was recruited to leave her job in Wisconsin and move to California to help the California Independent System Operator (Cal ISO) launch a Reliability Coordination Services department. Today, as a Reliability Coordinator for Cal ISO, she oversees the operations of the power grid from Washington state through Northern Mexico, monitors the integrated transmission and generation system to ensure reliability, and identifies conditions that may lead to widespread outages.

Though her career has focused on utilities, Anderson had always been interested in learning more about business. In 2020, she decided it was time to do something about that interest, so she enrolled in the Executive MBA (EMBA) program at Sacramento State just as the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

"We had a smaller cohort because of COVID," she says. "But because of that reduced number, we got to work with everybody, we got to know everybody, we formulated friendships and we figured out where we could leverage each other's experiences in different areas."

Anderson's final project in the EMBA program was to write a business plan. She always wanted to own a business, so it was a perfect opportunity to explore that possibility further.

"I realized the courses I took were really teaching me how to start my own business," she says. "It was a deep dive into exploring, what do you want to do? What are you good at? I decided that by the time I graduated I wanted to launch my own business."

Armed with the knowledge she gained from the program and the guidance she received from her professors, Anderson filed incorporation papers for Kaye's Konnections LLC, a long-haul trucking company, in September 2021.

"I got an SBA loan funded and bought my first Freightliner truck and trailer," she says. "The Thursday before I graduated, I sent the check out to pay for it all. My business was up running."

Anderson's mission is to improve the truck driver experience. "There is a high demand for trucking services, but truck drivers are fed up with the conditions," she says. "Many of them are not paid well, and they are away from home a lot."




Kaye's Konnections strives to connect drivers to a good driving experience where they are paid well and have more time off to be with their families. Anderson also wants to give back to the community, so her company will donate 10 percent of its net profits to philanthropic organizations.

The fact that she works 12-hour rotating shifts at Cal ISO gives Anderson the flexibility to run a business in addition to her full-time job, and Kaye's Konnections will provide her the financial stability she'll need after she retires from Cal ISO in seven years. But Anderson says the EMBA program was the turning point she needed to take a chance and launch her business.

"I was scared, but because I worked closely with my EMBA professors, I had the confidence to go for it," she says.

Anderson's goal is to buy at least seven more trucks within the next seven years.

"After I retire, I'm going to give them to my son. He can operate everything, and this can be part of his inheritance and legacy," she says. "I'm grateful I was able to achieve this goal." 

IMBA PROFILE

Chirag Thakur Giving Back: iMBA Student Launches Initiative to Help Those Struggling with the Pandemic

Born and raised in Himachal Pradesh, India, Chirag Thakur moved to the United States in 2019. Though she had a degree in engineering from her native country, Thakur wanted to explore the field of business. Just after enrolling in the Online iMBA program at Sacramento State, her whole world changed. Thakur found herself attempting to navigate a new country, a new culture, and the new world of online education amid a terrifying worldwide pandemic.

"There were so many changes at once, it was overwhelming," she says. "I vividly remember my husband galvanizing me after my first class. For me it was a constant struggle to fit in."

But the magic of the iMBA program is that the entire cohort is diverse and global, and they were all experiencing the same fears. Thakur's cohort included well-educated and accomplished students from China, Germany, Taiwan, Columbia, and elsewhere.

"At first, we were all living in our little self-made silos of fear, stigmas and insecurities," Thakur says. "As the program progressed, we brought down the walls. We shared our stories, our weaknesses, our insecurities and realized we do not need to try to fit in but to embrace our individualities."

At the same time, Thakur became acutely aware of the struggles caused by the pandemic back home in India. "So many people lost their lives, their jobs, their livelihoods. I wanted to do something to help," she says.

Thakur rallied her global cohort and launched a nonprofit called the Act Human Initiative. The Act Human Initiative is a 100 percent volunteer-run program designed to help families suffering from the COVID-19 crisis around the world. Its mission is to provide food, supplies and resources to communities in need.




"Our mission was to motivate people around the world to come forward and help their communities," says Thakur.

Thakur also got in touch with a professional from the California Department of Healthcare Services who agreed to offer mental health support via the Act Human Initiative to anyone seeking help. "Not everybody needs money or food, some need just someone to speak to," she says.

Thakur wanted to translate her passion for serving people into a profession, which drove her interest in California state jobs. She attended a virtual job fair at Sac State and was subsequently offered a recruiter position with the department of California Correctional Health Care Services (CCHCS). Her journey came full circle when she attended the 2022 virtual job fair at Sac State as a CCHCS recruiter and inspired attendees with her story.

Thakur was recently awarded iMBA's Outstanding Student Award. She credits her husband, mother, her family in India and her in-law's support for her success.

"Until my third course I wasn't sure how a four-point GPA system even worked, and yet I graduated with a 4.0 GPA," Thakur says. "I was there, as my husband says, 'to enjoy the learning.' I had 12 professors in the iMBA program, and every single one of them helped me grow. It was an experience that will be a source of joy throughout my life." 

MBA PROFILE

María José Ramírez

If 'Follow Your Dreams' Was a Person

María José Ramírez Saborío made several life changing decisions that ultimately led her to pursue her Master of Science in Business Administration (MBA) at the Sacramento State's College of Business.

Born and raised in Costa Rica, Ramírez graduated with her bachelor's degree in business administration from Universidad de Costa Rica and started her career as an administrative assistant at Ernst and Young. After being with Ernst and Young for almost a year, Ramírez decided to quit her full-time job to pursue an internship at Intel Corporation. "My parents thought I was crazy to trade a full-time job for an internship, but I still decided to do it and it was a wise career move," says Ramírez.

When Ramírez joined Intel, her English was out of practice and had a hard time working with the different accents. However, within three months she acclimated to the job and was promoted to a full-time position. A year later she was promoted to senior collector, and she finished off her career at Intel as a team lead.

Ramírez was very comfortable with her life. She had a good job in her hometown, and she was with her family, but she also sought new challenges. "I decided to pursue one of my biggest dreams – studying abroad and I was at a point in my life where if I didn't do it, I would never do it. So, I decided to leave my comfort zone and move to the United States to get my MBA."

Ramírez graduated with her MBA in Spring 2021, and completed most of program virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She was able to make key connections during her first semester,

that was in-person, and she nurtured those relationships throughout her time in the program and continues to keep in touch. "The network, connections, and friends you make is one of the most valuable things I got from the program," she says.


Ramírez is still very close with her team who competed alongside her in the International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition. Her team was awarded first place for best overall performance and best presentation, and runner up for best documents. "We bonded so much through that experience, we try to meet at least once a quarter," says Ramírez.

Reflecting on her experience in the MBA program, Ramírez acknowledged her professional growth, "I can feel the difference before and after the program. It encourages me to be more assertive, analytical, and strategic in the work environment," she says.

Ramírez's concentration was entrepreneurship, and her favorite class was an innovation class that promoted a curious mindset in the workplace.

Ramírez is currently working for Girl Scouts as a membership and



recruitment specialist. "Not only do I get to apply what I've learned in the MBA on daily basis, but I'm creating an impact in people's lives, giving girls this opportunity and helping them get started with our program gives my work meaning," says Ramírez. "Seeing the growth in these girls and how they enjoy the program is one of my biggest rewards." 

EMBA PROFILE

Lydia Ramirez

It Only Takes One

As a Senior Vice President at Five Star Bank, Lydia Ramirez is currently the highest-ranking Latina in banking in the greater Sacramento area. She's also dedicated to ensuring she helps improve diversity in banking and other industries throughout the Sacramento region.

Ramirez attended UC Davis as an undergraduate. While there, she stopped by the Davis branch of MUFG Union Bank and noticed there was a long line of customers waiting to see a teller. Always looking to help solve problems, she asked the manager if they were hiring. Little did she know, that would be the beginning of a long career in banking.

Ramirez started working as a teller for MUFG Union Bank as a sophomore in college. After graduating as a double major in psychology and Spanish, she wasn't sure what she wanted to do next. But she did love the idea of working with people, and the bank fulfilled that niche. Soon after graduation, one of the branch managers suggested Ramirez apply for a bank management training program. She applied to the competitive program and was thrilled to be selected. The program exposed her to all facets of the banking industry.

With her training program complete, Ramirez was promoted to Branch Manager at age 25. She stayed in that role for seven years, until her supervisor offered her an opportunity to attend CBA Executive Banking school at Furman University in South Carolina. The three-year program teaches students all aspects of how to run a bank.

"Executive Banking school exposed me to a lot. After that, I didn't want to go back and do the same job. I was ready for so much more," says Ramirez.

Soon after she graduated from executive banking school in 2017, Ramirez joined Five Star Bank as Director of Grant Administration and was later promoted to Director of Operations. But she wasn't done learning yet. Ramirez always wanted to get her MBA. As luck would have it, a couple of her colleagues at Five Star Bank had recently completed the EMBA program at Sacramento State and highly recommended it. Given her full-time job and two children at home, Ramirez found the EMBA program a perfect fit for her schedule. She began the program in October 2019 and finished in February 2021.

"The relationships that I built and the confidence I gained in the EMBA program were incredible," she says. "It was a great opportunity to meet future business leaders in the community and help them flourish and to help my own career flourish."

Ramirez wrote her EMBA thesis on Five Star Bank and diversity, equity and inclusion. In doing so, she wrote herself into a new job.




She now serves as senior Vice President, Chief Operations Officer and Chief Diversity Officer. "I wrote the foundation of the program that we are implementing at the bank today," she says. "The lesson learned is, you can write yourself into a job and the EMBA program gives you the tools to do it."

Ramirez's new job includes overseeing seven business lines, including the diversity and inclusion program. She also spends time in the community promoting workplace sustainability, equity and diversity, an aspect of her job she is passionate about.

"I love being a mentor and helping the next generation reach their career goals," says Ramirez. "We need more mentors stepping up to help others."

Ramirez hopes the fact that she's now the highest-ranking Latina in banking in the greater Sacramento area will inspire others to work toward breaking diversity barriers.

"One of the things that I hear the people I mentor say is, 'If I don't see myself at a company, I choose not to apply to that company.' I challenge them to say, why can't you be the first to open the door for the rest? It just takes one. Having different voices represented at the table inspires innovation, ingenuity and creativity. That's how this world is going to continue to evolve." 

MSA PROFILE

Mariel Cairns Changing Course

Mariel Cairns received her undergrad degree in civil engineering from San Diego State University. But after working as a civil engineer for nearly 20 years, she found her interests were shifting.

"I was volunteering as treasurer on a nonprofit board and found I was really interested in accounting," Cairns says. "I like problem-solving, understanding organizational operations, and how all the details come together to create financial reports."

As a civil engineer, Cairns gravitated toward project management, budget and other managerial aspects of her projects. "I realized it was kind of a path toward eventually working with money and budgets and financials," she adds.

Cairns was also looking for a career that would provide her a more flexible schedule so she'd have time to spend with her school-aged children, so she decided to pursue a career change and enrolled in Sacramento State's Master of Science in Accountancy (MSA) program. The MSA program is an 18-month accelerated program offered collaboratively by the College of Business and the College of Continuing Education.

"I liked the fact that the program is 100 percent online and asynchronous because that worked with my family schedule and my work schedule," Cairns says. "I also liked the fact that it was associated with the California State University system. Having a brick-and-mortar university backing the program made me confident about choosing it."

Cairns completed the MSA program in Fall 2021. She now works for a nonprofit school and focuses fully on accounting. "Sac State's MSA program helped me not only with the qualifications I needed to get the position, but it also gave me the background and confidence to apply what I learned in class to real life."

Cairns says the fact that Sac State's MSA program has been fully online since the beginning also helped during COVID



shutdowns. "Because it's always been an online program, we were already set up to do what so many other programs had to shift gears to figure out how to do. The program was already in good shape and they already had the curriculum established," she says.

Now that she's completed her degree and changed careers, Cairns says she has no regrets. "I feel like the skills I learned will carry me through this new career, give me some transferrable skills I can use in the future, and allow me some flexibility with my family," she says. "I definitely got what I needed from the program." COB

COB Launches New Master of Science in Finance Program



Dr. Lan Liu, MSF Faculty Director

On March 1, 2022, the College of Business (COB) officially launched a Master of Science in Finance (MSF) program, opening enrollment for Fall 2022. After 10 years of planning and conceptualizing, the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (FI&RE) department brought this program to life.

The program is designed as a specialist master's program that takes a deep dive into core finance curriculum and follows the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA)[®] curriculum. CFA is a designation for people who complete the CFA program and relevant work experience requirements, much like the CPA to


accountants. The CFA program is highly regarded in the investment management profession as the gold standard of the industry. Given Sacramento State's proximity to the regional financial center in the San Francisco Bay Area and two of the country's largest public pension funds (CalPERS and CalSTRS) in Sacramento, there was a demand for a program to help train and prepare highly skilled finance and investment professionals.

The MSF program is an accelerated program and can be completed in 12-months. It is cohort-based, offering

one course at a time on Fridays and Saturdays. Each course is four weeks long and is offered via a "blended" modality consisting of in-person classes during weeks one, two, and four. Week three is held online.

"We want to provide exposure and knowledge to students who want to get into the investment management industry and help them demonstrate to potential employers how serious they are," says MSF Faculty Director Dr. Lan Liu. "This program would also be great for professionals already in the investment industry who are looking for a program to improve their skill set."

The MSF program will incorporate about 70 percent of the CFA curriculum, but it is not a CFA charter prep course. The goal of the MSF program is to introduce the CFA curriculum to students and to build a strong foundation in the skills needed to be successful in the investment industry in an academically rigorous manner.

"The program is intended to help students master all aspects of the professional investment industry, including accounting, different aspects of investment like equity, fixed income and derivatives, as well as portfolio management, while emphasizing the ethics aspect of investment," says FI&RE Department Chair Hao Lin. "After completing the MSF program, students will be well-prepared and brought up to speed with the latest developments in the industry." 

For more information on the MSF program visit www.csus.edu/cob/msf

One Year In:

COB's iMBA Program

One year since the College of Business officially re-launched the iMBA program, Professor and Faculty Director Dr. Eric Lin says the AACSB-accredited program is successfully doing what it was designed to do: prepare students to become business leaders in the global marketplace.

"The demand for well-educated executives and managers has grown dramatically," says Lin. "The iMBA program provides students access to in-depth learning and practices in different business functions that prepares them to meet those demands."

Lin says because the program is 100 percent online, it fulfills a key niche by allowing students to complete their MBA degree without the logistical challenges of traveling to campus.

"Many students have other obligations that would make this program impossible to complete if it weren't completely online," says Lin.

The intensive 12-month program offers an accelerated format in which students take one course at a time, with each course lasting just three weeks. But Lin cautions that just because the courses are shorter doesn't mean they are any easier. "Students need to be even more dedicated and fully committed," he says. "If you don't pay attention, you can fall behind very quickly. They need to show up to every single synchronous class, they need to participate, and they need to work with their peers and their professors."

The cohort-based program focuses on peer-to-peer learning in a real-world, case study environment with group exercises and presentations.

"Most of the students are working professionals and they want to engage with their professors and their peers," says Lin. "Each student is expected to make a positive contribution to class discussions. In this type of




Dr. Eric Lin, iMBA Faculty Director

environment, everybody gets elevated when it comes to their knowledge and skills in business management."

While the program is intense, students are ultimately rewarded by earning an MBA in 12 months instead of two years.

"Feedback from students so far is that this program is exactly what they're looking for – it's convenient, it's accelerated and it's high-quality," says Lin. "It's a CSU program, it's AACSB accredited, and the tuition is

very affordable compared to similar programs at other universities and programs. Our graduates so far all concur that the program is a great value." 

To find out more about the iMBA program, visit www.csus.edu/cob/imba

HROB Undergraduate Concentration Academically Aligns with SHRM

The Human Resources and Organizational Behavior (HROB) concentration is officially academically aligned with the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) as of February 10, 2022. Management and Organizations Department Chair Dr. Sharyn Gardner explains that faculty make improvements to the curriculum but it's not easy to measure the success of those improvements. The SHRM academic alignment verifies that the program is hitting the mark.

"One of the goals for the department is continuous improvement and ensuring we're delivering the product that our community needs and that employers need," says Gardner. "Successfully aligning with SHRM says we are up to date with the expectations of the Society for Human Resource Management in terms of academics."

Globally, over 500 programs in approximately 425 educational institutions have been acknowledged by SHRM as being in academic alignment with its suggested guides and templates. The HR Curriculum Guidebook and Templates were developed by SHRM to define the minimum HR content areas HR students at the undergraduate and graduate levels should study. The guidelines created in 2006 and revalidated in 2010, 2013 and 2017, are part of SHRM's Academic Initiative to define HR education standards taught in university business schools and help universities develop degree programs that follow these standards.


Gardner initiated the process in September 2021 on behalf of the department and felt this academic alignment could prove to evaluate and validate the current curriculum. Along with department faculty, she worked with a SHRM specialist in academic programs and initiatives through the self-study process. After the HROB curriculum was analyzed, the department worked through the fall semester to submit the curriculum guidelines and alignment application; Gardner notes lecturer Todd Haines was very helpful in the process. Prior to initiating the process, some faculty in the department were already connected and used SHRM as a guideline, utilizing its educator resources, case material, and exercises to help students make connections to the professional field.

Achieving SHRM alignment comes with several benefits. The alignment is in the form of two badges, the first is a show of proof the HROB concentration is aligned academically with SHRM and the second is verifying the program serves as a SHRM recertification provider. Sacramento State is listed in the SHRM database for having academically aligned programs. SHRM offers two prominent certifications to HR professionals: SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP) and Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP). The SHRM certifications are considered the gold standard in the human resources and human capital fields and are marketable for current and future HR professionals. Typically, 60 professional development credits must be completed to sit for the SHRM-CP. With the SHRM academic alignment, Sac State students pursuing a

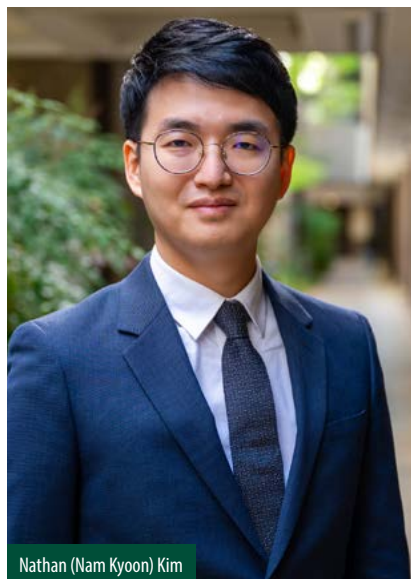


Dr. Sharyn Gardner, Department Chair, Management & Organizations

bachelor's degree in business administration with an HROB concentration are eligible to take the SHRM-CP certification exam to earn their SHRM certification while simultaneously earning their degree program.

HROB courses offered at Sac State are academically aligned with the SHRM Human Resource Curriculum Guidelines and template. A list of HROB courses can be found [here](#). 

Introducing COB's New Faculty and Staff



Nathan (Nam Kyoong) Kim

Nathan (Nam Kyoong) Kim Strategy & Entrepreneurship Faculty

Dr. Nathan Kim began teaching entrepreneurship at the College of Business in August 2021. Kim's research interests build off one of his recent publications, "Entrepreneurial Homeworkers," published in the 2021 edition of Small Business Economics. Kim is interested in how entrepreneurship is promoted and how community is built in the coworking spaces with entrepreneurs, self-employed individuals, freelancers, and other individuals. Also, he is interested in whether working in the coworking space enhances their productivity or level of psychological well-being.

Kim won the Plan for Excellence Doctoral Fellowship and several awards and scholarships over the years, including John F. Rankin Doctoral Scholarship, Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation Master of Science in Management Award, Queen's Graduate Award, Queen's School of Business Award, Vancouver SNUAA Scholarship, and the Academic Excellence Scholarship.

"I was really excited to join the Sacramento State's College of Business

because this is a good environment to meet diverse people and a diverse student population and I work with the great faculty here," says Kim.

Kim was born and raised in South Korea, where he lived for over 20-years, and completed his bachelor's in business administration at Seoul National University. In 2012, Kim's whole family decided to move to the eastern provinces of Canada, where he completed his master of science in strategic management, Queen's University, and his doctorate in entrepreneurship at the Ivey Business School, Western University. During Kim's undergraduate career he was a member of the acapella club in Seoul National University and performed at student centers and other universities.

"I really enjoy my life at Sac State," says Kim. "I am looking forward to meeting more students in my Entrepreneurship 187 course." 

Yaeun Kim Marketing & Supply Chain Management Faculty

Dr. Yaeun Kim began teaching marketing at the College of Business in August 2021. Kim's research interest is in social influence and the effects of brands on consumer decision making. Kim currently teaches Marketing 123: public relations and ethics in business. Kim has won the Harry A. Cochran Fellowship and several awards and grants, including Effective College Instruction, Intro to Online Teaching and Learning, Young Scholars, and the Doctoral Dissertation Grant.

"I am pleased to join the College of Business, and I hope students are enjoying Marketing 123. It's interesting to find many other students from other concentrations having an interest in marketing," says Kim. "I know that many students are under pressure after COVID these days. My goal is to provide a

delightful and less stressful environment and make sure the students know I understand them and to pay attention to the class and just learn as much as they want."

Kim completed her bachelor's and master's degree in management science and information technology business from the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST). After graduating, Kim wanted to study abroad to broaden her learning perspectives, and that's when she relocated to Philadelphia and started her doctorate program in business administration at Temple University. After finishing her doctorate program, Kim started working at CSU, San Luis Obispo in the Orfalea College of Business where she taught customer data analytics and consumer behavior theory. 



Yaeun Kim



Mandy Mangels

Graduate Programs Office Support Specialist

Mandy Mangels works in the Graduate Programs Office, specifically with Master of Business Administration Program Services. Mangels has been with the College of Business since January 2022. As the first point of contact for the Graduate Programs Office, Mangels works closely with the students, assists other staff in the office, schedules admissions interviews, manages program events, and processes student forms and other various documents.

"It's a really nice, chill environment to be in. Everyone I have met has been super sweet and welcoming," says Mangels. "I don't have as much face-to-face student interaction as I would like, but that is a product of our time."

Mangels has accomplished a lot during her educational career. She completed seven associate degrees while in high school, double-majored at UC Davis in sociology and human development and is now pursuing her master's degree in educational leadership and policy studies with an emphasis on higher education administration.

"With all the pandemic stuff, I was tired of sitting, so I applied to six grad schools, kind of impulsively and said I'm moving to Davis, and I did."

Maryanne Ruperto

Graduate Programs Office Support Specialist

Maryanne Ruperto works in the Graduate Programs Office and supports five graduate programs: MBA for Executives, Online iMBA, Master of Science in Business Analytics, Master of Science in Accountancy, and the Master of Science in Finance. Ruperto helps direct and answer general questions regarding the programs, plans events, and supports other staff in the Graduate Programs Office.

"I went to CSU, San Francisco, and just coming back to the college environment was super fun for me. My experience at San Francisco was good, and so was the support I was getting from faculty and advisors, so this was



Maryanne Ruperto

an opportunity for me to give back," says Ruperto. "I know the experience of being a student and being able to work with students again and put my experience into it is what attracted me most."

Ruperto started a business in 2020, Ever Wonder Creations, making Disney-inspired ears, home décor, and more. Ruperto was happy her business was up and running but was eager to take on a new opportunity in higher education at Sacramento State in the College of Business.

"Everyone here is so welcoming and so friendly, every time I have a question or need help with something, everyone is always willing to help out. I love the College," she says.

"I love the College of Business and enjoy working with everyone here."

Mike Hokama

Dean's Office Support and Event Specialist

Mike Hokama works in the College of Business Dean's Office assisting with day-to-day office tasks, updating directories and databases, event planning, and supporting the Executive Assistant to the dean. He ensures everything runs smoothly in the office. Hokama has been with the College of Business since March 2022.

"I was looking for a job that had stability where I could build a career and build a future," says Hokama. "I really enjoy working at the College of Business – it's peaceful."

Hokama was born and raised in Sacramento. Right after high school he started a bachelor of science program in health and exercise science at the University of Hawaii. While in Hawaii, one of Hokama's favorite jobs was working as a football manager and helping support other athletic programs such as baseball and basketball. When Hokama wasn't working he enjoyed going to the beach, hanging out with friends, or just being outdoors.

Hokama's future goals include pursuing a graduate degree at Sacramento State and ultimately becoming a physical education teacher. "Sac State is a good place for me to learn more about kinesiology," he says. "I've read articles about how Sac State's programs are top tier and have excellent pedagogy."



Mike Hokama



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Master of Business Administration

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- GMAT/GRE waived for 2022

MBA

MBA For Executives

- For experienced professionals
- GMAT/GRE waived for 2022
- International Study Trip

MBA

Online iMBA

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- GMAT/GRE waived for 2022
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- 100% CPA compatible

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MSBA

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