

# Olin Business

THE  
FUTURE.  
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Regional Partnerships

Business of Health

Individualized Education

In St. Louis, For St. Louis

## A ONE-YEAR CHECKUP

How is Olin delivering on the promise of the Business of Health Initiative, one year later?

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## SEEDS OF INNOVATION

Olin debuts new ways to tailor hands-on consulting projects to meet the needs of students and businesses.

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## HARNESSING AI'S POWER

Olin helps businesses and students lead the AI revolution with new courses, research, and business support.

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# 2025 Olin Stories

## WHAT'S NEW



### A ONE-YEAR CHECKUP

How is Olin delivering on the promise of the Business of Health Initiative, one year later?

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**PLUS:** A landmark strategic gift ... a PhD alum leads the drive to solve transplant challenges ... and more Olin news. **Pages 2-10**

## PREPARING STUDENTS



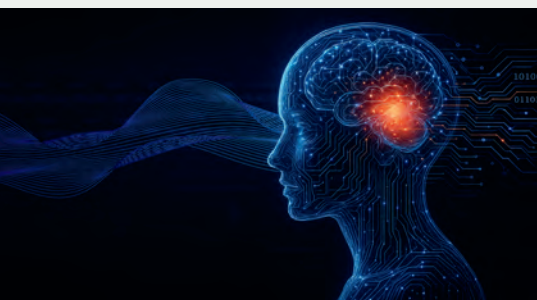
### SEEDS OF INNOVATION

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**page 12**

**Plus:** Olin's African students build community ... every student has a unique story ... and Olin by the numbers. **Pages 11-18**

## INDUSTRY IMPACT



### HARNESSING AI'S POWER

Olin helps businesses and students lead the AI revolution with new courses, research, and business support.

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## ALL ABOUT ALUMNI



### HONORING OUR ALUMNI

Introducing this year's cohort of trailblazers, industry leaders, and steadfast Olin supporters: the Dean's Medalist, Distinguished Alumni, and Emerging Leaders.

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2025

## Olin Business

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# A Brighter Future — With You

Dear Olin Community,

When we introduced *All Together Now* in November 2024, we outlined a bold vision for Olin's next chapter, renewing our sense of purpose and impact. In the short time since, that vision has begun to take shape in remarkable ways, thanks to the energy and engagement of our students, alumni, faculty, and partners.

Momentum is building across every corner of our community. Strong student outcomes and the dedication of our academic and alumni networks have propelled Olin upward in the leading business school rankings: #12 undergraduate business program and #24 MBA by *U.S. News and World Report* and the #1 EMBA by the *Financial Times* for our world-class WashU-Fudan Shanghai program. We've also welcomed our largest Executive MBA cohort in nearly a decade, representing the breadth and depth of the regional business community that looks to Olin as a partner in shaping its future.

Our faculty continue to be deeply engaged with the needs of today's business leaders. The 10th annual Koch Family Business Symposium (pg. 5) and our Business of Health Conference (pg. 6) together attracted nearly a thousand industry leaders to explore ideas defining the future of their fields. Faculty research and consulting are informing real-world decisions on issues ranging from artificial intelligence (check out the article on AI on page 20) and global supply chains to drug pricing, women's professional sports, and the economics of healthcare — evidence of Olin's influence in both scholarship and practice.

At the same time, the future of the Olin student experience is coming into focus. We're introducing new degree specializations, expanding opportunities for experiential learning and consulting through the Center for Experiential Learning, and deepening the personal and professional connections that define the Olin network. These innovations empower our students to design the education and the future they envision for themselves.

It's inspiring to see the future unfolding before us. But what excites me most is building it together.

As you read this issue, I hope you take pride in all that's happening at Olin — and I invite you to be part of what comes next: Come to an event on campus with a friend, speak in one of our classes, recommend Olin to a colleague or mentee, or even reach out to a faculty member for a conversation. Our future shines brightest when our alumni and friends contribute their experience, perspectives, and connections. Together, we can continue to build a stronger, more vibrant Olin.

With gratitude,



**Mike Mazzeo**

Dean and Knight Family Professor, WashU Olin Business School



Middle photo: It was an honor to be part of EMBA 61's GO! Week in August. They are an amazing group of talented and accomplished professionals.

Bottom photo: I visited with Kansas City alumni this spring to talk about staying connected and building partnerships in the region.



# Rooted in Community, Driving Impact

Dear Olin Alumni,

Each time we return to the WashU campus for a weekend walk with our dogs, we're reminded of what makes this community so extraordinary. As we cross the plaque beneath the iconic Brookings archway — honoring Washington University's co-founder, William Greenleaf Eliot — we feel the enduring strength of both WashU's and Olin Business School's values and vision.

A dedication to quality defines Dean Mike Mazzeo's leadership brilliantly. Olin's strategic plan has laid a strong foundation — and now, we're seeing real results. Our students and faculty are leading groundbreaking research, driving business innovation, and shaping the future of leadership. As alumni, we play a vital role in this momentum. Across generations, we're mentoring students, engaging in programming, and giving back financially to ensure Olin's excellence continues.

At the heart of this progress is the Olin Annual Fund, a key component of the **With You** campaign. Its greatest strength is its flexibility — empowering university leaders to meet emerging needs, fuel critical research, and invest directly in our students and faculty. Every contribution strengthens Olin's ability to deliver an unmatched educational experience.

This is more than a call for support — it's an invitation to deepen your connection. Whether it's attending an event, making a gift, or mentoring a student, your involvement is what makes this community thrive. Together, we can generate the crucial support needed to invest in what truly matters.

Serving you as Alumni Board co-presidents continues to be a great honor. We remain inspired by the power of our community — and its potential to create lasting impact, both on campus and far beyond.

Warmly,

**Richard and Julie LaBonté**

*Olin Alumni Board Co-Presidents*

Richard, PMBA 2003, is the head of marketing-Americas at Roquette. Julie, EMBA 2002, is an enterprise data enablement lead at Bayer Crop Science.

**“Not quantity  
but quality is  
the ultimate test  
of a university's  
success.”**

**William Greenleaf Eliot Jr.**



Rich, Julie, and family under the Brookings Hall archway.



# Kents Commit \$10 Million to Fuel Leadership, Innovation at Olin

Olin Business School at Washington University in St. Louis has received a landmark \$10 million dual-purpose gift from longtime university benefactors Jerry Kent, BSBA 1978, MBA 1979, and his wife, Judy Kent, to create an endowed deanship and to propel the school's Business of Health initiative. It is the largest gift to Olin in the past decade.

The pledged gift, made through **With You: The WashU Campaign**, includes \$5 million to establish the Judy and Jerry Kent Deanship at Olin, which will be administered by the current dean, Mike Mazzeo, and all future deans. The deanship honors Mazzeo's leadership and ensures Olin's leaders will have the strategic resources to seize opportunities, address challenges, and advance the school's mission.

The Kents also pledged \$5 million to create the Judy and Jerry Kent Business of Health Catalyst Fund, which will provide spendable resources to rapidly scale Olin's **Business of Health initiative** — a top strategic priority aimed at making Olin the premier institution for the business of health and an engine for innovation at WashU.

"We believe the health initiative holds great promise for Olin. We want our gift to be a catalyst to accelerate and elevate Olin's ability to make this program a real leader among its peers," Jerry Kent said.

Chancellor Andrew D. Martin praised the Kents' vision and steadfast commitment to Olin.

"Jerry and Judy have shaped the trajectory of Olin through their decades of partnership and support," Martin said. "This gift is not just generous — it is strategic. It empowers Olin leaders to take swift, bold action and solidifies Olin's future as a leader in business education."

“Jerry and Judy have shaped the trajectory of Olin through their decades of partnership and support.”

Andrew D. Martin, Chancellor

"With the Kents' generous support, Olin will have the resources to make an even greater impact within WashU, across the St. Louis region, and around the world," Martin said.



“We believe the health initiative holds great promise for Olin. We want our gift to be a catalyst to accelerate and elevate Olin's ability to make this program a real leader among its peers.”

Jerry Kent

# News



## Global EMBA's Reach New Milestones

WashU Olin's Global EMBA programs — EMBA Shanghai in partnership with Fudan University and EMBA Mumbai in partnership with IIT Bombay — have plenty to celebrate.

The *Financial Times* named WashU Olin-Fudan University's **Shanghai EMBA program #1** in its latest global ranking released on October 13, 2025. In addition, the program's Class 23 is the first to begin their studies at the new Zhengli Campus of the Fudan School of Management. The state-of-the-art facility provides a premier learning environment and top-tier educational resources.

Meanwhile, **EMBA Mumbai** welcomed its 10th batch of students earlier this year. This milestone marks a decade for the program, which is still the only EMBA to grant a joint degree from both an Indian and an American university. Cheers to 10 years of helping leaders succeed!



## Beyond Retirement: Ron King Inspires a New EMBA Tradition

After 38 years — and multiple teaching awards — beloved Olin Professor Ron King retired on December 31, 2024. Known for viewing accounting as a dynamic combination of metrics and storytelling, King's passion for the classroom and his students is legendary within the Olin community. His impact extends beyond academics, with students often crediting his belief in their potential for sparking their entrepreneurial success.

King considers teaching Executive MBA students the "sweet spot" of his career, calling the EMBA community an ecosystem he is "totally in love with." Though retired, King isn't slowing down. In fact, he's establishing a new EMBA tradition.

The Annual King EMBA Forum, set for May 2, 2026, will bring the extended EMBA community together for a day of networking, cutting-edge insights from industry leaders, and interactive workshops designed to unlock personal and professional growth. EMBA alums, it's a day you won't want to miss.

## Olin Awards Four Endowed Positions

WashU Olin is celebrating the installation of four accomplished members with endowed positions during the 2025-26 academic year. The first installation took place on October 9, 2025, when Andrew Knight was named the Bank of

America Professor. This was followed by Xiumin Martin's installation as the inaugural Margaret Oung Distinguished Professor on November 17, 2025.

Upcoming installations include Mike Mazzeo being formally named the Judy and Jerry Kent Dean of Olin Business School in February 2026, an honor made possible by a generous gift from the Kents (see page 3). In March 2026, Markus Baer will be installed as Olin's Knight Family Professor.

Olin's esteemed faculty members are accomplished scholars, trusted consultants, and dedicated instructors. Their pioneering research influences business trends, and they incorporate a powerful blend of theory and real-world application into the school's curricula, shaping the next generation of 21st-century leaders.

**With You.**  
The WashU Campaign

## With You, This Is What WashU Can Do.

On May 1, WashU launched an ambitious fundraising campaign dedicated to creating a more promising future for all. **With You: The WashU Campaign** invites alumni, parents, and friends to partner with the university to accelerate its ability to address society's greatest challenges — fostering greater access for students, developing future-ready leaders, building flourishing communities, and advancing healthier lives. The comprehensive campaign will also support strategic priorities across schools and other university programs.

[withyou.washu.edu/](http://withyou.washu.edu/)





## New Degrees Meet Market Needs

Beginning in fall 2026, Olin will offer three new specialized master's degrees, specifically designed to meet the evolving demands of today's business landscape. These programs reflect our commitment to anticipating market shifts and providing in-demand education that will empower graduates for the lifetime of their careers.

The **Master of Science in Wealth Management** offers analytical training, practical experience, and client-focused approaches that prepare graduates for professional roles across the wealth management and financial advising fields.

The **Master of Science in AI for Business** addresses the transformative impact of artificial intelligence, providing the strategic and technical skills needed to apply AI tools across finance, marketing, and technology.

The **Master of Science in the Business of Sports** provides focused, industry-specific training and crucial networking opportunities for those aiming for management and analytical roles within the competitive sports industry.

Cuong Dang, Markus Baer, and Quang Pham



## Olin Executive Education Offerings Expand to Vietnam

In May, Olin celebrated a new partnership with strategic advisory and investment firm Resu Vietnam that will bring Olin's Executive Education programming to rising Vietnamese business leaders. Resu founder Cuong Dang and his partner Quang Pham visited Olin for a signing ceremony to kick off the collaboration.

The WashU Olin in Vietnam partnership elevates leadership standards for Vietnamese enterprises, multinational companies, and rising business talent. Vice Dean Markus Baer was closely involved in establishing the partnership and will oversee the programming. "I'm thrilled for this new partnership ... and I look forward to starting with our in-person executive education programs and seeing how this program grows," Dean Mike Mazzeo said.

Dang also expressed his enthusiasm for the new relationship. "We're laying the foundation for a new generation of leaders equipped not just for growth, but for transformation — in business, policy, and society."



**We're laying the foundation for a new generation of leaders equipped not just for growth, but for transformation — in business, policy, and society."**

*Cuong Dang, Founder and Managing Director, Resu*



## Leaders Share Insights at Family Enterprise Symposium

The Koch Center for Family Enterprise hosted its 10th annual Family Enterprise Symposium, attracting around 250 attendees to Energizer Park on April 24, 2025.

The theme, "Evergreen & Impact: Building Companies That Last," put a spotlight on the power of strategic ownership, with Tugboat Institute CEO Dave Whorton serving as keynote speaker and sharing his journey of building an organization dedicated to enduring companies.

Enterprise Mobility Executive Chairman Andrew Taylor and McDonnell Douglas Corp. former Chairman and CEO John McDonnell participated in fireside chats with Peter Boumgarden, the center director and the Koch Family Professor of Practice in Family Enterprise. Additionally, CEO and owner of St. Louis CITY SC Carolyn Kindle welcomed attendees to the event. Kindle is also president at Enterprise Mobility Foundation.

This signature event underscores Olin's strong commitment to supporting private enterprise. It also highlights the Koch Center's role as an invaluable, neutral resource where family-owned businesses, investors, and advisors can find real-world thought partnership and valuable insights.



# The Business of Health: A One-Year Checkup

One year in, the Olin initiative delivers fresh ideas, vital connections, and a fast path to progress

BY SUZANNE KOZIATEK



The Business of Health — Olin's ambitious initiative that seeks to engage and empower business leaders so they can improve the well-being of individuals and societies through health products, services, and community partnerships — has come a long way in 12 months.

Guided by a vision to create impact that can be felt across WashU and the St. Louis region, the initiative has rapidly scaled. It's now a fully fledged ecosystem of classes, programs, and partners geared toward educating future health leaders, engaging St. Louis' deeply established healthcare community, and catalyzing investments that drive innovation.

That impact was evident in October, when the school partnered with *The Atlantic* magazine for an event at Emerson Auditorium to explore how science and business working together can propel medical breakthroughs from discovery to real-world impact at scale. It brought a national focus to the leading role that WashU and St. Louis play in this vital sector.

Speakers from the worlds of translational science, public health, and biotech entrepreneurship examined the crucial handoffs required for health innovation between research, implementation, and commercialization.

The speakers and panelists dissected the challenges that stand in the way of advancements, including sustained funding along the path to approval, bureaucratic roadblocks, and equitable access to innovative treatments.



## **“We’re bringing core business skills to fuel the steady growth of ideas and innovation so that we can build better outcomes for patients, improve care delivery systems, and deliver revolutionary breakthroughs to the market.”**

**Mike Mazzeo**, *Dean, Olin Business School*

The key, panelists agreed, was the power of collaboration. “Innovation, especially in the healthcare space, is a team sport,” said Olin alumna Erin Scott, MBA/MSBE 2007, PhD 2013, now a senior lecturer at MIT Sloan. “We want to bring people with deep knowledge across many different disciplines together in the room to move these innovations forward.”

The event highlighted the catalyzing role that universities can play in building bridges from innovators to funders and from startup to scale-up. That discussion is a microcosm of the role that WashU Olin is already playing in the sector, Olin Dean Mike Mazzeo said.

“We’re bringing core business skills to fuel the steady growth of ideas and innovation so that we can build better outcomes for patients, improve care delivery systems, and deliver revolutionary breakthroughs to the market,” Mazzeo said.

### **BUILDING ACADEMIC MOMENTUM**

In classrooms across Olin and throughout WashU, faculty members are introducing courses that tackle the economic, financial, and management challenges of health. The school has introduced a new MBA specialization and a health designation in the Executive MBA program, bringing the number of health-focused degrees at Olin to six.

This year, the school welcomed two new faculty members who work and teach in this field: Ryan McDevitt, a professor of economics, and Arlen Dean, an assistant professor of supply chain, operations, and technology.

McDevitt said he was drawn to Olin by Mazzeo's vision for the school, particularly the role of the Business of Health.

“I think WashU is poised to be the top university in the world for researchers who want to make an impact, not just as academics, but in terms of advocating and advancing health business and policy as well,” he said. “There’s no better place to be doing what I’m doing.”

He’s excited about opportunities to collaborate with colleagues across WashU. “Before I even set foot in St. Louis, I was on Zoom calls and having email threads with faculty in the Medical School and the School of Public Health.”

WashU Olin and *The Atlantic* magazine hosted an October health summit to discuss how to advance medical breakthroughs to implementation.

Dean Mazzeo confers with Olin’s new health-focused faculty members, Ryan McDevitt and Arlen Dean.

## **6**

### **health-focused degrees at Olin**

- MBA with a Business of Health specialization
- MBA with a joint MD from WashU Medicine
- MBA with a joint MPH from WashU Public Health
- MS in Business Analytics with a Healthcare Analytics concentration
- Executive MBA with a health designation
- BSBA in Healthcare Management





Dean Sandro Galea of the School of Public Health served on a panel at Olin's spring Business of Health symposium.

Olin is collaborating to provide cross-pollinated courses that draw from the strengths of all three schools. The WashU Medicine ties are long-standing; for example, for more than 15 years, Olin has collaborated on an "Olin Grand Rounds" course focused on the business of medicine.

The ties to the newly launched School of Public Health are already starting strong. Inaugural Dean Sandro Galea joked that learning about Olin's health initiative as he prepared to join WashU was his "sign me up" moment.

"Hearing that Olin had this vision for a Business of Health initiative seemed to be a perfect moment to launch such a vision in parallel with the university investing in a School of Public Health," Galea said.

## A SUPPORTIVE, HEALTH-FOCUSED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Olin's health-forward approach continues to attract a substantial number of healthcare professionals into the school's graduate programs, ranging from 15% to 30% of students in incoming MBA programs.

Lakshmi Gokanapudy Hahn, a pediatric transplant cardiologist and associate medical director of the heart transplant program at St. Louis Children's Hospital, is in her first year of the EMBA program.

Discussions with Patrick Aguilar, Olin's managing director of health, convinced Hahn to accelerate her plans to pursue her Executive MBA.

"Initially, I was thinking about doing it next year," Hahn said. "But I chatted with Patrick, and as he told me more about the Business of Health, it seemed so juicy — like, this is exactly why I want to do this. I thought, Why am I waiting? I'm just going to start."

She said she's already applying what she's learning to her current job, as well as gaining insights about her future path. "It really broadens my horizons as to what my impact could really be," Hahn said. "I'm looking forward to seeing what roles I could potentially take on."

As Rony Takchi began his EMBA studies in 2024, he was looking to transition from a medical research role at WashU to a business-focused position. He found strong support through Olin, including guidance from Aguilar.

"I needed help to figure out what my other options were," Takchi said. "Patrick was a very good resource for me. He was very supportive throughout the entire process." Takchi recently accepted a position with Geneoscopy, a gastrointestinal health startup co-founded by a WashU Medicine graduate.

Olin's leadership in entrepreneurship has long attracted health-focused students with innovative ideas.

The school joined with *Poets & Quants* to host a Big IdeaBounce competition focused on health innovation, drawing applications from 75 young entrepreneurs from 50 schools in 10 countries. Among the finalists was Olin's Sergiu Celebidachi, whose SPARC Sports app uses AI to help student-athletes prepare mentally. Since then, Celebidachi, MBA 2025, has been named a St. Louis Inno Under 25 honoree and made the top tier of a national pitch competition.

"The classes I've taken as a student were very entrepreneurship focused," Celebidachi said. "They boosted my entrepreneurial experience and pushed the needle forward on the business as well."

As leaders climb the career ladder in healthcare organizations, Olin executive education offerings, such as advanced management certificates and custom programs, can help them level up their strategic skills. Rob Goren, president and CEO of Delta Dental of Missouri, said his Olin executive education experience helped him settle smoothly into his leadership role.

"As a new CEO in 2015, our board of directors knew that I brought a strong financial acumen to the role but wanted to ensure that I also immersed myself in the latest training in talent management, strategic thinking, business execution, and leadership," Goren said. "The advanced management certificate program allowed me to sharpen my skills and lead more effectively over the past decade."

## OLIN'S HEALTH-FORWARD APPROACH BY THE NUMBERS

30%

of the incoming EMBA class works in the healthcare field

18%

of all Flex MBA students work in the healthcare field

15%

of incoming full-time MBA students work in the healthcare field



## LEADING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT HEALTH

Professors at Olin are driving discussions about the most pressing issues in health, not just in classrooms but through research and in forums aimed at the business community. Aguilar has begun a series of “Health Decoded” seminars — open to students and alumni — in which he invites business and health leaders to dissect the real-world challenges they’ve encountered and the solutions they’ve found.

An emerging area of focus for several Olin faculty members has been how the ownership of healthcare organizations can affect patients. Aguilar has written about the impact of private equity ownership on the Walgreens pharmacy chain and on the care of heart failure patients. Similarly, McDevitt has studied the effects of consolidation on the dialysis industry and is interested in how private equity ownership affects care.

New health-focused professor Arlen Dean studies ways to manage resources to optimize hospital operations as well as medical decision-making and disease progression. Dean is eager to collaborate with colleagues across the university. “There are so many researchers in different areas — public health, computer science, statistics, clinicians — focused on these issues,” he said. “In terms of connections and resources, it’s quite abundant.”



**HEALTH  
DECODED**  
*Breaking it down. Bit by bit.*

## BUILDING A NETWORK FOR BUSINESS IMPACT

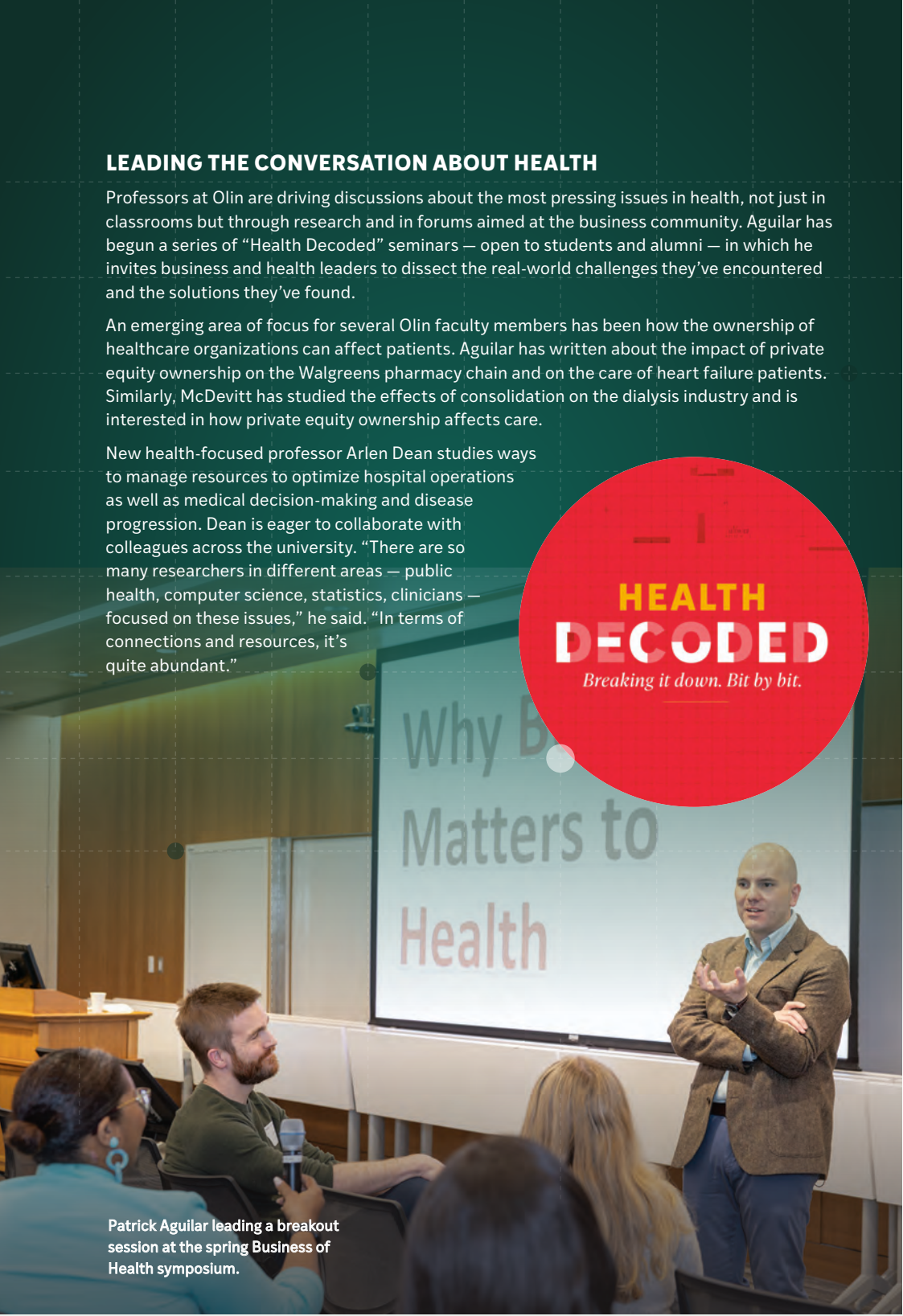
A key focus of the initiative is to draw together academic researchers from across WashU and spark conversations about how to build networks to solve problems, advance innovation, and drive business outcomes.

Joe Beggs, BSBE 2020, alumnus of WashU’s McKelvey School of Engineering and founder/CEO of healthcare company GenAssist, got a taste of this synergy at Olin’s Business of Health spring research symposium.

“I thought I was just going to be listening to talks, but we actually had an opportunity to talk to each other and to bring up what we’re working on and what could help supercharge our own innovations,” Beggs said. “I came away from that with multiple potential collaborations, and that’s not something I had when I walked in the door.”

That continued emphasis on connectivity is key to the value WashU Olin brings to the business of improving health across society.

“When we start to collaborate, we get insights on opportunities, gaps, and policy needs that we would miss if we stayed in our own silos,” Aguilar said. “When we collaborate, we get new tools for operational leadership that help us optimize, improve, and sustain care delivery. And ultimately, that’s how we get solutions.”



Patrick Aguilar leading a breakout session at the spring Business of Health symposium.



## Highlights Report: Business of Health

**FUNDING:** Established \$5 million Kent Catalyst Fund to scale the Business of Health initiative.

**CURRICULUM:** Launched new Business of Health MBA specialization that connects academic business concepts to the nuanced problems healthcare organizations face.

**FACULTY:** Welcomed two new faculty members conducting high-impact health research.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

- Partnered with *The Atlantic* to bring new insights and perspectives to the discussion.
- Established monthly Health Decoded case study discussions with industry leaders.

# A Big, Interesting Problem

PhD alum leads the hunt for solutions to complex organ transplant challenges

BY SUZANNE KOZIA TEK

Brendon Cummiskey, MSBA 2018, PhD 2021, had a straightforward but open-ended goal after earning his degrees from WashU Olin. “I just wanted to work on complex and meaningful problems,” he said.

Today, he applies his skill set in organizational behavior to one of the most complex systems in healthcare: organ transplantation. As a behavioral scientist for the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), Cummiskey is leading research into how to make faster, better-informed transplant decisions. His current project seeks to improve the utilization of donated lungs. It’s a critical challenge: Currently, 75% of potential donor lungs aren’t utilized, partly because of surgeons’ reservations about how they were handled.

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**“This is a gift of life, and we have to take really good care of it.”**

**Brendon Cummiskey**, *Behavioral Scientist, UNOS*

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Cummiskey’s team is testing a scoring system for potential lung donations that can point to the best ways to manage deceased donors for optimal lung utilization. “The idea is that if donor hospitals have the score available to them, they might think differently about how they are managing donors.”

Supported by a National Institutes of Health R01 grant, Cummiskey and UNOS are partnered with WashU Medicine’s transplant surgeon Dr. Varun Puri and a surgeon at Duke University’s School of Medicine. Their next steps are to survey transplant surgeons and organ procurement teams about the use of the scoring system and also to simulate potential organ offers to see how transplant surgeons would respond.

It’s his first outing as a co-principal investigator for an R01 grant — a significant milestone in a researcher’s career.

“I’m ecstatic about it, honestly, and it’s professionally satisfying to have WashU be the med school to be working with,” he said.

Cummiskey’s leadership on this project is a testament to how Olin’s emphasis on real-world problem-solving can help graduates achieve crucial goals in the health arena, particularly in getting the best use of scarce resources.

“One of our values is stewardship,” Cummiskey said. “Not just the idea that this is a gift of life, and we have to take really good care of it. That’s true, and it’s important. But we also need to be good stewards with the funds we’re given.”

After earning a bachelor’s degree in psychology, Cummiskey came to Olin for his doctorate, drawn by its organizational behavior program and by the complex real-world problems he could tackle. “In a business school, you have working professionals in your classes who are bringing actual problems to you.”

He and his wife, who earned her MBA at Olin, moved back to their home state of Virginia, and Cummiskey started looking for a job where he could apply his skill set to make a difference.

“And then I found UNOS,” he said. “It turns out that organ transplant is unbelievably complicated and is a really big, interesting problem to sink your teeth into. It was an awesome opportunity.”

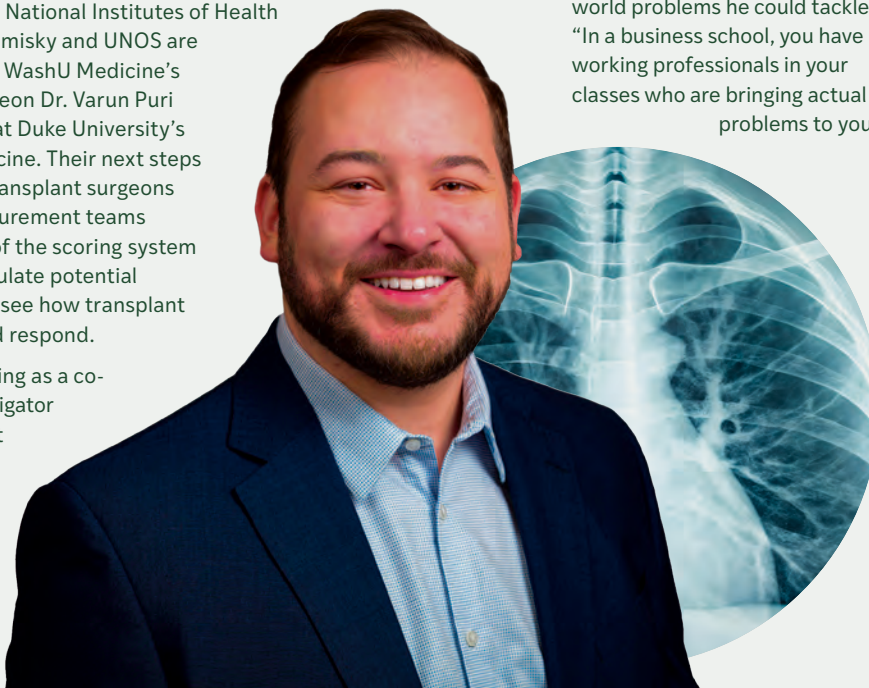
In his role at UNOS, Cummiskey works to better understand organ transplant decision-making.

“Usually, the goals are just trying to get folks to make better decisions faster,” he said. “Because if you can get through the decisions more quickly, that will improve transplants and outcomes. In transplants, time is really, really critical because the condition of an organ matters greatly.”

He said the interdisciplinary aspect of his organizational behavior focus at Olin has been invaluable in his work.

“It really is trying to pull together pieces across fields such as psychology, statistics, and behavioral economics to get insights, to understand human behavior, to try to understand what we use to nudge people in meaningfully helpful decisions.”

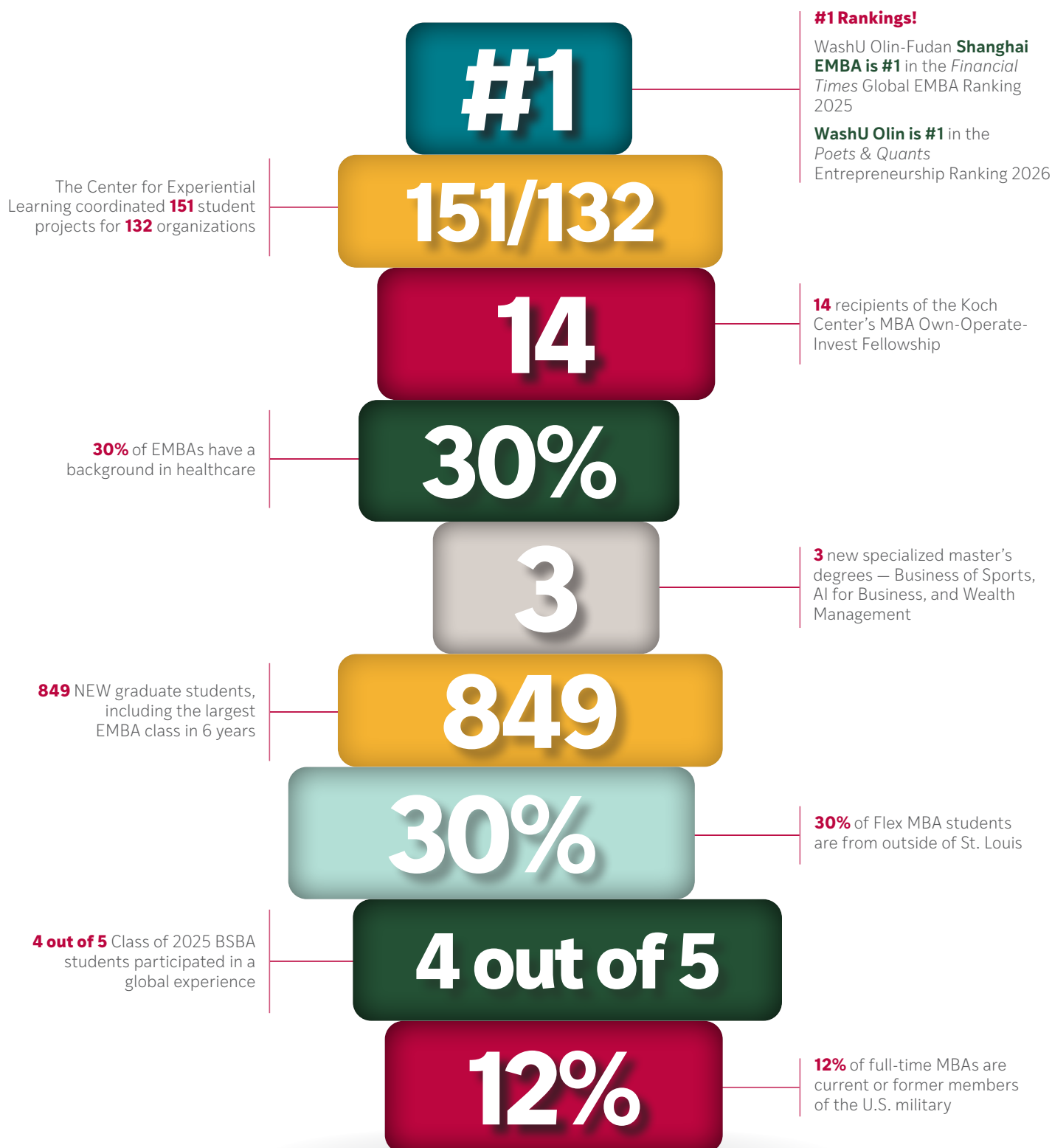
Among the advantages of his current research project is the potential for a visit to St. Louis. “I really loved Olin. It was a beautiful place to be, a beautiful place to learn.”





# Statistically Speaking

Leave it to a business school to tell a story with numbers. Here are some standout stats about this year's students and programs.



# SEEDS OF INNOVATION

Flexible, individualized experiential learning yields harvest of impact for students and partners

BY SUZANNE KOZIATEK





## For more than a century,

the Eckert family has operated a retail farm in Belleville, Illinois, offering generations of families the chance to enjoy apples, peaches, and other seasonal fruits they pick themselves.

In recent years, they've noticed a social media-driven trend hitting their bottom line: younger visitors looking for a free photo backdrop, not baskets of fruit. Eckert's Country Store and Farms sought out WashU Olin's expertise, ultimately engaging student consultants with a finger on the pulse of their peers.

Olin's Center for Experiential Learning (CEL) proved to be the right resource to help Eckert's crack the code on reaching the Instagram- and TikTok-focused Gen Z consumer. The CEL took on Eckert's as a client for an undergraduate-led, four-week competitive consulting challenge.

That model — short and impactful, organized mid-semester — is an example of the CEL's new emphasis on agile, tailored experiential learning opportunities. The center's strength has always been a hands-on approach that puts students to work solving real-world problems for businesses. Now the CEL is supplementing its traditional, 16-week academic course construct with courses that play out over four weeks or seven weeks.

Regardless of length, the new CEL courses offer academic credit. Each project is finely tuned to meet the needs of a particular student or client. "The idea is that students can come to us and say they want to do something, or one of our partners can come to us and say they have a specific need, and we now have more flexibility to activate in those situations," said Olin faculty member Michael Wall, who also serves as academic director of experiential learning and curricular advancement.

The new course formats give businesses the benefit of student assistance without requiring months of collaboration. Meanwhile, students have greater access to projects that speak to their own passions and desired career paths.

Wall is excited about an approach that he said Olin is uniquely positioned to offer.

"Most schools can't offer this kind of flexibility — their operating models are too large or too rigid, or they lack the infrastructure required to deliver," he said. "Olin's size, structure, faculty, and Center for Experiential Learning make it possible.

"What makes this transformative is the differentiated and impactful learning experiences it creates," Wall said. "For our students, it means opportunities they can't find elsewhere, and for our partners, it delivers insights and outcomes that truly matter."

For businesses like Eckert's, it's an invaluable opportunity to gain beneficial insights from Olin's talented and motivated students — at the speed of business.

"I was just blown away by the quality of WashU students. It was powerful, and it was also exciting to see the energy they put into it. The level of feedback and detail that we got was much more complex than I had anticipated," said Angie Eckert, vice president of retail operations for Eckert's.

### SUPPORT FOR ST. LOUIS BUSINESSES

The Eckert's project, which grafts together WashU's "In St. Louis, For St. Louis" ethos and a strategic focus on the individualized student experience, grew out of a COVID-era collaboration.

At the outset of the pandemic in 2020, Erin Joy, an entrepreneur and business consultant, had put together a task force to help St. Louis-area small businesses grapple with thorny issues such as masking, social distancing, and evolving government safety guidelines.

Looking for a professional economist with substantial business experience, Joy connected with Glenn MacDonald, John M. Olin Distinguished Professor of Economics and Strategy at WashU Olin. MacDonald said that as he reviewed the challenge facing the task force, he knew the group needed an infusion of business expertise.

"So, I met with a couple of my best students and found about 70 undergraduates from all over WashU, and I organized them into teams," MacDonald said. "We did consulting projects with a collection of St. Louis small businesses, mostly task force members."

One of those clients was Eckert's. "Those who invented the pandemic distance restrictions had no idea that they might be applied to something like an apple-picking business," he said. "My students figured out how to run Eckert's in a way that would be safe and consistent with the rules but still allow them to sell apples and run a grocery store."

Since that time, Joy has continued to bring some of her local clients to MacDonald for student consulting projects, supplementing similar experiential projects from national companies that he assigns to his classes.



**Pumpkins** are one of the pick-your-own fall harvests at Eckert's Farms.



**Apple-picking** is a traditional fall activity at Eckert's Farms.



**Student CEL teams** visited the Eckert's farm complex in Belleville, Illinois, to speak with Chris and Angie Eckert about the challenge.



Most projects are notable for their speed: often a matter of a few weeks from challenge to finished proposal.

MacDonald has been following this format for a decade or more.

“We work really hard, like in a consulting company, for two or three weeks, and then present our recommendations and implementation plans,” MacDonald said. “The projects are not rushed — they simply occur at a pace that’s different from what would normally arise in an academic setting, which is very slow. A typical business pace — which students find themselves in soon after graduation — is much faster.”

### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN MOTION

Since Wall took the academic reins at the CEL, one of his priorities has been to expand the universe of how Olin provides experiential learning opportunities to students, an outgrowth of Olin’s emphasis on individualized student learning experiences.

He said the new course constructs, which debuted this fall, add a fresh dimension to the options available to students and to the school’s business partners.

“Other course offerings are bound to the constraints of the academic calendar — known and planned for in advance of enrollment,” he said, noting that new constructs can be activated within the semester, giving students and partners greater flexibility.

“We have a wide range of experiential learning offerings with great breadth and depth, and they deliver incredible impact for our students. What these new constructs add is another layer, enabling even more individualized opportunities that aren’t possible within our standard course formats.”

To test-drive the new model, the CEL and MacDonald partnered to pilot a “strategic sprint,” a four-week project in which teams competed to craft a solution for a client.

That client was Eckert’s, a sprawling farming operation whose Belleville complex features a restaurant, specialty food store, and garden center, plus seasonal locations in southern Illinois and Kentucky. Together, the various locations offer harvest-your-own opportunities for everything from spring strawberries and summer blackberries to fall pumpkins and cut-your-own Christmas trees.

Over the years, the family has made changes and additions, including the Cider Shed, an outdoor music venue serving food and drinks, which opened in 2022. Angie Eckert said the leadership team has been looking for ways to enhance the visitor experience in response to the changing trends they were seeing. “When my grandma came out here and picked, she picked bushels,” Eckert said. “Now, people come and take a picture and pick four apples. So we were asking, ‘How do we either get more guests here or dial up the experience around picking those few apples?’”

MacDonald said he’d been speaking with Wall for a while about the CEL pursuing more streamlined projects. When Wall began his new role at the CEL, MacDonald brought him the Eckert’s project.

They designed the sprint to kick off in late March and wrap up in early April, allowing the business to implement ideas in time for prime strawberry-picking season. The CEL invited teams of students to compete for a cash prize, with four teams eventually making presentations to Eckert’s senior leadership.

MacDonald said the winning team focused on finding ways to organize the company’s many varied activities into a more cohesive visitor experience.

Among the students’ recommendations were ideas to enhance the pick-your-own experiences for younger visitors, who place a high emphasis on social media posting. They suggested creating more photo opportunities in areas patrons must pay to enter, rather than in the free-admission parts of the farm.

Angie Eckert said the student consultants also suggested changes to how events are presented on the Eckert’s website and social media, emphasizing the many different ways to serve fruit.

The appeal of the winning presentation was that Eckert’s could implement it quickly and easily, she said. They created ticketed areas with props set up for photos in the pick-your-own strawberry fields.

“After the students’ presentation, we invested in some interactive photo scenes,” she said. “We added three things to the strawberry patch: a strawberry cut-out, a swing, and a tandem bike.”

Later in the season, Eckert’s included donuts and cider in the strawberry fields as part of the ticketed experience. “The students definitely gave me the confidence to try it,” Angie Eckert said.

The farm has continued to repurpose the photo props, moving the swing and bike to other fields for the sunflower and blackberry seasons.



Student **Ananya Radhakrishnan** at the children’s play area on the Eckert’s farm.



**Chris and Angie Eckert** met with CEL staff, faculty, and students throughout the competitive consulting challenge.



The students’ recommendations included displaying props like these **blackberry cutouts** in the fields for photos.

While the farm's apple orchards are not currently set up well for photo ops, Angie Eckert said the business is working on a new orchard planting design that could accommodate them. "To be continued on that!"

She added that the other competing teams also presented great ideas, ones she would like to see the farm implement in the future.

Ananya Radhakrishnan and Jamie Nicholson, both BSBA 2025, were part of the four-person team that won the challenge.

Both said they benefited from the opportunity to work directly with the owners as they created their recommendations. The students in the sprint had multiple meetings with the Eckert's team, including a visit to the Belleville farm.

"I really enjoyed the relationship-building with the client, and I think it was really helpful throughout the process," Radhakrishnan said. "So it was a skill I learned, but also something I really enjoyed doing."

Nicholson said the Eckert's strategic sprint and other experiential learning projects at Olin gave her valuable experience in the client consultation process, from initial meetings to final presentations. She has taken that experience to her new role as an associate consultant with Bain & Co.

"I got a ton of experience in learning about new industries and breaking down business models and examining them from the top level," Nicholson said. "As well as working with a team and making recommendations that are as specific as possible."

MacDonald said experiential learning opportunities like this one hone students' skills and ultimately help them see that they are well prepared for entry into the business world.

"Learning in an academic setting is very efficient but, by its nature, quite passive," he said. "I give you an assignment; you do the assignment; I grade the assignment. Once they are ready for a more experiential approach, they can really go out, use their brain, and solve a problem."

"They always say the same thing: 'Wow! That was so empowering. I feel like I can do something!'"

## BRIDGING ACADEMICS, EXPERIENCE, AND COMMUNITY

Wall said the course constructs were designed not just for flexibility but for credibility, expanding the range of individualized opportunities while upholding Olin's academic standards and WashU's accreditation requirements.

He credited Paige LaRose, senior associate dean and director of undergraduate programs, with helping to structure the programs to ensure they meet those standards. "We have the flexibility to be highly individualized without sacrificing academic rigor or jeopardizing university policy or accreditation," he said.

The new courses are open not only to Olin students but also to students from across WashU. A second eight-week pilot conducted alongside the Eckert's project included students from Olin, the McKelvey School of Engineering, and the Sam Fox School of Design.

Regardless of a student's background, Wall said these experiences are most impactful as part of a deliberate learning journey. "Students first need the breadth and grounding of the core (courses), then building depth through electives, and only after that are they ready to bring it all together through experiential learning," he said. MacDonald said it's also essential to pair student teams with the right type of client — a business large enough to have substantial issues to work on but small enough that the decision-makers can be actively involved with the students.

"Eckert's was perfect — the students got to hear their clients, Angie and Chris, say, 'That's an awesome idea; I think I'll do that.'"

Joy sees these partnerships as a vital bridge between WashU and the St. Louis small business community.

"A lot of small business owners have informal education; WashU can seem like the ivory tower," she said. "This really does break down the walls. Business owners have direct access to Olin Business School and to WashU at large. They're on campus; they meet professors; they meet the students. It really does create a palpable connection."



Eckert's created an **email collage** displaying strawberry treats in response to a recommendation from the winning student team.



## Highlights Report: Individualized Education

**CURRICULUM:** Launched **12** MBA specializations and **3** new specialized master's degrees.

**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING:**

- Engaged **689** students in **135** Center for Experiential Learning projects.
- **4 out of 5** BSBA students complete an experiential learning credit.

**ENGAGEMENT:** Established the Koch Own-Operate-Invest Fellowship, with an inaugural class of **10 second-year MBA** fellows receiving education, mentoring, hands-on experience, and networking support.

**PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS:** Launched more individualized full-time MBA and Flex MBA curricula, with **50%** or more credits coming from **100+** elective courses.

# In Their Own Words

**AT WASHU OLIN, NO TWO STUDENT STORIES ARE THE SAME — AND THAT’S THE POINT. OUR STUDENTS ARE CRAFTING POWERFUL, PERSONALIZED JOURNEYS. AND WE’RE MAKING SURE THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITIES TO MATCH THEIR AMBITION.**



## From Aspiration to Achievement

Esmeralda came to Olin as an undergraduate with ambitious goals. That led her to pursue two degrees — a BSBA and a Master of Accounting — in just five years with Olin’s U-Gap program (Undergraduate to Graduate Accelerated Pathway). She’s also packed her journey with experiential learning, including study abroad in Spain, internships at Deloitte and EY, consulting in the Taylor Community Consulting Program, and volunteering with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program.

“

Attending college was always my goal, but it wasn’t a given. I knew I needed a place that would not only challenge me academically but also believe in my potential. Olin has opened doors I never thought would be accessible to me. The school’s emphasis on learning, curiosity, and meaningful engagement with the world beyond the classroom truly resonated with me. Olin has created an environment where I feel like I belong, a place where I feel supported, encouraged, and equipped to grow both personally and professionally.”

**Esmeralda Martinez Mata**, BSBA/MACC 2026



## Leading Projects, Leading Change

As a senior lead project engineer at Boeing, Dana supports the company’s F/A-18 program, which includes development, production, and modernization of the carrier-based strike fighter. As a Flex MBA student, she’s made a deliberate decision to grow as a professional, open herself up to future opportunities, and make a difference in the community.

“

I’ve enjoyed the networking and volunteering aspect of the Flex MBA program the most. As part of the Teamwork and Leading Organizations class with Giselle Antoine, each group embodied the WashU ‘In St. Louis, For St. Louis’ commitment by volunteering at a local nonprofit utilizing our MBA skill sets. In addition, I led a cohort-wide winter clothing and necessities drive benefiting Peter & Paul Community Services. This experience truly embodies the power of community and how our education can be impactful outside of our careers.”

**Dana Rohlman**, Flex MBA 2026





## Getting Real About Real Estate

Mia has many interests, and she's pursuing a good number of them at Olin. In addition to her Olin majors (marketing and organization and strategic management), she's squeezing in a design minor through the Sam Fox School. Her first love is real estate, and that's been front and center — president of the Real Estate Club, an internship at Cushman & Wakefield in NYC, and an internship at AI startup RealtyAds.



**From my very first visit, I could tell there was something special about Olin's culture. People genuinely invest in one another's growth, and that sense of community has only grown stronger during my time at WashU. I've never felt confined to one path. Instead, I've been encouraged to explore all of my interests, from real estate to marketing to design, and to shape a career that truly reflects who I am."**

**Mia Rubenstein**, BSBA 2027

## Innovation With Intention

Quintrel is an MBA candidate, entrepreneur, proud veteran, and creative force. He came to Olin's MBA program to enhance his business skills and his network. Already, the company he founded, Kre8 Spaces, was named one of the Top 100 Small Businesses in the U.S. by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in September. And he's just getting started.



**I chose Olin Business School not only because it's the number one entrepreneurship graduate program in the country, but also because WashU is deeply connected to St. Louis, which is the community I'm committed to serving through my company Kre8 Spaces. Olin's focus on innovation and purpose-driven leadership aligns perfectly with my mission to grow a community-centered business that empowers creatives and entrepreneurs."**

**Quintrel Brown**, Full-Time MBA 2027



## People Who Need People

Bobbi's day job is director of human resources at Black Cape, a veteran-owned software company specializing in AI, machine learning, and data analytics. One weekend a month, she's a student in Olin's EMBA program, where she's fine-tuning her leadership skills and building lifelong connections with the diverse and talented people in her cohort.



**The people have been the heart of my Olin experience. My classmates come from industries and backgrounds I'd never encountered during my military career, and those differences make every discussion richer. The global residency in Germany and the Netherlands brought our coursework to life. It reminded me how much leadership is about perspective — understanding not just how businesses operate, but how people connect and collaborate across borders."**

**Bobbi Gilbert**, EMBA 2026

## The Future's So Bright

Meet Rafaella — part-time Flex MBA student and full-time inbound logistics manager at Anheuser-Busch. Rafaella is embracing Flex's flexibility, especially the freedom to tailor the program to her professional goals. Best of all, she's had the chance to take on new opportunities that enhance her studies and career path.



**I've enjoyed serving as a Koch Fellow through Olin's Own-Operate-Invest Fellowship, where I'm being mentored by a seasoned executive to develop a transition plan for my family's business. After completing my first year in the program, I was honored with the Lead and Learn Award for my efforts to inspire and support others within the Olin community. This recognition means a great deal to me, and I'm excited to see what comes next in my MBA journey with Olin!"**

**Rafaella Keppen**, Flex MBA 2026



# Bridging Cultures. Building Futures.

THE OLIN AFRICA BUSINESS CLUB IS BUILDING CONNECTIONS THAT ENDURE

BY BLAIRE GARWITZ

Recognizing Africa's vast potential and growing influence on the global stage, the Olin Africa Business Club (OABC) has, for more than five years, served as the center point of a growing community of African students at WashU Olin Business School. OABC prides itself on creating a community that will help build connections, advance careers, and support WashU Olin students in their transitions from Africa to pursuing an education in St. Louis.

As a student, Ony Mgbeahurike, MBA 2019, founded the Olin Africa Business Club to "integrate cultural, economic, and business perspectives from Africa into the broader Olin dialogue," he said. "I chose to come to WashU from Nigeria because I wanted to be part of a community where I could create meaningful impact."

MBA student and club co-president Dorcas Aborah said OABC was instrumental in her decision to attend WashU. "I wanted a world-class institution with a strong business program, a small class size where I could build authentic relationships with people from across the globe, and a program with strong African representation to help support my transition," she said.

The support Aborah received began before she even started at Olin. "OABC members picked me up from the airport, helped me shop for essentials, and made sure I was settled in my apartment," said Aborah, who is from Nigeria.



A dancing demonstration at the Olin Africa Business Club's 2025 business forum.

The sense of community that OABC creates isn't limited to students from Africa. The club's networking, social, and cultural events are open to all who want to learn about Africa and build community with others. OABC's flagship event, the Olin Africa Business Forum, features panel discussions from business leaders across Africa, an African-themed gala, and a fashion show.

"The innovation and talent coming out of Africa doesn't always get the spotlight it deserves, and I want to introduce Africa to the broader WashU community through my role as OABC co-president," said Tumelo Magabo, an MBA student from Botswana.

In addition to the learning opportunities students can access through OABC, Olin also offers a course, Africa Business Landscape, to those wanting to further their knowledge of African markets. Mgbeahurike, now an adjunct lecturer, developed the course while still a student.

Through the OABC and Mgbeahurike's course, Olin students can tailor their own unique educational experience — one they can't get anywhere else. "My MBA was enriched through leadership opportunities, exposure to perspectives I wouldn't have encountered otherwise, and the chance to build something that bridges cultures and continents," said Magabo.

After graduation, African students can continue to build on the community they created at Olin through the Olin Africa Alumni Association, founded by Mgbeahurike. "The sense of belonging doesn't end once students leave campus," he said. "It evolves into a lifelong community of mentorship, collaboration, and career acceleration."



Top: Dorcas Aborah, Full-Time MBA Candidate 2026

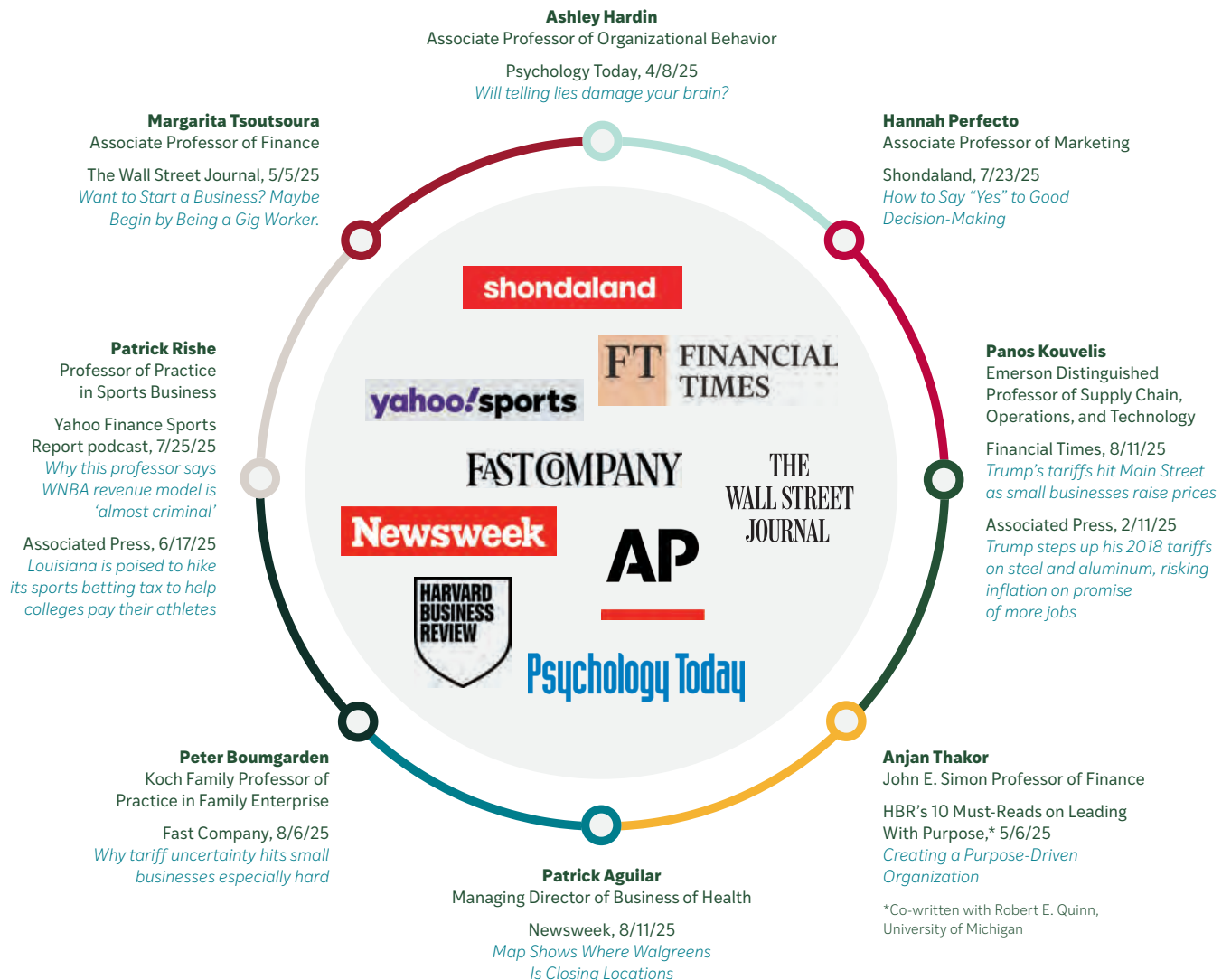
Bottom: Tumelo Magabo, Full-Time MBA Candidate 2026

**"The innovation and talent coming out of Africa doesn't always get the spotlight it deserves, and I want to introduce Africa to the broader WashU community through my role as OABC co-president."** Tumelo Magabo, MBA student from Botswana



# Shaping the Conversation

WashU Olin professors are at the forefront of influential research and expert perspectives, allowing them to regularly influence the national discussion in top-tier media outlets across the country and the globe. Check out some of their contributions to the business conversation this past year.



## GET THE POINT

We're excited to introduce **PoP: Professors on Point**, our new video series! In each short, two-to-three-minute video, an Olin professor breaks down current business and culture topics, giving you an expert perspective — quickly and clearly.

Professor Hillary Anger Elfenbein talks Darth Vader, Lando Calrissian, and wielding power in her PoP video "Negotiation Power Dynamics: A Star Wars Case Study." FYI, she's the John K. Wallace, Jr. and Ellen A. Wallace Distinguished Professor of Organizational Behavior.



## In the Media

Scan the QR code below to read the complete published stories from the faculty featured in this article.



# TURNING **AI'S** POTENTIAL INTO BUSINESS POWER

Olin helps businesses and students lead the **AI revolution** with new courses, research, and business support.

BY SUZANNE KOZIATEK

As artificial intelligence continues to remake the world of business, Olin is deepening its commitment to helping students and partners understand and leverage its transformative power.

From new course and program offerings to groundbreaking research and assistance for regional business partners, the Olin community is pushing the boundaries of the technology's capabilities and value to business.

## **NEW OFFERINGS COVER AI'S EXPANDING USES**

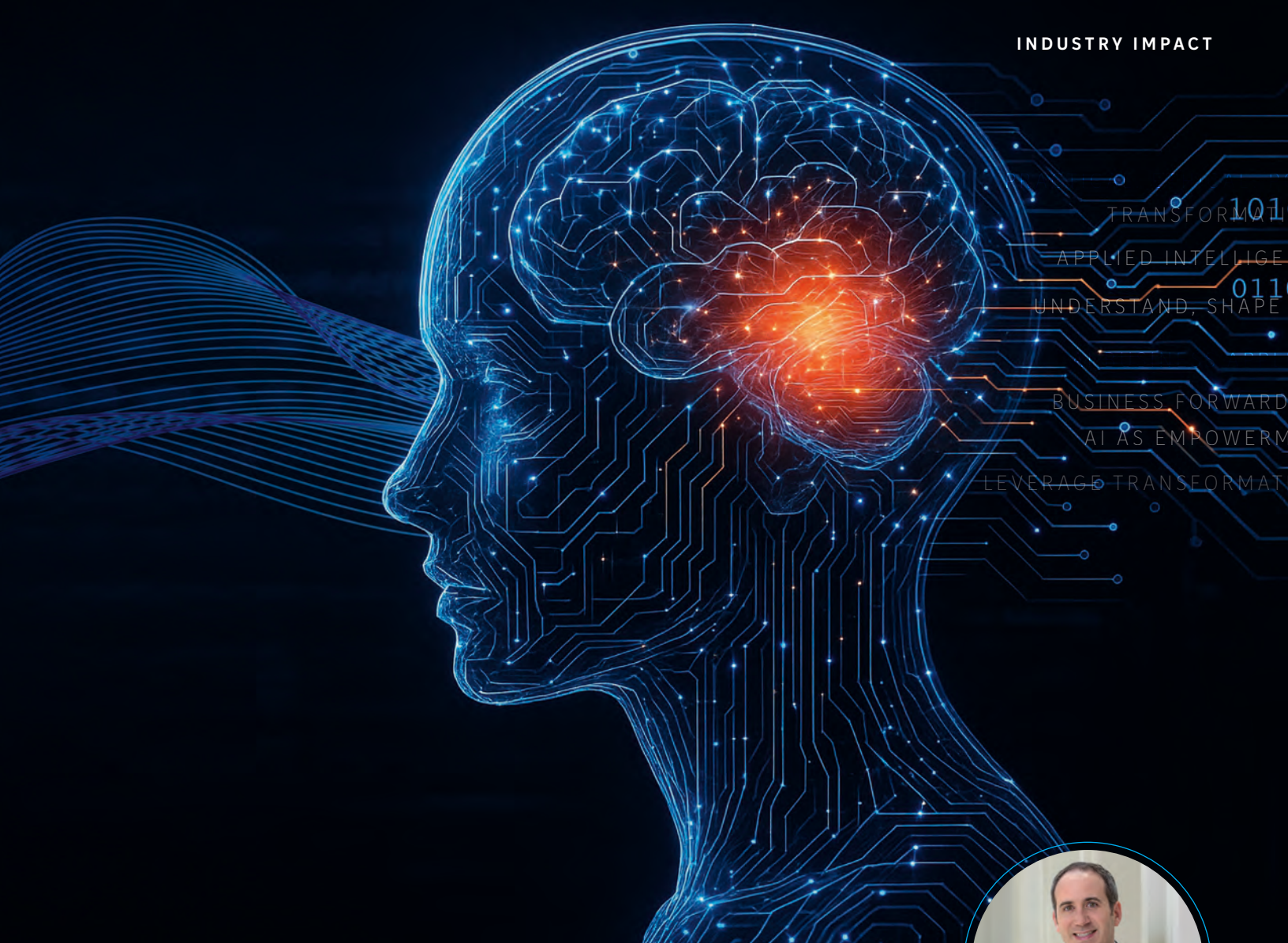
For the past several years, Olin has ramped up the inclusion of AI-focused courses across degree programs. In fall 2026, that will go a step further with the launch of a new Master of Science in AI for Business (MSAIB). Seethu Seetharaman, W. Patrick McGinnis Professor of Marketing, said the degree is a natural outgrowth of Olin's well-regarded Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSA) program, and is addressing industry requests for more employees with AI expertise.

**"I wouldn't be surprised if somebody who has been working in analytics, for example, would take a break and do a program like this."**

**Durai Sundaramoorthi**  
*Professor of Practice  
in Data Analytics*

Durai Sundaramoorthi, a data analytics professor who is helping to build the curriculum for the new degree, said it was becoming more difficult for students who wanted to pursue this area to fit enough AI courses into the existing business analytics degree. He sees the new MSAIB degree as a good choice for a range of students, from recent graduates seeking marketable skills to longtime professionals looking to upskill. "I wouldn't be surprised if somebody who has been working in analytics, for example, would take a break and do a program like this."





Todd Gormley



Durai Sundaramoorthi

Sundaramoorthi said many of Olin's current AI courses will be at the core of the new degree, supported by the addition of new courses focusing on topics such as large language models and generative AI.

In fact, across Olin, professors are developing new AI-focused courses that can serve as electives across different programs, said Todd Gormley, vice dean of education and a professor of finance. This includes the development of AI-Driven Finance, a course that focuses on the use of AI in the sector.

**“If you want to be a successful business school, you need to stay at the cutting edge of the tools that businesses want to use.”**

**Todd Gormley**  
*Vice Dean of Education  
and Professor of Finance*

“We have a lot of really strong faculty who enjoy being able to teach these frontier technologies and their potential impacts,” Gormley said.

Olin's agile ramp-up to meet the AI demand is not unusual, he noted, pointing to the original MSA program, which was launched a decade ago.

“AI is a newer type of technology that businesses are getting excited about and want to know how to use and apply,” he said. “If you want to be a successful business school, you need to stay at the cutting edge of the tools that businesses want to use.”



## AI IS DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN FACULTY RESEARCH

Olin faculty continue to expand and strengthen their AI-focused and AI-dependent research, building on years of discovery. Six of the last eight winners of the Olin Award — established by Olin executive-in-residence Richard Mahoney to honor research with practical business applications — either studied the effects of artificial intelligence or used it as a tool. A 2023 Olin Award-winning AI-based project that Seetharaman helped develop detects suspicious pharmaceutical shipments to retailers to help curb the opioid epidemic.

The 2025 award went to Xiang Hui and Oren Reshef, who found that wider availability of advanced generative AI tools negatively impacted freelance creative workers.

Hui, an assistant professor of marketing, is now studying the effect of GenAI on a different marketplace: the high-stakes Chinese real estate market. Hui is examining how AI “assistants” can help real estate agents by providing personalized recommendations for matching

buyers and sellers. “The big takeaway is that this AI technology can make the market work more efficiently and can improve outcomes for both the buyer side and the seller side.”

He envisions more scholarship looking at how AI can augment rather than replace human expertise.



Xiang Hui / Oren Reshef



Xiumin Martin, the Margaret Oung Distinguished Professor of Accounting, is researching how retail investors are leveraging AI to improve returns and level the playing field with sophisticated investors.

For Martin, AI is not only a fascinating object of study; it's a tool that can enhance and accelerate her work.

“I would say that AI has changed how we do research significantly,” she said. She teaches doctoral students how to use AI in their research — to seek out data, organize it, and categorize it. AI not only speeds up research but also improves its accuracy.

However, Martin warns that the benefits of generative AI come with the risk of AI agents

“hallucinating” or inventing information. “As researchers, we need to guard against that, because sometimes the output looks very real,” she said. “I really need to go a long way to check the validity of that output, instead of just bluntly relying on it.”

Dennis Zhang, professor of supply chain, operations, and technology and professor of marketing (courtesy), is exploring how AI can help online platforms optimize targeted offerings, such as advertising for their users. Currently, much of this optimization comes through A/B testing — showing different offerings to different people and noting what works better. It's effective but slow, and in the meantime, half the target audience gets the less effective option.

Using generative AI to simulate consumer behavior can shrink that process — at enormous potential savings.

“The advertising business in the U.S. across big tech is on the order of \$300 billion to \$500 billion every year,” Zhang said. “Even if you're saving 10% of the efficiencies, that's \$30 to \$50 billion per year across those platforms.”



Xiumin Martin



Dennis Zhang



Seethu Seetharaman



Eli Snir



## HELPING COMPANIES LEVERAGE AI'S POWER

The Center for Analytics and Business Insights (CABI), Olin's business analytics research hub, has long applied sophisticated analytical tools to the challenges raised by its business partners. As companies become more AI-savvy, CABI is keeping them on top of the latest developments, said Seetharaman, who is also the center's director.

CABI sponsors at least two research roundtables a year, giving attendees a front-row seat to the latest faculty research in the area, as well as frequent lunch-and-learn events. Meetings of CABI's board allow member companies to share best practices, which in turn helps the center decide where to direct its attention.

**“We’re currently partnering with exec ed to offer a whole host of data science, data literacy, machine learning, and AI types of courses.”**

**Eli Snir**  
*Teaching Professor of  
Data Analytics*

Seetharaman said members can send their employees to CABI immersion training — deep dives into the nuts and bolts of popular topics. Most recently, the center conducted a training on Microsoft Copilot: “It was constructed almost exclusively based on what we heard our board members say: Tell us how to be clever prompt engineers, how to use prompts effectively so that we can get maximum business value.”

As interest in these immersive events is growing, Olin is branching out with a new AI executive education offering that can be tailored to client needs.

“We’re currently partnering with exec ed to offer a whole host of data science, data literacy, machine learning, and AI types of courses,” said Eli Snir, a teaching professor of data analytics.

In addition to employee education, experiential learning practicums give CABI's board members access to student-led solutions to pressing business challenges. Many of these projects employ AI tools, and over the past several years, Seetharaman said he's noticed AI becoming a part of more unique projects. Currently, he and Michael Wall, academic director of experiential learning and curricular advancement, are advising a team on a consulting project for the API Innovation

Center (APIIC), a nonprofit dedicated to reshoring the production of medications locally.

The team is advising APIIC on which drug molecules they should target for domestic production in St. Louis, based on the cost implications of producing it.

“So, it's a data-driven project, where they are making available some external data sources that students can mine,” Seetharaman said. “But it is also to make our country and our city more self-sufficient in terms of the drug supply chain. CABI has always had this eye on doing at least a couple of projects like this every year. Doing something for the community and society.”



## Highlights Report: Regional Partnerships

**CURRICULUM:** Launched new MBA specialization in Private Capital and Strategic Ownership.

**RESEARCH:** Partnering with WashU's Brown School on research focused on improving economic mobility and reducing wealth disparities.

**ENGAGEMENT:** Convened 250 members of the small business community at the Koch Center for Family Enterprise's 10th annual symposium.

**EXECUTIVE EDUCATION:** Collaborating with Bunzl North America on custom programming to develop its leadership pipeline.

**PARTNERSHIP:** Strengthening relationships with more than a dozen companies, including Millipore Sigma, Enterprise Holdings, Nestlé Purina PetCare Co., and PARIC.

# When Nature Gives and Takes

WHY WE STILL TRUST THE GOODNESS OF THE NATURAL WORLD — AND HOW OLIN AND THE WASHU COMMUNITY PITCHED IN AFTER THE STORM

BY BLAIRE GARWITZ



Nature can be awe-inspiring in its beauty and power — and frightening in its ferocity and destructiveness. Can people who have experienced the negative side of nature's power — a flood or fire, a tornado or earthquake — continue to see the natural world as a positive and benevolent force? According to recent research at WashU Olin Business School, the answer is yes.

"We were interested in finding out how experiencing potentially profound negative impacts from nature might affect people's beliefs and views about the natural world," said Sydney Scott, associate professor of marketing. "We found that people have a very positive view toward nature even if they've experienced its negative consequences."

Scott's paper, "Americans believe in the benevolence of nature, and this belief is not lower in people who have experienced natural disasters," was published in the journal *Judgment and Decision Making*.

For the study, Scott and her team surveyed more than 300 adults through an online research platform. "We specifically tried to recruit participants from states that had a higher incidence of natural disasters, including California, Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas, so we could look at whether that ended up being related to how they viewed nature and the natural world," she said.

The 24-question survey asked participants how they value nature across different domains such as food and medicine. "We found that people really do believe that nature is benevolent," said Scott, who

focuses her research on the roles of naturalness and morality in consumers' decision-making about their health and well-being. "They sometimes even believe that nature is better when we're talking about natural versus artificial products that are stipulated to be very similar or have identical effects. People really value naturalness and think natural food and medicine are safer, healthier, and more beneficial."

Surprisingly, those who had indicated on the survey that they or a family member had experienced a natural disaster held positive views of nature and the natural world similar to those who hadn't been affected by a natural disaster.

"I think that this view of nature's inherent benevolence is part of the reason why people love natural products," Scott said. "The word 'natural' has a very strong appeal, and this study adds some empirical evidence to how people are thinking about the types of labels and attributes food and medicine have."

While the study results certainly have implications for marketing professionals to consider when promoting products, the findings are also helpful for society at large.

"Ultimately, understanding how we see ourselves in relation to nature, both in terms of natural risks and also the benefits of nature, is really important for understanding our policies around the environment and what people want our role to be in the natural world," Scott added.



**“Ultimately, understanding how we see ourselves in relation to nature, both in terms of natural risks and also the benefits of nature, is really important for understanding our policies around the environment and what people want our role to be in the natural world.”**

Sydney Scott, Associate Professor of Marketing







# Helping St. Louis Tornado Victims

BY BLAIRE GARWITZ

Sara Savat, senior news director for business and social sciences at WashU, contributed to this article.

Winds of up to 152 mph blew through St. Louis on May 16, 2025, as an EF-3 tornado traveled more than 20 miles through the Greater St. Louis area. Nearly a mile wide, the tornado damaged or destroyed more than 5,000 structures and claimed five lives.



Photo by Lawrence Bryant of LB Photography

In the weeks and months after the disaster, the WashU community didn't need to guess at how to help: The university's strong ties in the St. Louis community led people across WashU to reach out to partners to find recovery efforts that would make the most impact.

- WashU's "In St. Louis, For St. Louis" initiative team worked with Delmar Divine-associated nonprofits to clean up debris.
- A group from the Brown School helped clean up neighborhoods and deliver supplies to those in need through the People's Response Hub, a recovery initiative launched by Action St. Louis and For the Culture STL.
- Joining efforts with Power4STL, volunteers from the Medical Campus packaged food, water, and supplies for delivery.
- Volunteers from the Sam Fox School served in a variety of roles with Invest STL, 4theVille, and Dream Builders 4 Equity.
- During GO! Week in August, Olin full-time MBA students partnered with the Urban League for an MBA Day of Service to help neighborhoods still affected by the storm. They assisted with housing support, a food bank, and a clothes closet.





Elisha Akli

Sometimes, community connections are personal. That was certainly the case for Olin's Elisha Akli. An accountant from Ghana who is pursuing a master's degree in accounting, Akli learned of heavy damage in North City in a social media post by a St. Louis-area woman who had been supportive of international students from Africa.

"I immediately reached out to ask how I could help," Akli said. "We volunteered together, joining other organized groups and individuals already working in the area."

He said the experience of joining with others to make a difference has left a lasting impact.

"In a world often characterized by division and individualism, it was uplifting to be part of a movement that was selfless, unified, and deeply compassionate," says Akli. "North City is a predominantly Black community, but I saw people from all backgrounds, many of them white, working hand in hand to help those affected. It reminded me of the best of humanity — what's possible when we see each other simply as people in need and people who care."

**“North City is a predominantly Black community, but I saw people from all backgrounds, many of them white, working hand in hand to help those affected. It reminded me of the best of humanity — what's possible when we see each other simply as people in need and people who care.”**

*Elisha Akli, Olin student*

As part of their GO! Week activities, first-year MBAs pitched in to help those in areas still affected by St. Louis' devastating tornado just a few months earlier.



# Driving Impact Through Scholarship

**WashU Olin Business School faculty** are producing groundbreaking, interdisciplinary research that is shaping the future of business — and the world beyond. From innovative insights into leadership and entrepreneurship to data-driven solutions for complex global challenges, their work combines rigor with real-world relevance.



## Financial Reporting Issues Skyrocket With Death of CFO

When there's a sudden death of a CFO, what's the impact on the firm's financial reporting? MaryJane Rabier was inspired to study this issue after experiencing sudden loss herself.

Her findings reveal just how vital CFOs are to maintaining the integrity of a company's financial reporting. When a CFO dies unexpectedly, the chances of the firm facing serious reporting issues — like delayed SEC filings or restatements — more than double.

The research also highlights why firms need robust succession plans and contingency strategies to keep financial operations steady — and why competitive compensation and retention efforts for CFOs matter more than ever. In short, an unexpected CFO departure can put a company's financial reporting stability at real risk.

### MaryJane Rabier

Assistant Professor of Accounting

#### *The Accounting Review*

"How resilient are firms' financial reporting processes to the sudden loss of a CFO? Evidence from sudden deaths"



## Data Shows Visibility Can Boost Minority-Owned Business Success

What happens when online platforms make it easier to identify and support minority-owned businesses? A study led by Oren Reshef finds that labeling a business as Black-owned on sites like Yelp can increase demand by up to 67%, while Latinx-owned businesses see a 60% boost in online traffic. These effects are strongest in predominantly white, left-leaning areas. The study also shows that "opt-in" labeling helps minimize potential bias while encouraging genuine engagement.

The findings highlight a practical, low-cost strategy for promoting economic equity through market mechanisms — demonstrating how transparency can align consumer values with business outcomes and create shared value for entrepreneurs, platforms, and communities alike.

### Oren Reshef

Assistant Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship

#### *American Economic Review*

"The Benefits of Revealing Race: Evidence From Minority-Owned Local Businesses"



## Banks, Rules, and Crises: The Timing Is Everything

What if financial stability depends not on stricter rules, but on smarter timing? This research by Brittany Lewis finds that the most effective banking regulations shift with the business cycle — loosening when recovery is needed and tightening when the economy runs hot.

The study reveals that the optimal policy must be dynamic, not rigid. When the economy is struggling after a financial crisis, regulators should be lenient. Being too strict at that point risks throttling the capital flow needed for businesses to recover, causing long-term inefficiency.

Conversely, during prosperous times, rules must be restrictive to build a safety cushion that prevents banks from reckless risk-taking. Ultimately, the research shows that the most effective way to protect the financial system is through smart, flexible regulation that changes with the business cycle.

### Brittany Lewis

Assistant Professor of Finance

#### *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*

"Bank Leverage Restrictions in General Equilibrium: Solving for Sectoral Value Functions"



# entrepreneurial mindset problem-solving minority-owned business succession planning financial stability



## The Power of Productive Daydreaming

Letting your mind wander might be more productive than it seems. Research on “problem-solving daydreaming” — a playful, imaginative form of mind wandering — shows that it can spark powerful work-related epiphanies. These moments of insight often shift perspectives, deepen purpose, and inspire new ways of thinking. Olin’s Erik Dane and Markus Baer studied MBA students and emerging leaders and found that setting aside time for creative reflection helps people move past limiting beliefs and approach challenges with greater flexibility.

In practice, this approach can be applied in leadership development, coaching, and career workshops that encourage structured self-reflection and imaginative problem-solving — helping individuals uncover clearer direction, renewed motivation, and greater professional growth.

### Erik Dane

Professor of Organizational Behavior

### Markus Baer

Professor of Organizational Behavior

### *Journal of Management*

“Gaining Career Purpose Through Lightning Bolts: Examining the Strength and Psychological Foundations of Work-Related Epiphanies”

## The Corporate Advantage of an Entrepreneurial Mindset

Entrepreneurial employees are sometimes viewed as organizational misfits — but this research by Alyssa Liang and Markus Baer suggests the opposite may be true.

Acting entrepreneurially within a company can actually boost career success by driving new internal ventures. The researchers conducted two studies, the first linked entrepreneurial behavior to career rewards, while the second tested how creating internal ventures signals leadership potential. Employees who question the status quo, observe with fresh perspectives, share ideas across diverse networks, and experiment with new approaches are more likely to launch internal corporate initiatives. These ventures, in turn, often lead to more promotions and, in larger organizations, higher compensation — sending a clear signal of leadership potential.

The findings provide valuable insight for both employees eager to innovate and organizations looking to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset from within.

### Alyssa X. Liang

Visiting Assistant Professor of Organizational Behavior

### Markus Baer

Professor of Organizational Behavior

### *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*

“Internal venturing as a signal: How entrepreneurial employees gain career benefits in organizations”

# Powered by Alumni

**We often say, “Once Olin, always Olin,” and it’s true.**

Our alumni are the powerful force that helps drive our school’s growth, reputation, and excellence. They aren’t just engaged; they are actively shaping the next generation of business leaders and securing Olin’s place among the world’s top business schools.

From stepping into classrooms as guest speakers and mentoring students through consulting projects to sitting on boards and consistently hiring Olin talent for internships and full-time roles, the impact of the Olin network is everywhere. These profiles offer a quick look at the many ways our alumni continue to lead, connect, and help us make a real impact.



**Magdalen Sparrow, PMBA 2023**

Founder, Passback



**Shradha Challa, MBA 2024**

Founder, Nari



**Jason Carter, EMBA 2020**

Founder and CEO, UNCOMN



**Megan Maher, EMBA 2022**

Director of Trade Marketing, Energizer Holdings



## Why do you stay connected to Olin?

“WashU Olin continues to play a huge role in my personal and business lives, including [my sports gear upcycling company] Passback’s growth. Since our founding in 2023, we’ve had students involved in research and consulting projects each semester — most coming through the Center for Experiential Learning. Additionally, I also stay in touch with many alumni, and it’s been incredible to watch as their careers evolve, and it’s been beneficial for Passback as well. For example, my classmate Max Barretto, now VP at Parkside Financial, helped Passback secure our first CRA donation; Tom Graff at Ameren recently helped coordinate a companywide collection drive; and Titobi Oreorolun (we met in The League) is a key redistribution partner for Passback. Also, Vianca Cuevas Soulette and Jon Lee Casco are key teammates of Passback. Staying connected to professors like Dr. Heather Cameron has also been crucial — her mentorship has shaped both my leadership and our organization’s strategy.”

“Olin has one of the most supportive and encouraging networks I have ever been part of. Whenever I face a challenge, I know I can reach out to someone from Olin and find genuine guidance and help. The community truly wants to see each other succeed, and that spirit of connection and collaboration has stayed with me beyond graduation. I stay involved because Olin played such a big role in shaping my growth as a founder, and it continues to feel like a place where I belong.”

“I stay connected to WashU Olin for numerous reasons. First, for the continuous education opportunities afforded through the seminars, roundtables, executive education, and more. Second, for the unmatched network available via Olin, its current students, its past and present faculty members, and its alumni. Because I am a citizen of the region, WashU Olin Business School is one of my primary means of staying connected and relevant. Finally, for the ongoing mentorship provided through relationships I developed at Olin, whether that be former instructors, fellow students, or current Olin staff.”

“I stay connected to WashU Olin because I deeply value its vibrant community and the diverse opportunities the network provides for continued professional growth. Serving on the Olin Alumni Advisory Board allows me to stay engaged with the school’s strategic direction and contribute to its mission. I’ve also had the privilege of partnering with the Center for Experiential Learning, which has been a meaningful way to collaborate with students and faculty on real-world business challenges.”

## How did Olin prepare you for your career?

“Olin taught me how to think and act like an entrepreneur. Courses like The Hatchery, The League of Extraordinary Entrepreneurs, and the Skandalaris Center were the launchpads for Passback — the very first funding we received was from the Holekamp Seed Fund. Olin gave me not only the business fundamentals but also the confidence, network, and community to take an idea from concept to tangible impact. Passback truly wouldn’t exist without that foundation and credibility.”

**“Olin gave me not only the business fundamentals but also the confidence, network, and community to take an idea from concept to tangible impact.”**

Magdalen Sparrow

“Olin gave me the opportunity not only to learn essential skills such as pitching business ideas, managing teams, and developing long-term strategy, but also to apply them through hands-on experiential opportunities. Those experiences allowed me to take what I learned in the classroom and bring it to life through my own venture. The combination of academic rigor, real-world application, and mentorship from professors like Doug Villhard played a huge role in preparing me for my career as a founder.”

“I am a retired Navy officer and had started my own business when I attended the Executive MBA program at Olin from 2018 to 2020. When I started the program, my company had less than \$10 million in annual sales. This year, we’re going to exceed \$60 million in revenue. The executive education I received at Olin helped me transition UNCOMN from a burgeoning startup into a growing, profitable, scalable consultancy ready for the next phase of growth.”

“I joined Olin later in my career through the Executive MBA program, recognizing it was the right time to take the next step in my professional journey. During the 20-month program, I transitioned into a new role and was promoted — I credit the program’s impact. Olin challenged me to think more strategically, ask better questions, and define my leadership style. The experience sharpened my performance and equipped me with the confidence and tools to lead more effectively.

## What things have you done with Olin recently?

“Over the past year, I’ve continued collaborating with Olin student groups on research and impact-building projects. These have included analyzing the fair market value of donated sports gear, tracking greenhouse gas and landfill diversion data, and developing our circularity brand metrics and product life-cycle tracking systems. The students’ work has directly advanced Passback’s technology and sustainability reporting. I have also been honored to speak to a few classes as part of a panel learning about entrepreneurship.”

“This past year, I had the opportunity to return to Olin to speak in an entrepreneurship class and share my journey as a founder — which was such a full-circle moment for me. I also participated in a program with the Center for Experiential Learning, where I had the chance to collaborate with an incredible student team. They helped me gain deeper insights into my target market, refine my business strategy, and navigate some of the challenges that come with scaling a growing brand. It was inspiring to see the level of thought, creativity, and dedication they brought to the project.”

“I am an active board member of the Olin Veterans Association Advisory Board and have participated in several events designed to strengthen the connection between Olin and its military veterans, as well as recruit new veterans into the school. I have spoken at Olin recruiting events, sat on Olin-sponsored panels, and honored Ron King by speaking on his behalf at his retirement ceremony. I’ve also traveled to Puerto Rico to visit a fellow student who I met through the EMBA program. There are too many ways to count!”

“Last fall, I partnered with the Center for Experiential Learning and Professor Michael Wall to host a practicum at Energizer, where a team of Olin students tackled a specific business challenge we were facing. The students impressed us with their intelligence, creativity, and fresh perspectives. Their recommendations helped us reframe our approach and demonstrated the real-world value of experiential learning.”

# “It changed my life.”



BSBA 2019

Gratitude from an Olin alum  
to an impactful donor.



**Logan Bash, BSBA 2019**, said the road from his small Ohio town to a promising career with Walmart ran straight through WashU Olin Business School — the school gave him the skills and connections that made it possible for him to excel as a buyer for the megaretailer.

But that road would have been nearly impassable without the help of another Olin alum, Sarah Boles, BSBA 1980, MBA 1981, who provided scholarship funding that helped put a WashU education within Bash's reach.



In a full-circle moment recently, Bash reached out to Boles to let her know how much that opportunity continues to resonate in his life.

*"I grew up in Appalachian Ohio, where opportunity often felt out of reach — the average household income in my hometown is \$26,000. I come from a long line of hard workers, but no one in my family had ever gone to college, let alone a school like WashU."*

*"You gave me the chance to attend WashU, not just as a student, but as someone who could fully focus on learning without the crushing weight of financial worry. Because of you, I graduated debt-free and was able to seize opportunities that I never dreamed possible."*

*"I've changed not just my life, but the entire trajectory of the Bash family."*

For Boles, who has been sponsoring scholarships at WashU since 2010, Bash's email was an unexpected reminder of why she continues to support students at the university.

"Contributing to scholarships is the most effective way I can think of to invest in the future — for the betterment of our country, our planet, and civilization," she said.

## OHIO TO OLIN TO WALMART

Bash grew up in Zanesville, Ohio, a small town east of Columbus. He first learned about WashU when football coach Larry Kindbom contacted him, marking the beginning of a recruitment journey in which Bash became excited about the university.

**"I've changed not just my life, but the entire trajectory of the Bash family."**

**Logan Bash**  
Buyer, Walmart Corporation

"I went on a visit, and thought, This is awesome — I could play football, and it's a great school," he said. "And then it clicked to me at some point: I should probably figure out what this place costs. I remember looking it up and just being heartbroken, thinking there's no way I could do that."

As an NCAA Division III school, WashU doesn't offer athletic scholarships. But Bash soon learned the school works with promising students to provide various types of financial aid. In Bash's case, that included a substantial scholarship from Boles.

A few years later, Bash had the chance to meet the person behind that generous assistance at a scholarship banquet.

"It was at that moment when I realized how impactful she had been," he said. "I thought, Wow! This woman went out of her way to give this money, to give me this opportunity."

That sense of gratitude has stayed with him throughout his professional career.

He went to work for a subsidiary of Walmart and has since moved up through the ranks, becoming a buyer for the company. His most recent promotion reminded him once again of the role that Boles had played in his success.

"I just felt so fortunate and grateful not only for what Sarah was able to provide for me, but for future generations of my family," Bash said. "I hope to one day be able to send my kids to a school like WashU. I hope to one day be able to do what Sarah did for me for other kids who don't have the means."

## PAYING IT FORWARD

Boles said she has met with many recipients of her named scholarship over the years and has received notes of thanks from some of them, often around graduation time. But Bash was the first recipient to reach out to her years later.

She said she was impressed "on so many levels" by Bash's email.

"It touched my heart deeply," Boles said. "To hear someone his age understand that his experience will change his family's legacy reflects a mature perspective and sense of responsibility."

**"Contributing to scholarships is the most effective way I can think of to invest in the future — for the betterment of our country, our planet, and civilization."**

**Sarah Boles**  
William H. Danforth  
Leadership Society

The scholarship had lifted the burden of worry about taking on substantial debt or a part-time job that might have interfered with studies and extracurriculars, Bash had noted.

Boles said that offering that relief was intentional: "It's a lot of work to be a full-time student. That alone is a full-time job. I'm blessed to be able to help."

Boles was particularly moved by Bash's intention to follow her example and support other students when he is able to do so:

*"I'll never forget what you did for me, and I'll spend my life striving to pay it forward."*

Of Bash, she said, "He articulated why I support scholarships. It can change a family, a community, and a legacy. It's how you spread hope, understanding, and light."

She encouraged others to similarly "pay it forward" in whatever way they can.

"Make a contribution at whatever level works for you. Every bit helps — it all has an impact," Boles said.

# 2025 Alumni Awards

Each year, WashU Olin recognizes the incredible commitment of our alumni. These honors celebrate individuals who have not only achieved professional distinction but have also dedicated their time, wisdom, and leadership to helping the school thrive and shape its future.



## DEAN'S MEDALIST

**Lynn Gorguze**  
PMBA 1986

Lynn Gorguze is chair and CEO of Cameron Holdings, which she co-founded in 1993.

Cameron, a family office investor with offices in San Diego and St. Louis, acquires and operates privately held middle-market manufacturing and service companies.

Cameron has completed over 50 acquisitions with a total transaction value exceeding \$1 billion. Gorguze serves on WashU Olin's National Council and was honored in 2006 with the school's Distinguished Alumni Award. In 2017, she received WashU's Outstanding Alumni Award.



## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

**Aaron Powell**  
BSBA 1993

Aaron Powell is CEO of Pizza Hut Global, reporting directly to the Yum! Brands CEO. He leads the brand's global growth strategy and franchise operations while driving performance across the division. Since joining Pizza Hut in 2021, Powell has spearheaded the brand's modernization journey with an emphasis on connecting people through the joy of pizza. Leveraging the global scale of the Yum! organization, Powell has championed Pizza Hut's implementation of key digital and technology initiatives to elevate the customer experience.



## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

**Robert Lowenthal**  
BSBA 1998

Robert Lowenthal, president and CEO of Oppenheimer Holdings Inc., is dedicated to driving the firm's growth by investing in digital transformation, attracting top talent, and developing new revenue streams. He's been on the firm's board of directors since May 2013, chairs the executive management committee, and co-chairs the risk management committee. In addition, Lowenthal serves as head of investment banking, where he leads the division responsible for delivering capital-raising and advisory services.





## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA

**Alaina Macia**  
MBA 2002

As the president and CEO of Medical Transportation Management Inc., one of the St. Louis area's largest woman-owned and privately held businesses, Alaina Macia is passionate about leading change in the healthcare and transit industries. Since 2005, she has overseen MTM's growth from \$30 million in annual revenue to \$1.75 billion. She is leading the transportation industry to focus on a sustainable future with a reduction in climate impact. Macia serves as a trustee for WashU and is the chair of WashU's Institute of Public Health National Council.



## EMERGING LEADER

**Chris Hoffmann**  
MBA 2016, MLS 2018

Chris Hoffmann serves as the CEO at HB Solutions Group, which operates a family of service companies to include Hoffmann Brothers, Ferguson Roofing, and Blue Sky. Prior to joining HB Solutions Group, he served as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, leaving active duty in 2014.



## EMERGING LEADER

**Clay Canfield**  
BSBA 2023

Clay Canfield is the founder of Sobriety Hub Software, a purpose-built platform designed to help recovery homes streamline operations and improve outcomes for residents. He has dedicated his career to providing user-friendly software solutions tailored to manage resident intake, payments, progress tracking, and house operations.



## EMERGING LEADER

**Cambrie Nelson**  
MBA 2017

Cambrie Nelson is the director and chief of staff of the Gender Equality Division at the Gates Foundation, overseeing the division's business operations, cross-division strategy, and leadership engagement. She serves as a trusted advisor to the division's president and executive team and supports the division's culture and overall effectiveness.

# Class Notes

## 1960s

**Jeffrey G. Mandel, BSBA 1963, Portland, OR**, shared that after having open heart surgery in December 2024, he's "84 and going for 10 more."  
[j\\_mandel@comcast.net](mailto:j_mandel@comcast.net)

## 1980s

**Frank O. Trotter, MBA 1981, Edwards, CO**, after founding EverBank.com and managing EverBank Direct until its sale to TIAA in 2017, is celebrating retirement by organizing Battle Bank.



**Charles "Chuck" L. Munson, BSBA 1988/MSBA 1994/PhD 1998, Pullman, WA**, co-authored (with Jay Heizer and Barry Render) the 15th edition of Operations and Supply Chain Management (Pearson, May 2025), the market-leading college textbook in the operations management field. The 15th edition enhances previous editions by providing the modern context and problem-solving practice needed for career success.  
[munson@wsu.edu](mailto:munson@wsu.edu)

**David E. Shogren, MBA 1989, St. Louis, MO**, last year was elected chairman of the Missouri District Export Council. He and his wife, Linda Hornby Shogren, MBA 1989, co-own a food and grocery products business

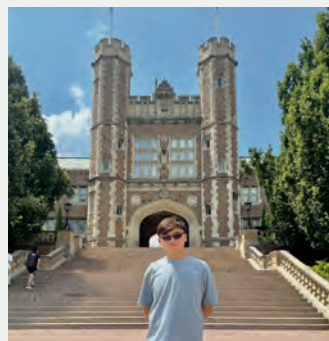
serving customers in a dozen countries. David is active in the St. Louis international trade community and teaches graduate-level marketing courses (part time) at Webster University.  
[dave@usi-foods.com](mailto:dave@usi-foods.com)

## 1990s

**Thomas W. Bassett, AB 1985 (Phys.)/AB 1985/MBA 1991/JD 1991/MSBA 1996, St. Louis, MO**, recently launched ETRA: Certified Public Accountants, providing services to high-net-worth individuals, trust beneficiaries, and executives.  
[twbassett@gmail.com](mailto:twbassett@gmail.com)

**Reuben A. Shelton, EMBA 1991, Chesterfield, MO**, was appointed to the Harris-Stowe State University Board of Regents by Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe.

**John M. Howell Jr., MBA 1992, St. Louis, MO**, recently celebrated the first anniversary of his company, Two Rivers Stone Boutique, offering high-quality natural stone — including onyx, granite, quartz, quartzite, marble, and porcelain — from Brazil, India, Italy, and the United States.  
[john@tworiversstone.com](mailto:john@tworiversstone.com)



**Rebecca Chang, BSBA 1997/MBA 2003/JD 2003, Taipei, Taiwan**, has shared her excitement on recently transforming from a WashU alum to a WashU parent. Her son,



## LAWRENCE E. THOMAS, BSBA 1977

Larry Thomas was honored with a lifetime achievement award by the St. Louis American Foundation during its 23rd Annual Salute to Excellence in Business Awards in February. Thomas was recognized as this year's "Lifetime Achiever in Business." In addition to a 40-year career at Edward Jones, Thomas has served Olin and WashU in many ways, including WashU's Board of Trustees, as co-chair of the **Make Way** initiative, as a leader of the national Black Alumni Council, as past president of the Olin Alumni Association Executive Committee, as past chair of WashU's Alumni Board of Governors, and on Olin's National Council, where he currently serves.

William Fang, is a BSBA student in the Class of 2029.

## 2000s

**Michael "Mike" J. Gallo, BSBA 2000, San Francisco, CA**, headed up the acquisition of 10 solar projects for his Pennsylvania company, Renewable Properties. Through this portfolio acquisition, the firm is significantly expanding its presence in the state, which is increasingly embracing solar power.



**Suman Menda, BSBA 2002, Dubai, United Arab Emirates**, reunited with **Denise Gagnon Faulhaber, BSBA 2002, Manila, Philippines**, to celebrate their 45th birthdays by walking the

final leg of the Camino de Santiago, from Vigo to Santiago de Compostela.

[suman@myadigital.com](mailto:suman@myadigital.com)

Picture: Suman Menda, second from left; Denise Gagnon Faulhaber, third from left

**Puneet Leekha, BSBA 2003, Bloomington, IL**, was promoted to chief executive officer of Chestnut Health Systems, a multistate provider of integrated healthcare services with an embedded behavioral health research institute.  
[pleekha@chestnut.org](mailto:pleekha@chestnut.org)

**Thomas Kim, MBA 2005, Puyallup, WA**, is a deployment sourcing manager for Amazon Web Services, responsible for sourcing server cabling for the company's North American data centers.

## 2010s

**Dean Swaller, EMBA 2011, Arnold, MO**, is vice president of operations at Vivos Holdings, one of the world's largest solution providers for private brand and co-manufactured hygiene and personal care products.



He recently managed the firm's acquisition of Nice-Pak Products.

**Irina N. Neveleff, PMBA 2016,** Bogotá, Colombia, is a business executive officer for Nestlé Purina.

**Andrei Popescu, MBA 2016,** Bucharest, Romania, is president of the Coaching Tools Division at Noble Manhattan Coaching Ltd., United Kingdom. Recruited to build the division from scratch, he is rapidly growing the division's headcount and revenue.  
[andrei.popescu@wustl.edu](mailto:andrei.popescu@wustl.edu)



**Conn Q. Davis, MBA 2017,** Dallas, TX, in October launched Annalex Equity, a private equity independent sponsor focused on industrial, building products, and services business in the lower-middle market.  
[conn.q.davis@gmail.com](mailto:conn.q.davis@gmail.com)

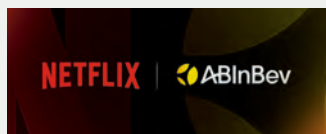
**Travis J. Sarich, EMBA 2018,** St. Louis, MO, was appointed CEO of Wildpack Beverage, a national co-manufacturer and packaging partner supporting emerging and established beverage brands.

## 2020s

**Philip W. Park, BSBA 2021,** Boston, MA, is a private equity associate at H.I.G. Capital, a leading global alternative investment firm with \$70 billion of equity capital under management.  
[pwpark@wustl.edu](mailto:pwpark@wustl.edu)



**Latasha Collins, MACC 2023,** St. Charles, MO, after a successful tenure with the IRS, launched Collins & Collins Tax Advisors in Chesterfield, MO. The firm assists clients in building lasting wealth through its trust, estate, and tax planning services.  
[collins7637@icloud.com](mailto:collins7637@icloud.com)



**Tyler G. Whiteman, MBA 2023,** Astoria, NY, led the global AB InBev team involved in the recent creation of a global partnership with Netflix.  
[whitemantylor89@gmail.com](mailto:whitemantylor89@gmail.com)



### BILL WIRZ, MBA 1997

Lifelong runner and product enthusiast Bill Wirz brought years of footwear knowledge — from owning a retail store to leading product testing at global brands — to co-found Amento Footwear, where he serves as COO. Bill applies his expertise to every step of creating Amento's performance-driven sandals and is actively promoting the footwear at events like the Atlanta Shoe Show (pictured). You can learn more at [amentofootwear.com](http://amentofootwear.com) or reach Bill directly at [wmjwirz@thewapsiegroupp.com](mailto:wmjwirz@thewapsiegroupp.com).



### EMBA 59 OFFSPRING

While the Executive MBA Class 59 cohort was busy working, studying, traveling, and more, they were also parenting. These four babies, who were born to EMBA students during the program, made guest appearances at their parents' April 2025 graduation. Parents pictured in this photo (left to right) are Ellory Frick Brunkhorst, Ihab Hassanieh, Bill Effah, and Matt St. John. Here's to all the Olin students raising families while pursuing their education!

**Phaidra Stanley, MBA 2025,** Chicago, IL, works in product management at Medline Industries LP.

**Alexander "Alex" B. Thomson, MBA 2025,** St. Louis, MO, and his wife, Emily, were selected by the *St. Louis Business Journal* for its 40 Under 40 list for 2025.  
[alexthomson@gmail.com](mailto:alexthomson@gmail.com)

## What's New?



### SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Submit your updates, corrections, and announcements to Class Notes.

[apps.olin.wustl.edu/  
alumni/forms/classnotes](https://apps.olin.wustl.edu/alumni/forms/classnotes)

# Family and Celebrations



**Jonathan Arenas, BSBA 2020,** Chicago, IL, married Hope Walsh, September 6, 2025.  
[jarenas1040@gmail.com](mailto:jarenas1040@gmail.com)



**Lyndsey E. Douglas, BSBA 2014,** Hoboken, NJ, shared news of her engagement to Jeffrey Lender.  
[lyndseyerindouglas@gmail.com](mailto:lyndseyerindouglas@gmail.com)



**Judy A. Williams, BSBA 1984/PMBA 1990,** St. Louis, MO, is thrilled to announce the birth of a granddaughter, Caroline Jade Breitenstein, October 9, 2025.

## In Memoriam

### 1940s

**Mrs. Evelyn Louise Dawson, BSBA 1947,** Barrington, IL, November 22, 2023

**Mrs. Alice Levy, BSBA 1947,** Austin, TX, October 15, 2024

**Mrs. Esther Berger, BSBA 1948,** St. Peters, MO, March 15, 2025

**Mr. Herbert A. Strain Jr., BSBA 1948,** St. Louis, MO, September 29, 2024

**Mr. Lloyd Arthur Torgove, BSBA 1948,** Marblehead, MA, December 6, 2024

**Mrs. Flora L. Warfield, BSBA 1948,** Ballwin, MO, February 25, 2017

**Ms. Virginia R. Marcagi, BSBA 1949,** Covington, KY, July 19, 2024

**Mr. Robert B. Ruethain, BSBA 1949,** Charleston, SC, November 26, 2024

**Mr. Eugene R. Topper, BSBA 1949,** Deerfield, FL, February 10, 2025

### 1950s

**Mrs. Marilyn L. Griesedieck, BSBA 1950,** St. Louis, MO, May 21, 2025

**Ms. Katherine Lupo, BSBA 1950,** St. Louis, MO, July 25, 2024

**Mrs. Jacqueline "Jackie" (Berg) Saboff, BSBA 1950,** Port Orange, FL, January 6, 2025

**Mr. George J. Boudoures, BSBA 1951,** St. Louis, MO, August 20, 2025

**Ms. Libby Sorkin Routman, BSBA 1951,** St. Louis, MO, August 5, 2025

**Mrs. Sue Ittner Voorhees, BSBA 1951,** St. Louis, MO, April 2, 2025

**Mr. Edward T. Feldman, BSBA 1952,** Palm Beach Gardens, FL, November 8, 2024

**Mr. Louis B. Loebner, BSBA 1952,** St. Louis, MO, November 1, 2024

**Mr. Robert A. Oglander, BSBA 1952,** Sarasota, FL, March 11, 2025

**Mrs. Mary Ann Windsor, BSBA 1952/MA 1956,** Sheboygan, WI, May 16, 2025

**Miss Mary S. Hewitt, BSBA 1953,** Bristow, OK, July 2, 2025

**Mr. Robert A. Praechter, BSBA 1953/MBA 1964,** St. Louis, MO, February 16, 2023

**Mr. Charles E. Boersig, BS 1954/BSBA 1954/MBA 1960,** Milford, OH, April 5, 2025

**Mr. Richard P. Burgdorf, BSBA 1954/MBA 1957,** St. Louis, MO, December 17, 2024

**Mr. Jon E. Fuhrer, BSBA 1954,** St. Louis, MO, July 2, 2025

**Mrs. Judith Lorenz Green, BSBA 1955,** Orange, CA, November 30, 2022

**Mr. Carl A. Leibner, BSBA 1955,** O'Fallon, MO, July 19, 2025

**Mr. Sylvan A. Weingarten, BSBA 1955,** Lake Worth, FL, December 18, 2024

**Mr. Gary L. Hammon, BSBA 1956,** San Antonio, TX, September 4, 2024

**Mrs. Betty A. Moenkhaus, BSBA 1956,** Rosemount, MN, June 14, 2024

**Mrs. Marlene V. Renz, BSBA 1956,** Madison, AL, January 24, 2025

**Mrs. Marilyn J. Skaggs, BSBA 1956,** St. Louis, MO, July 24, 2024

**Mr. Thomas G. Skaggs, BSBA 1956,** St. Louis, MO, March 28, 2025

**Mr. John A. Straub, BSBA 1956,** Fort Myers, FL, May 8, 2025

**Mr. Alan L. Travis, MBA 1956,** Chesterfield, MO, June 7, 2025

**Mr. Chandrakant J. Bhatt, MBA 1957,** Jersey City, NJ, July 22, 1997

**Mr. Richard "Dick" G. Hatz, BSBA 1957,** Washington, MO, March 10, 2025

**Mr. Charles W. McSpadden, AB 1953/MBA 1957,** Marietta, GA, August 31, 2025

**Mr. Robert L. Merriman, BSBA 1957,** St. Louis, MO, January 16, 2025

**Mr. John R. Ring, MBA 1957,** Dallas, TX, February 3, 2025

**Dr. Harry E. Wilkinson, MBA 1957,** Houston, TX, June 1, 2025

**Mr. Bernard S. Levin, BSBA 1958,** Van Nuys, CA, May 26, 2025



**Mr. Raymon Sauer, BSBA 1959,**  
Boca Raton, FL, June 17, 2025

**Mr. Gordon E. Scobel, BSBA 1959,**  
Troy, MI, July 27, 2025

**Mr. Kenneth J. Staten, BSBA 1959,**  
Pacific, MO, April 4, 2025

**Miss Carole A. (Redecker) Vohsen, BSBA 1959/MBA 1971,**  
Chesterfield, MO, March 30, 2025

## 1960s

**Mr. Thomas E. Fitzgibbons Jr., BSBA 1960,**  
St. Louis, MO, July 12, 2025

**Ms. Christine M. Hinkley, BSBA 1960,**  
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA, June 10, 2025

**Mr. Joseph F. Odgers, BSBA 1960,**  
Santa Barbara, CA, October 20, 2024

**Mr. Irwin A. Albrecht Jr., BSBA 1961,**  
St. Louis, MO, July 11, 2025

**Mr. Jack J. Bachmann, BSBA 1961,**  
Naples, FL, February 14, 2025

**Mr. William D. Crowell Jr., MBA 1961,**  
Barrington, IL, July 3, 2025

**Mr. Joseph A. Frimel III, BSBA 1961,**  
Wildwood, MO, December 19, 2024

**Mr. Kenneth E. Krancher, BSBA 1961,**  
Peoria, IL, March 5, 2025

**Mr. Franklin S. Sax, BSIE 1955/MBA 1961,**  
Chico, CA, July 31, 2025

**Mr. Robert E. Schaefer, BSBA 1961,**  
Pacific, MO, August 7, 2024

**Mr. Bernard D. Tischler, BSBA 1961/MBA 1970,**  
St. Louis, MO, August 27, 2025

**Mr. Ivan N. Zwick, BSBA 1961,**  
Marion, IL, December 16, 2024

**Mr. William B. Gillespie, MBA 1962,**  
Scarborough, ME, May 21, 2025

**Mrs. Judith Ann (Queensen) Jones, BSBA 1962,**  
Newport News, VA, August 12, 2025

**Mr. Floyd P. Cook Jr., BSBA 1963,**  
Sherman Oaks, CA, August 1, 2025

**Mr. Kenneth W. Finn, BSBA 1964,**  
Naples, FL, December 13, 2024

**Dr. John M. Barnett Jr., BSBA 1965/MBA 1967,**  
Carson City, NV, May 31, 2025

**Mr. Edgar W. Ellermann Jr., MBA 1965,**  
St. Louis, MO, March 11, 2025

**Mr. John H. Reardon, MBA 1965,**  
Chesterfield, MO, April 26, 2025

**Mr. John W. Cramer, MBA 1966,**  
Florence, AL, November 8, 2024

**Mr. Thomas D. Peschio, MBA 1966,**  
Vero Beach, FL, December 19, 2024

**Mr. Donald F. Wood, BSBA 1966,**  
Wimberley, TX, July 26, 2025

**Mr. Robert E. L. Lamkin III, MBA 1967,**  
St. Louis, MO, December 25, 2025

**Mr. Jerome B. Spector, BSBA 1967,**  
Chesterfield, MO, September 3, 2024

**Mrs. Jane L. (Irwin) Byrn, BSBA 1968,**  
St. Louis, MO, November 8, 2024

**Mr. Garrett H. Headrick, BSME 1957/MBA 1968,**  
St. Louis, MO, July 23, 2025

**Mr. Daniel N. Klaff, BSBA 1968,**  
Sloughhouse, CA, July 16, 2024

**Mr. Jack Wides, BSBA 1968,**  
Carbondale, IL, November 1, 2024

**Mr. R. Michael Wittenbrink Jr., MBA 1969,**  
New Orleans, LA, June 27, 2025

## 1970s

**Mr. William K. Carson, MBA 1970,**  
St. Louis, MO, September 2, 2025

**Dr. Ganas K. Rakes, DBA 1971,**  
Littleton, CO, July 13, 2024

**Mr. Thomas L. Farquhar, MBA 1972,**  
Belleville, IL, October 14, 2024

**Mr. Kenneth R. Fritz, MBA 1972,**  
St. Louis, MO, February 4, 2025

**Mr. Warren Chong Der, MBA 1973,**  
Chesterfield, MO, April 25, 2025

**Mrs. Veselina L. Jovanovic, BSBA 1973,**  
Ballwin, MO, September 7, 2025

**Mr. David D. Sicher, MBA 1973,**  
New York, NY, January 1, 2025

**Miss Deborah Louise Moran, MBA 1974,**  
Cantonment, FL, September 2, 2025

**Mr. Norman Leigh Sandfield, MBA 1974,**  
Dallas, TX, June 11, 2025

**Mr. Patrick Ross Doherty, MBA 1975,**  
Dallas, TX, June 5, 2024

**Mr. Samuel Goldstein, BSBA 1975/MBA 1975,**  
St. Louis, MO, April 25, 2025

**Mr. Alexander Meltzor Keith, MBA 1975,**  
Tulsa, OK, May 7, 2008

**Mr. Charles Louis Sharp, MBA 1975,**  
Louisville, KY, June 11, 2024

**Mr. Mark Dale Zerman, AB 1973/MBA 1976,**  
Ballwin, MO, December 17, 2024

**Mr. Stanley C. Boyle, BSEE 1955/MBA 1978,**  
St. Louis, MO, September 9, 2022

**Ms. Melinne Katherine Owen, MBA 1978,**  
Fort Collins, CO, August 13, 2024



### SAM FOX | BSBA 1951

Sam Fox, 95, a business and civic leader and prominent St. Louis philanthropist, died on December 2, 2024. A former U.S. ambassador to Belgium, Fox was a WashU alumnus and long-serving member of the Board of Trustees who established numerous fellowships, scholarship programs, and endowed professorships. In 1998, he was appointed chair of the \$1.5 billion Campaign for Washington University. In recognition of his service and generosity, one of WashU's eight schools — the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts — bears his name.

He earned a BSBA from Olin Business School in 1951 and soon joined a brother in Fox Industries Inc., which manufactured powders for the chemical industry. He married Marilyn Fox, a University City native and fellow WashU student, in 1953.

Washington University “yanked open the curtain I didn’t know was there and revealed a world of ideas and knowledge and possibilities,” Fox said in 2018, when he and Marilyn received the Sam Fox School Dean’s Medal. “I’ve been filled with gratitude ever since.”

In 1976, Fox founded Harbour Group Ltd., a privately owned operating company that specializes in the acquisition and long-term development of manufacturing companies. WashU Olin Business School established the Sam & Marilyn Fox Scholarship in the couple’s honor in 1980. Fox also received WashU’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 1986 and Olin’s Distinguished Business Alumni Award in 1988.

“Sam Fox was an invaluable advisor to many Olin deans, in addition to his incredible generosity to the business school and across WashU,” said Mike Mazzeo, Olin’s dean and Knight Family Professor. “We are a better, more vibrant school because Sam chose to study business here more than 70 years ago.”

# In Memoriam

**Mr. Thomas Edward Wilson, MBA 1978**, Cincinnati, OH, May 12, 2017

**Mr. Craig Martin Schultz, MBA 1979**, St. Louis, MO, January 22, 2025

## 1980s

**Mr. Brad Davis Fogel, BSBA 1980**, Novato, CA, July 4, 2024

**Mr. Donald Anthony Aromando, PMBA 1981**, Madison, GA, May 21, 2025

**Mr. Jesse James Cox, BSBA 1982**, Howell, MI, August 12, 2024

**Mr. Harold Sherman Mars III, MBA 1983**, Rochester, NY, September 4, 2023

**Mr. James Alvin Hardin, MBA 1984/JD 1984**, St. Louis, MO, February 19, 2025

**Mr. C. Kevin McCarter, MA 1982/MBA 1984**, Jersey City, NJ, July 22, 2025

**Mr. Tracy Nicholas Putnam, MBA 1984**, Miami, FL, August 19, 2025

**Mrs. Elaine Demmler Soderlund, PMBA 1984**, Severna Park, MD, December 22, 2024

**Mr. John L. Jenkins, BSBA 1985**, St. Charles, MO, October 12, 2021

**Ms. Debbie Brown, BSBA 1986**, St. Louis, MO, May 7, 2025

**Mr. Devon Overlock Howe, MBA 1986**, Sarasota, FL, January 20, 2025

**Ms. Susan Lee Banes, BSBA 1987/MBA 1988**, Durango, CO, August 19, 2025

**Mrs. Lisa Gerard Burnham, AB 1978/PMBA 1987**, Ballwin, MO, July 12, 2023

**Mr. Terry Blaine McDonald, PMBA 1987**, San Antonio, TX, January 26, 2025

**Mr. Andrew Marc Karpen, BSBA 1988**, Fairfield, CT, April 28, 2025

**Mr. Joseph David Beaty Jr., MBA 1989**, Farmington, MO, February 2, 2022

## 1990s

**Mr. Robert Allen Carter, EMBA 1990**, Chesterfield, MO, January 3, 2025

**Mr. Thomas Ralph Grass, PMBA 1991**, St. Louis, MO, May 17, 2025

**Dr. Kenneth W. Chilton, MSBA 1992/PhD 1994**, Lake St. Louis, MO, January 22, 2025

**Mr. Anil Kumar Chauhan, EMBA 1994**, Ballwin, MO, September 22, 2021

**Mrs. Sandra Farley Graves, MBA 1995**, Henrico, VA, October 14, 2024

**Mr. Eiji Kubota, PMBA 1995**, Mission Viejo, CA, August 13, 2024

**Mr. John Thomas Seng, EMBA 1995**, Houston, TX, July 6, 2025

**Mr. Timothy Leo McLaughlin, PMBA 1996**, St. Louis, MO, January 2, 2022

**Ms. Annitree Laverne Edison, BSBA 1997**, St. Louis, MO, July 31, 2025

**Mr. Barry Jon Martin, MBA 1997**, St. Louis, MO, June 10, 2025

**Mr. Mark B. Burns, MBA 1998**, Jupiter, FL, February 9, 2025

**Mr. Colin A. Koester, MBA 1999**, Mount Kisco, NY, June 19, 2024

## 2000s

**Dr. Dan E. Potts, MD 1972/EMBA 2001**, Chesterfield, MO, December 28, 2024

**Mr. Nicholas John, MBA 2002**, St. Louis, MO, April 28, 2025

**Mr. Karey Alan Van Sant, PMBA 2002**, St. Louis, MO, May 10, 2025

**Ms. Sandra Miriam Norwitz, AB 1990/EMBA 2003**, Rockville, MD, August 21, 2024

**Mr. Warren Eugene Schuessler Jr., EMBA 2007**, Chesterfield, MO, July 15, 2025

## CLARENCE “CEDGE” BARKSDALE | FRIEND OF OLIN

A renowned civic leader, trustee emeritus of the WashU Board of Trustees, and longtime Olin National Council member, Clarence C. Barksdale, 92, died December 25, 2024, in St. Louis.

A St. Louis native, Barksdale returned to the city after graduating from Brown University and serving with the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Corps in Germany. He joined First National Bank in 1958 and was named president 16 years later at age 42, the youngest person ever to hold that title at the St. Louis institution. Barksdale orchestrated the name change to Centerre Bancorporation, to better reflect its increasingly regional focus, and as board chairman and CEO, he built the Centerre Bank building at 800 Market St. (now Bank of America Plaza).

After his retirement from banking in 1989, Barksdale became vice chairman of WashU's Board of Trustees, a volunteer position he held until 2004. Barksdale worked with multiple university chancellors to grow the school's endowment and help it become the national powerhouse that it is today. He served on Olin's National Council from 1995 to 2023.

**Mr. Gaston Armand DeVigne, BSBA 2008/MSF 2008**, Placitas, NM, February 21, 2025

**Mr. Justin Emmanuel Siddotam, MBA 2008**, Fulshear, TX, October 16, 2025

## 2010s

**Mr. Tyler Erickson, PMBA 2010**, Farmington, UT, January 1, 2025

## 2020s

**Mr. Peter Joseph Balfe, AB 1998/PMBA 2020**, St. Louis, MO, September 27, 2024

## Friends of Olin

**Mr. Norman H. Baron**, Neptune, NJ, January 14, 2025

**Mrs. Virginia Craig**, Naples, FL, May 19, 2025

**Mrs. Elizabeth L. Doherty**, St. Louis, MO, December 11, 2024

**Mr. Alfred E. Goldman**, St. Louis, MO, January 24, 2025

**Mrs. Nancy F. Kalishman**, St. Louis, MO, November 24, 2024

**Mr. Eugene Maurice Kornblum**, St. Louis, MO, September 17, 2024

**Mr. Gary E. Krosch**, St. Louis, MO, November 7, 2024

**Mr. Warren B. Lammert Jr.**, St. Louis, MO, June 1, 2025

**Mrs. Leslee F. Levey**, St. Louis, MO, May 15, 2025

**Mr. Charles Lipton**, Lake Worth, FL, January 4, 2025

**Mr. Bernard Marcus**, Boca Raton, FL, November 4, 2024

**Mr. Cozy W. Marks III**, St. Louis, MO, May 28, 2025

**Mrs. Julie C. Martin**, St. Louis, MO, July 11, 2024

**Georgianna A. Melzer**, St. Louis, MO, August 4, 2025

**Mr. Jerry L. Myers**, Tucson, AZ, June 6, 2025

**Mr. Edwin Pepper**, St. Louis, MO, July 12, 2024

**Mrs. Patricia Finnegan Reding**, St. Louis, MO, June 27, 2025

**Ms. Deborah B. Rogers**, Nantucket, MA, May 21, 2025

**Mrs. Marjory Russell**, St. Louis, MO, December 4, 2024

**Mrs. Joy Sandweiss**, St. Louis, MO, March 2, 2025

**Dr. Ronald Strauss**, Cleveland, OH, January 12, 2025

**Mrs. Lilli Tragos**, Santa Barbara, CA, November 10, 2024



# Save the Date!

Mark your calendar for these upcoming Olin events.

## February 03, 2026

Installation of Mike Mazzeo as the Judy and Jerry Kent Dean of Olin Business School

## February 18, 2026

Installation of Markus Baer as the Knight Family Professor

## March 25, 2026

Koch Center 11th Annual Family Business Symposium

## March 26, 2026

Dean's Medalist, Distinguished Alumni, and Emerging Leaders Celebration

## March 31, 2026

Business of Health Spring Symposium

## April 14, 2026

Brauer Lecture Series

## April 17, 2026

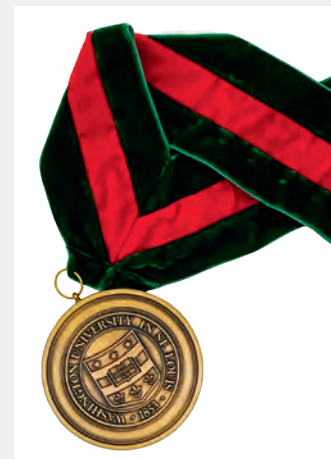
WashU Reunion at ThurtenE Carnival

## May 02, 2026

Inaugural King EMBA Forum

## May 15, 2026

Graduation Recognition Ceremony







# WashU

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BSBA Class of 2029 students walk across  
Mudd Field during their first week on campus.

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