MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

FELICIANO biz

Feliciano School
Fosters Students’ career growth

NEW JERSEY’S MOST INNOVATIVE BUSINESS SCHOOL
FROM THE DEAN

As you read through this year’s annual magazine, I am sure you will agree that amazing things are happening at the Feliciano School of Business, New Jersey’s Most Innovative Business School.

Last year, we celebrated our incredible new $66 million facility, the significance of our $20 million anonymous gift and the naming of the school in honor on Mimi and Eddie Feliciano. Since then, we have experienced very substantial GROWTH in student numbers: During the 2015/16 academic year, we added 500 business students, and another 300 just this fall. With our new online MBA and other academic programs and offerings, we are likely to add 1,000 business students over two years. We have developed NEW CONCENTRATIONS and CERTIFICATES in areas such as data analytics, forensic accounting, project management and human resource management, and our Entrepreneurship and 3D Innovation programs continue to flourish. This fall, we welcomed 15 new full-time FACULTY to our outstanding teaching ranks. All are collaborating to provide rich learning EXPERIENCES for our students while producing high impact RESEARCH that enhances the School’s reputation and reach.

The magazine begins with accounts of the IMPACT we have on the lives of our STUDENTS, a recurring theme that is evident in all of the featured stories. On page 8, we chronicle the influence of our ALUMNI in organizations as diverse as ADP, Applegate Natural & Organic Meats, KPMG and Coca-Cola. We are always excited to be able to highlight the generosity of our SUPPORTERS. Inside, we profile Michele and Keith Ansbacher, a dynamic couple who contribute their time, professional expertise and financial support to the betterment of the School, and Helane Becker, who continues to be one of our most inspiring ROLE MODELS for young women and men seeking careers in the finance sector. Women Entrepreneurship Week, now in its third year, is celebrated, along with the creativity of our students participating in our Times Square Challenge.

It is appropriate to end my comments as I started last year’s letter, by acknowledging that our achievements are made possible by the hard work and diligence of a large and diverse TEAM of faculty and staff. On page 16, there is photo essay entitled “A Day in the Life.” The piece was included to celebrate the vibrant life of our School community. We see students working on projects together 24/7 or just chilling out, our cleaning staff readying the building early in the morning, and faculty members continually engaging students and each other in active learning. In stories and in pictures, the Feliciano School of Business continues to focus on its core mission – to develop talent for a changing world.

Greg Cant, Dean
Feliciano School of Business
A Giving Couple
After decades of success, alumni Ansbachers donate conference room

Prepared for Success
New concentration provides analytic skills for a new world

Alumni Impact
Alumni give back to their alma mater

It’s Academic – And More
McColgan Student Services Center helps business students stay on track from admission to graduation

By the Numbers

MIXing it UP
3D printer lab is open to students across disciplines

Leveling the Playing Field
Feliciano Center provides encouragement – and skills – for future female entrepreneurs

A Day In The Life

Master’s For All
Online program makes it more convenient for working students to achieve an MBA

Supporting Success
KPMG mentorship program enriches Feliciano students, both academically and professionally

Top Notch
Legacy student makes parents proud

Larger Than Life
Student-produced commercial featuring mascot will air in Times Square

Promise Fulfilled
MBA student wins prestigious award

New Faculty
Meet our new faculty members

Student News

Giving Back
“Our experiences here shaped the direction of our lives, and gave us our future.”
After decades of success, alumni Ansbachers donate conference room

Michele and Keith Ansbacher graduated from Montclair State with several shared goals: raise a family, have successful careers and enjoy life. Today they credit their alma mater with helping them accomplish all of them.

The couple — married 32 years — both recently retired from their respective executive positions, Michele as vice president of Prudential’s distribution channel for the eastern United States territory and Keith as VP and associate general counsel for BASF.

“We very much feel that Montclair State gave us our start and had more of an impact on us than even our graduate degrees,” says Michele, who graduated in 1980 with a BA in economics and political science. “We met and fell in love at Montclair State. Our experiences here shaped the direction of our lives, and gave us our future.”

That’s why the Ansbachers are so passionate about giving back. As a longstanding member of the Feliciano Advisory Board, Michele heads up the School’s Corporate and Institutional Partnership Committee and volunteers as a guest speaker every semester for presentations on topics related to career preparedness. Keith, who earned his BS in business administration in 1979, is a member of Montclair State’s Foundation Board.

But the Ansbachers are generous with more than their time. Last year, the couple also donated a conference room in the new business school. The room now bears their names.

“The professors at Montclair State cared about us and were invested in us,” Michele says. “The student activities were so broad and there were so many opportunities. If you wanted leadership roles they were there for you.”

The Ansbachers met while taking advantage of one of those opportunities — student government, where Keith was treasurer and Michele was a student representative. Michele was also president of the economics club and Keith was president of his fraternity. While participating in those campus organizations and taking classes full time, the couple held down jobs to help finance their degrees. Developing that ability to manage multiple responsibilities early on prepared them for the rigors of their corporate careers.

“Montclair State instilled in me a work ethic and determination to strive and excel,” she says. 

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“The Feliciano School of Business prepared me for the workplace by offering relevant courses on subject matters that I now use on a daily basis. Also, I took advantage of the networking, resume writing and career events and applied that learning to my professional life. My professors inspired me to always push myself and seek new career opportunities.”

Washington Segura ’15
Project Implementation Coordinator
JPMorgan Chase & Co.

“The most important thing I learned from my classes was understanding how businesses function from every aspect. My professors taught me how to successfully operate a business and how to be a productive company employee. By my last semester, I was giving presentations to students, professors and business professionals on topics that related to my concentration – events and events marketing.”

Jasmine Hoffman ’16
Event Director
TechDay
“My professors were able to use the curriculum as a baseline for their teachings and brought their work experience into the classroom. Leadership was the common theme in my classes, and learning how to lead effectively has been invaluable in my daily business life.”

Denise Davila ’16
Associate Project Manager
ADP

“I learned a lot of information in the classroom, but the Feliciano School of Business also taught me how to communicate better with my classmates, helped my time management skills and provided me with a diverse classroom experience. Hearing everyone’s outlook on different topics was more enjoyable than I realized it would be.”

Andrew Rohling ’16
Audit Associate
KPMG

“The Feliciano School of Business provided me with the tools I needed to succeed in attaining my full-time position. The ‘campus to career’ business program prepared me by offering opportunities to practice our newly acquired skills. The faculty gave me support and guidance to reach my goals. The School offered many leadership opportunities for me to meet peers and develop personally.”

Vincent Noren ’16
Analyst
Fidelity Investments
Dr. Rashmi Jain, professor and chair of the Information Management and Business Analytics Department
The world is awash in digital data.

Google fields 40,000 search queries every second. Facebook recorded 1 billion users on a single day in August 2015, and experts predict that by 2020, 1.7 megabytes of data will be generated per person per second globally, building on a digital universe that will equal 4.5 zetabytes.

“That is data of humongous size, volume, velocity and variety,” says Dr. Rashmi Jain, chair and professor in the Department of Information Management and Business Analytics at the Feliciano School of Business. “Having the right technology to gather data is not enough. Having the right skill set to analyze data is very important to be able to foresee and predict trends.”

To help students acquire those skills, Jain led the design of Montclair State’s new concentration and certificate program in business analytics. Since it launched last fall, nearly 30 undergraduates have enrolled in the 27-credit concentration that is supported by four new faculty members and an advisory board of industry professionals. The University is one of the only two New Jersey institutions offering this undergraduate concentration, which includes a 3-credit hands-on practicum. A 12-credit certificate program is also available at the graduate level.

“I am so impressed by the feedback I’m getting from employers about the ability of our students,” says Jain of the response to the student practicum experience. “They are using the right tools and the right methods and understand how to apply them in the business context.”

This isn’t the first time Jain has been at the forefront of a seismic business shift. After earning her doctorate in technology management, her early career coincided with the dotcom boom of the late ’90s. “I said, ‘Wow, this is it. Technology is going to change everything,’” says Jain, who worked as a consultant for Accenture, a company specializing in business strategy, consulting, digital technology and operations. “Technology became the key distinguishing frontier where companies competed.”

Initially, even unsophisticated companies competed to launch websites, followed by e-commerce capabilities, she says. Today, businesses are competing to hire professionals who can make sense of all the back-end data created by those technologies and use it to better the bottom line.

“‘If you don’t know the right questions to ask, you will never get the right answers from the data,’” she says. “We are trying to bridge the gap as much as possible,” says Jain, “and work with industry to find out what we need to do to prepare our students with the right skills and competencies for the future. There is excitement in our department, akin to the excitement in the early stages of the dotcom era. I say to the students, ‘Welcome aboard!’”

In conjunction with the creation of the business analytics program, Montclair State hosted the state’s Big Data Symposium in March 2016. Now in its third year, the symposium attracted more than 250 members from industry and academia who shared developments — including new technologies, applications and higher education programs — in the field of big data.
MIKE BURNS graduated from Montclair State University in 1982 with more than a degree in accounting. He left with a solid understanding of rules and regulations as well as the ability to analyze and think strategically. Those are the qualities that helped propel Burns to senior vice president of finance at ADP.

“Accounting is one of the foundational sides of finance,” says Burns. “To move from accounting into analytics and decision support, you almost have to peel back the accounting to develop the analytics within decision support.”

Montclair State helped instill Burns’ agility by requiring him to explore beyond the core accounting and business curriculum and encouraged him to work with students outside of his field of study.

“It’s really important to have a well-rounded ‘diversity-of-thought’ team,” he says. “Everybody at the table has a slightly different lens on how to solve a problem. Creating diverse teams is what I’m doing today to solve problems at ADP.”

Burns sits on the Feliciano School of Business Advisory Board, recruits on campus for ADP, and is building a closer relationship between ADP and the Feliciano School of Business that will ensure graduates’ skills are aligned with the needs of companies like ADP.

“I’m proud that most Feliciano School of Business students still combine work and school, as I did. That combination reflects the work ethic of the graduates of the program,” he says. “Going to a job before or after class is tough and at the same time makes students better prepared for the real world of business.”

KERRY COLLINS started her career at Price Waterhouse, she remembers her accounting peers working madly to prepare for the CPA exam.

“I really didn’t feel like I needed to do that because that’s what I had been preparing for during the last two years at Montclair State,” says Collins, who graduated in 1984 with a degree in business administration and a concentration in accounting.

Her time at the University, she says, was “really about certain professors who did a great job getting us ready for the test and our profession.” That preparation freed Collins up to focus on her budding career and adjustment to post-college life.

Using the tools she acquired at Montclair State, it wasn’t long before Collins transitioned from public accountant to business leader, most recently as CEO of Applegate, a natural and organic meat company. She led the Bridgewater-based company’s sale last year to Hormel Foods and is now a member of Applegate’s Advisory Board.

“During the sale’s finalization, I was in a room full of extremely bright people from many prestigious universities, and there I was, Kerry Collins from Montclair State,” she says. “That brought me a sense of pride, not just personally but also as an indication of what’s possible for folks coming out of this school.”

That’s the message Collins passes on to Montclair State students when she returns to campus as a guest speaker. As a first-generation American (her parents emigrated from Ireland) and college graduate, she feels a kinship with much of Montclair State’s student body.

“I want the students to see what’s possible for them and what it takes to make it happen,” she says. “I was no different than the students today, I sat in those same seats.”
KEISHA HUTCHINSON has come full circle.

More than a decade ago, she sat across from a KPMG recruiter at a Montclair State University job fair.

Today, she is on the other side of the table, chatting up Feliciano School of Business students as an audit partner with KPMG.

Hutchinson credits that job fair with launching her career, which is why she returns to her alma mater as a recruiter.

“It’s definitely a good feeling, and I’m very proud to be doing it. I know how beneficial those job fairs were to me,” says Hutchinson, who graduated in 2002 with a double major in accounting and finance. “You’re on campus, so there’s less anxiety than you would feel walking into a big corporate office. It’s a very good way to introduce the top performers at Montclair State to the business world.”

In addition to creating those valuable networking opportunities, Hutchinson says the Feliciano School of Business’ focus on real-world application helped her ascend at KPMG faster than she ever thought possible.

“They instilled in us the ability to think strategically,” she says of the School. “To step back and look at the whole picture.”

Hutchinson continues to positively impact Feliciano School of Business students by engaging with faculty and shaping future curriculum as a member of the School’s Accounting Advisory Board.

Before he became a Coca-Cola executive, CHUCK MUTH ran his own beverage company at Montclair State.

It was a hypothetical company created for a marketing class, but Muth remembers that the experiential project laid the foundation for his future career.

“Through marketing and research, we had to make critical decisions on pricing, what products to introduce, when and how to market — all the things that help make a brand successful,” says Muth, who graduated in 1977 with a double concentration in management and marketing. “I always thought it was fate that I had that class and ended up in a beverage career.”

The senior vice president for venturing and emerging brands comes back to campus regularly — despite relocating to Maryland — to share his time and expertise with Montclair State students and faculty as a recruiter, speaker and member of the Feliciano School of Business Advisory Board.

“I think it’s important to pay it forward and give back to those people and institutions that provided the platform to help establish where you are today,” says Muth, who, with his wife, also sponsored the Laura and Charles Muth classroom in the new Feliciano School of Business building. “I thought it would be a nice way to give back to the school and leave a legacy behind,” he says of the classroom.
Ellyn A. McColgan Student Services Center helps business students stay on track from admission to graduation

As the coordinator of academic advising for the Feliciano School of Business, Maureen Branca’s main priority is to help students graduate on time.

“They don’t want to spend extra time or money if they don’t have to,” she says. “I want all students to have every answer they need. I don’t want them walking around wondering ‘What do I need to take next?’ or feeling overwhelmed.”

So Branca keeps business majors on track, ensuring that they enroll in courses in proper sequential order, and helping them identify concentrations that best suit their strengths and interests.
“We provide each student not only with curriculum guidance, but with a plan so they can see from day one, at orientation, how they can build their schedule each semester to complete their studies in four years,” she says.

Branca knows a diploma alone doesn’t ensure career success. That’s why she works closely with her Career Services colleagues, Diane Freedman and Mariah Mayers, who connect students with internships, networking and job opportunities.

“Our aim is to have them leave the School, not only with a degree, but with relevant experience,” Branca says. “The combination can definitely put them ahead of the curve.”

Getting programming and career support became infinitely easier for students when the Ellyn A. McColgan Student Services Center opened in the new Feliciano School of Business building last fall.

The Center houses the undergraduate Academic Advising and Career Services areas together for the first time, allowing students to access and use the integrated services from admission to graduation.

“I’ll have a student in my office and I’ll say, “Have you spoken to Career Services yet about job options that are aligned with your concentration?”’” says Branca. “I can connect them right then and there with career advisers. They don’t have to come back for another appointment. The students see clearly the benefits to them.”

The Student Services Center’s location near the business school’s main entrance means it commands more attention from both students and employers, says Mayers, assistant director of Career Services.

“When the students walk in the front door, they immediately see the Center. There’s definitely been an increase in the number of students coming in to talk to us,” Mayers says. “It’s a resource for employers as well. They are impressed with the facility and its spaces for job fairs, networking events, student appointments and interviews.”

Recruiters are also impressed by students’ improved communications and other “soft” professional skills. Director of Career Services Freedman attributes the positive impression to the sequence of noncredit campus-to-career transition courses that have been mandatory since 2013. “Career Services is a tremendous resource for the firms, as they do everything they can to ensure a smooth and seamless on-campus interview process for us,” says Marisa DiRocco, Senior Associate, Campus Recruiting with KPMG.

“Middle school students are very impressionable. The workshops open their eyes to different careers that are out there and get them to think at an early age about their options,” Mayers says. “As an employee at Montclair State University, it gives me a chance to give back to the community and build a relationship with schools with a diverse student body. And who knows, in four or five years we may be giving advice to those same young people in our offices in the McColgan Center. We are all about providing service that helps students at every stage of their journeys.”
Ellyn A. McColgan
Student Services Center by the numbers

Career Counseling Student Meetings +10%

Student Resume Critiques +57%

Career Fair Employer Attendance +37%

Undergraduate Events +56%

Internship Participation +31%

Career Fair Student Attendance +48%

Data compared to Academic Year 2014–2015

Total Feliciano School of Business Enrollment

90% increase over past five years

11% increase compared to last year
MIXing it Up

MIX Lab’s co-directors, from left, Jason Frasca and Iain Kerr

“Every week we have an entrepreneur at the door saying, ‘I have an idea.’”
–Iain Kerr

3D printer lab is open to students across disciplines

What do mathematical models, medical imaging, shoes, ear buds, a toothbrush, lamps, dishes and a 6,000-piece dress have in common?

They are just a handful of the 2,500 ideas brought to life this year through 3D print technology at Feliciano School of Business’ MIX Lab.

With 35 cloud-based 3D printing devices on site, MIX Lab is one of the largest university-based 3D printing facilities in the country and one of the first housed in a school of business. Since opening in August, Montclair State students from 23 different majors have taken advantage of the new technology by enrolling in the 9-credit 3D Printing Certificate in Digitally Mediated Innovation Design, says Iain Kerr, co-director of the lab.

“We suddenly have activated an interdisciplinary way for students to realize their vision – from math students to fashion design students – whatever they are thinking of, we help them make it,” Kerr says. “Students are coming up with entirely new ways to think about textiles and infrastructure. Silos have been broken; creativity has taken off.”

More than a student resource, MIX Lab also collaborates with regional small and midsized manufacturing companies on innovation research.

A November workshop the lab hosted with the NJ Manufacturing Extension attracted eight companies to campus, said Jason Frasca, who co-directs the lab with Kerr and is an entrepreneurship instructor.

“They are just a handful of the 2,500 ideas brought to life this year through 3D print technology at Feliciano School of Business’ MIX Lab.

“Every week we have an entrepreneur at the door saying, ‘I have an idea. It’s prohibitive cost wise or I don’t know how to do the design,’” Kerr says. “We assign them a student. The student learns design and entrepreneurial skills and they work on the product together.”

One such entrepreneur is Charlie, a retired aerospace engineer with three degrees who exited his field just as computers entered it. After attending the MIX Lab open house in February, he began working with a student designer on a collapsible Easter toy.

“What we really like is that our students are learning old-school engineering skills and at the same time teaching 21st-century computer-assisted design skills,” says Frasca.

“To have that intergenerational exchange is fantastic.”

The lab also is participating with local high schools on 3D printing demonstrations and programs, including the University’s Weston Science Scholars Program. The month-long summer program – now in its 17th year – recognizes high school students with significant potential in science, mathematics and related fields.

“We were one of the most popular options,” says Frasca.

Exposing students to this technology before they consider college or fields of study is crucial to building a community of entrepreneurs, says Frasca.
Feliciano Center provides encouragement — and skills — for future female entrepreneurs

When the Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship launched its first student pitch competition in 2014, four teams — all coed — vied for the $10,000 prize.

This year 16 teams — nine composed of all women, three all men and four coed — competed in the May event where bragging rights and the coveted check went to an all-female team, Karuda Skincare, for the first time.

It’s an indication that the Center is accomplishing its mission, says Sharon Waters, program manager for the Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship.

“It fits with an important goal of our program: to nurture and encourage women entrepreneurs,” she says.

While the playing field is being leveled on campus, women entrepreneurs still are underrepresented at the local and national levels.

For example, at the statewide UPitchNJ competition this April, Karuda was the only all-women team presenting, placing third behind Princeton and Seton Hall.

“We were really proud of Karuda, who competed with schools like NJIT, Stevens and Rutgers,” says Waters. “Our best team was all women and that’s who we sent. The judges remarked positively about that, but said it was something they focused on only after Karuda had won its prize.”

Why are women less likely to think of themselves as entrepreneurs? Waters says that there are different theories as to why that is, including the idea that women are less likely to be risk takers — and entrepreneurs are risk takers.

“There has been research and articles written about how women are less likely to get funding — especially in Silicon Valley,” she says.

The Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship strives to change those tendencies by regularly reaching out to sororities, student clubs and majors with a high percentage of female students; inviting successful women entrepreneurs to speak on campus; and hosting Women Entrepreneurship Week each October.

“Students get exposure to women entrepreneurs and see them as role models,” Waters says. “It can open their eyes to the possibility that they could be entrepreneurs too.”

The goal is to create a pipeline for female entrepreneurs by directing them to the cross-campus Certificate in Entrepreneurship program — a trio of 3-credit courses that culminates with the annual TeleBrands Inventors Day for Aspiring Entrepreneurs pitch competition. During the last two courses of the program, students identify a real-world problem, brainstorm a solution, test their products/apps/services with real customers, finance their businesses with seed capital donated privately to the Center, and learn how to pitch their business to investors. The Center now offers an entrepreneurship minor, effective fall 2016, which is an expansion of the certificate program.

This year’s winning Karuda Skincare team — Christiana Himobi, senior, Spanish translation major; Larissa Elvers, senior, child advocacy and policy major; and

“It fits with an important goal of our program: to nurture and encourage women entrepreneurs.”

—Sharon Waters
Sacha Vincent, senior, finance major — created a line of coconut oil–based beauty products including makeup remover, foot and hand scrub, body mask, lip balm and deodorant.

“Some groups are there for the course and the grade and they’d like to win the $10,000,” says Ross Malaga, professor of information technology and entrepreneurship, who teaches all three undergraduate courses in the certificate program. “I think early on Karuda saw they could have a real company. They had some sales. That’s when they realized: ‘This might be something more than a class project. This might be something we can really do.’”

Since winning the competition, team Karuda has applied for LLC status, launched a website and is searching for a company to mass produce their formulas and distribute them for retail sale.

Of the six teams selected as finalists this year, four were all women. One of those teams — PhiloStand’s Jenny Patel, senior, finance; and Lauren Szewczyk, senior, animation/illustration — wouldn’t have made it that far, Malaga says, without access to the new 3D MIX Lab. The lab, which opened in August 2015 with 35 cloud-based 3D printing devices on site, is one of the largest university-based 3D printing facilities in the country and one of the first housed in a school of business. The facility added a new dimension — literally — to the pitch competition, says Malaga, allowing some teams to bring their ideas to life.

“Without a prototype, PhiloStand was just an idea,” he says of the product designed to prevent wine spills. “But with it you can see the idea. You can see that it works. They really benefited from being able to print something out that the judges could hold.”

Karuda’s recipe for success, says Malaga, was hitting on a concoction that kept coconut oil stable at warmer temperatures and having confidence as a team.

“I think what holds women back from exploring entrepreneurship is lack of confidence, especially in college,” he says. “Karuda was three very confident women. That helped.”

But even those who don’t take top honors at the pitch competition come out of the program more self-assured, says Malaga.

“Every week you are standing in front of the class and pitching your idea,” he says. “There were some who were talking to their feet in whispers at the beginning and then, by the end of the course, were presenting to hundreds in the pitch competition. It’s a wonderful transformation.”
A Day In the Life

Designed to prepare our students for the business challenges of tomorrow, our building promotes interactive exchanges between students and allows them to easily connect with alumni, faculty, employers and business leaders. The building features state-of-the-art classrooms and technology along with flexible work and event spaces that are critical for a world-class management experience.

7:04 a.m.

A Day In the Life

Designed to prepare our students for the business challenges of tomorrow, our building promotes interactive exchanges between students and allows them to easily connect with alumni, faculty, employers and business leaders. The building features state-of-the-art classrooms and technology along with flexible work and event spaces that are critical for a world-class management experience.

2:25 p.m.

5:04 p.m.

7:25 p.m.
Wencang (Warren) Zhou
Assistant Professor, Department of Management

“One practical and important question the leading entrepreneur must answer when creating a team is whom he/she wants to select as partners. Our results suggest that the leading entrepreneurs should ensure that the team has an adequate blend of relationship-oriented personalities, such as agreeableness, extraversion and emotional stability.”


Jigar Patel
Assistant Professor, Department of Information Management and Business Analytics

“In today’s ever-changing, technology- and information-driven world, the firms that launch newer generations of products over time (cars, smartphones, processors) face smart consumers. Our paper studies the equilibrium product launch strategies that provide the best utilities to the firm and the consumers.”


A. Seddik Meziani
Professor, Department of Accounting and Finance

“Investors anxiously anticipated the debut of actively managed ETFs, expecting them to succeed as well as their active mutual fund counterparts. Reality did not match expectations, however, as actively managed ETFs have languished. This study explores the factors responsible, particularly the issue of transparency that remains contentious between the Securities and Exchange Commission and ETF sponsors.”

Sustainability has become a major issue in today’s society. An examination of the top- and bottom-ranked U.S. sustainability companies in the S&P 500 suggests that sustainability initiatives are positively correlated to industry. Companies, even in polluting industries, are increasing their efforts and focus to reduce their negative environmental footprints. Sustainable initiatives are not only positive for the environment but also for the company’s bottom line and market value. The collective consciousness of both the consumer and the investor is pressuring companies to strive for ‘responsible profits.’ What previously appeared to be an insurmountable hurdle appears to be within our reach. Collectively, the masses are moving the sustainability mountain.”


“Consumers facing health care or financial challenges often turn to virtual communities for the advice and support of their peers. Our study of participants in virtual health care communities found that the emotional support received within these communities actually increases consumer skepticism toward doctors and drug companies.”

At the Feliciano School of Business, nothing stands between working professionals and their MBA.

The School’s flexible MBA programs allow students to work around their professional and personal obligations.

“We are offering an array of options to complete the MBA," says MBA Director Nicole Koppel.

The School launched two new versions of its highly regarded degree program this fall, a new Executive MBA and a fully online MBA. The new offerings join the existing flagship Weeknight MBA and Hybrid Saturday programs, which are delivered through in-person evening courses and a combination of online and on-campus Saturday instruction, respectively. All four programs allow students to earn MBAs in as few as 21 to 24 months.

The Executive MBA program builds on the former Weekend MBA program, adding more features and courses specifically tailored to experienced businessmen and businesswomen.

“We’re very deliberately gearing the courses for more seasoned, rising professionals and developing premier services to help them meet their career objectives,” Koppel says.

Those include an executive-style international study trip and a sequence of courses that focus on leadership insight, innovative problem solving and decision making, executive presence, communications and change management. The program also provides strategic career-planning sessions with career coaches and opportunities for networking with business leaders during catered breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

“The program targets managers who are preparing to move into positions of greater scope and responsibility,” Koppel says. “They will apply the classroom lessons in real-life strategic planning and stewardship for their organizations.”
“Students explore countries with emerging economies and visit both multinational and regional companies, as well as cultural landmarks”  –Jonida Dervishi

The business school’s new Online MBA was designed for those who live too far from campus or have too many travel or other responsibilities to commit to a traditional face-to-face program. Students will be able to jump into their MBA education online at six different start points per year: September, November, January, March, May and July.

“This allows them to advance their careers, yet not be tied down to taking classes on campus,” Koppel says.

Two defining aspects of Montclair State’s MBA programs that are constant across the various platforms are the nine- to ten-day international study trip and the cohort experience.

Since 2013, Montclair State MBA students have traveled to nearly 20 countries in Asia, South America, Europe and Africa as part of their program of study, and they frequently describe the experience as a highlight of their time together.

“The international study trip is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the students,” says Jonida Dervishi, assistant director of the MBA program. “The destinations are not the typical tourist attractions.

Students explore countries with emerging economies and visit both multinational and regional companies, as well as cultural landmarks.”

Students’ cohort relationships are fostered even before schoolwork begins through orientation activities that include team-building activities.

“They are not walking into a room full of strangers on their first day of classes,” Dervishi says. “At orientation they are able to see connections and learn a little about fellow cohort members’ strengths and challenges. The experience sets them up to support each other over the course of the program and to successfully complete their degrees.”
“Education alone isn’t sufficient to prepare our students for the workforce.”

– Te Wu

SUPPORTING SUCCESS

KPMG mentorship program enriches Feliciano students, both academically and professionally

The Feliciano School of Business’ rigorous curriculum sets students on the path to becoming successful business professionals. But when winding your way down that path, it’s helpful to have a guide — preferably someone who knows the shortcuts and detours that lie ahead.

That’s why the business school’s partnership with KPMG LLP’s professional mentoring program is such a windfall for students.

“Education alone isn’t sufficient to prepare our students for the workforce,” says Te Wu, a former KPMG employee who is a professor in the Department of Management and serves as the mentorship’s program coordinator at Montclair State. “The biggest benefit of a mentorship for students is it gives them a real sounding board, a professional in the field to give advice, feedback, mock interviews, life and career coaching. It’s like a lifeline.”

Qualified students are matched through a detailed application process with not just any professionals — with KPMG professionals. Known as one of the “Big Four” accounting firms, KPMG is among the world’s largest audit, tax and advisory firms and has a global footprint that covers more than 155 countries and employs more than 174,000 professionals.

“They are the epitome of what it means to be a good consultant. It’s a very well-respected firm around the world and one of Fortune magazine’s ‘100 Best Companies to Work For,’” says Wu. “I don’t know many other mentoring programs that can claim this caliber of mentor.”

The benefits are obvious for Montclair State students: a flexible relationship that provides academic and professional enrichment.

“I found the KPMG mentorship to be highly effective, as my mentor has given me stellar insights and advice that I have been able to apply professionally and academically,” says student Muhammad Rasheed.

But the partnership also is advantageous for KPMG, says mentor and associate director Thomas Osucha.

“We practice their elevator speech,” Osucha says. “If I’m on an elevator and I need to speak to the CEO of the company, I have the time it takes for that elevator to get where it’s going to tell them who I am and what value I bring.”

On a personal level, mentoring college students is a fantastic opportunity for Osucha to prepare for his own future while paying it forward. The father of 13-year-old twins says he hopes one day his children will seek his professional advice as well as that of other mentors.

“Giving back and seeing the light bulb go on and then watching them succeed is rewarding,” he says.
Legacy student makes parents proud

Sydney Garcia ’17 followed in her parents’ footsteps by attending Montclair State. Since arriving, however, she has forged her own path.

“Just when we think she’s topped herself, she manages to come back and do one better,” says her father, Tony Garcia. “She’s perpetually outdoing her own accomplishments.”

Antonio and Gena Garcia say they could not be more delighted with their daughter’s growth at Montclair State University.

The 21-year-old senior majoring in business administration with a concentration in marketing and management has amassed a number of awards, including the Joseph and Fran Cucci Scholarship, the NBS Consulting Award and the SWAT Marketing Solutions Inc. Intern Award.

“I guess I’ve always been focused and driven,” says Sydney Garcia. “At Montclair State, I’ve sought out resources like the Career Services Center and student clubs to further develop my skills and strengths.”

While maintaining a 3.92 GPA, she participates in the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, Epsilon Delta Epsilon Honor Society, Golden Key International Honor Society, Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society and the American Marketing Association, of which she is president.

“Montclair State exposed her to diverse cultures and a variety of activities within the campus.”

–Gena Garcia

“I never had to push her to do her homework or meet school deadlines,” says her mother. “In college she became even more assertive and more competitive and more self-assured in working to meet her goals.”

That included figuring out how to work an internship without owning a car. During her junior year, Sydney Garcia became the first Montclair State student to participate in a remote internship, drafting search engine optimization (SEO) ideas for a small digital marketing firm from her dorm room. She is currently a product development intern at Movado Group Inc.

The fact that her daughter is going to graduate from her alma mater next year is a point of pride for Gena Garcia, who received a marketing degree from Montclair State University in 1983.

“I still have my student ID,” she says. “Sydney has a picture of it on her phone and shows it to her schoolmates all the time.”

“But we’re most proud that she’s well-rounded,” she continues, “I think she’s become more social, more involved. Montclair State exposed her to diverse cultures and a variety of activities within the campus. She now has the comfort level to seek them out for herself.”
“We needed to find a way to develop unique content while showcasing the best thing about Montclair State University: our students.”

—Dean Cant
Larger Than Life

Student-produced commercial featuring Rocky and Feliciano School will air in Times Square

Montclair State University has long promoted its proximity to New York City. Now, a unique marketing opportunity promises to bring the Red Hawks right to Times Square.

Well, make that one Red Hawk: Rocky. The University’s mascot will appear next year in a student-produced, 30-second short featured across an entire week on a Times Square video billboard.

“It’s one of the most iconic, photographed spots in the world,” says Feliciano School of Business Dean Greg Cant.

It was a promotional concept previously thought too pricey to consider, Cant says, until business school donor and namesake Mimi Feliciano presented it as a gift to the University last fall.

“It must be worth tens and tens of thousands of dollars,” Cant says. “It’s one of the biggest of the electronic billboards in Times Square.”

Feliciano bid on the advertising time at a charity auction with the intention of passing it on to the business school if she won. When she did, it was up to the business school to devise a plan that best utilizes the one-of-a-kind gift.

“We never thought about doing something on that big a scale and how to compete in that cluttered of a space,” says Cant of the audio-free video ad. “How do we stand out in that environment?”

The University decided to pose that question to the student body in the form of the Feliciano Times Square Challenge. The call went out in October 2015 for teams – at least one business school student and one student from another field of study – to pitch ideas that promote the Feliciano School of Business’ innovation and prime location “just over there.”

“We needed to find a way to develop unique content while showcasing the best thing about Montclair State University: our students,” Cant says.

More than a chance to promote the business school at the crossroads of the world, the Feliciano Times Square Challenge presented an opportunity to gain interdepartmental cross-collaboration and impressive experiential credentials.

“Being creative, working together and coming up with ideas is just fantastic,” Cant says. “If you want to say to future employers, ‘Do you want to see something I did on a team?’ it doesn’t get much better than this.”

A number of student teams pitched ideas for the ad space. By late spring two remained: one presented storyboards for an animation, the other a short featuring Rocky the Red Hawk. Both were deemed co-winners of the competition, but, ultimately, Rocky will be the first to make his debut in the lights of Times Square.

“It’s about Rocky the Red Hawk failing at several things in a humorous way. He then gets admitted to the business school, starts achieving and goes out and gets a cool job,” Cant says. “It’s very edgy and doesn’t look like the other bright advertising down there. People don’t know Rocky outside of here, but a person wouldn’t be as impactful as a giant bird.”

Fulfilment of Promise

Stanley Fils ’09, ’16 MBA almost ignored the message in his inbox.

The email from the Feliciano School of Business notified Fils that he was in the running to be featured on its website. While he appreciated the opportunity, Fils wasn’t sure he had time to complete the in-depth screening process, which required a resume submission, and phone and in-person interviews.

“I thought, ‘This is a pretty big ordeal for just being featured on the website,’” says Fils, 28, of Linden, but luckily he did it.

The College couldn’t tell the MBA student that the information was actually for a confidential nomination for the Marie Nesbitt Promise Prize.

When Fils received the call notifying him that he won the Promise Prize, he was honored — and shocked.

“I guess it makes it more authentic if you don’t know you are applying for a $5,000 prize,” he says. “Otherwise, everyone will come out of the woodwork, and the answers probably won’t be as genuine.”

Fils, who earned his bachelor’s degree in justice studies with a minor in sociology from Montclair State, recently graduated from the University’s MBA program with a 3.80 GPA. Once a recipient of the University’s Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF), he now volunteers as a mentor with the program’s Male Leadership Academy. The program helps disadvantaged and underrepresented students succeed. He also manages a financial literacy initiative through the Office of Student Financial Aid, which offers guidance to students and their parents on how to better handle financial matters.

But the entrepreneurial project that takes up most of Fils’ time and almost caused him to shrug off the scholarship altogether is a new mobile app he’s creating called Bar Blitz. The location-based marketing directory provides lists and reviews of restaurant and bar happy hour specials. The idea came to Fils while he was out with friends in Hoboken.

After spending the bulk of the evening at crowded bars with overpriced drinks, they happened upon another less crowded venue with affordable drink specials. “I am excited to introduce Bar Blitz to the marketplace and guide its success,” says Fils.
Welcome New Faculty

KATHERINE ASHLEY, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Information Management and Business Analytics

DAVID AXELROD, PhD
Instructional Specialist, Department of Economics

CYDNA BOUGAE, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Management

DONNA CHLOPAK, PhD
Instructional Specialist, Department of Information Management and Business Analytics

DAVID FINCH
Assistant Professor, Department of Management

JIE GAO, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Marketing

VICTOR NICHOLAS A. METALLO
Assistant Professor, Department of Accounting and Finance

THOMAS E. MILLER
Instructional Specialist, Department of Marketing

DIPESH PATEL
Instructional Specialist, Department of Information Management and Business Analytics

LINDY RYAN
Instructional Specialist, Department of Information Management and Business Analytics

SHINTARO SATO, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Marketing

PATRICIA J. VILLANO
Instructional Specialist, Department of Accounting and Finance

JEFFREY WARREN
Assistant Professor, Department of Accounting and Finance

GAIL YOSH
Clinical Specialist, Department of Information Management and Business Analytics

ZHU ZHU, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Management

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Going for the Gold

Alumna lands job as Olympic Guest Communications Coordinator for NBCUniversal

Just a few months after graduating from Montclair State, Amanda Fuerstenberg ’16 was already putting her degree in business administration with a concentration in sports, events and tourism marketing to good use as one of two Olympic Guest Communications Coordinators for NBCUniversal.

How did she get such a great gig? “The way I look at it, all of my classes at Montclair State were about the Olympic Games,” says Fuerstenberg. “They incorporated elements of sports, events, tourism and marketing. So having that unique perspective really made me stand out in my interview.”

The North Brunswick resident had worked as a booking intern at NBC while attending classes and sought other opportunities to network, like volunteering to plan big events for the country club where she waited tables.

“My advice is, make as many connections as you can and keep in touch with them because that’s what matters,” she says.

“Everyone says I’m so lucky, but I’m not. You have to work for what you want.”

Her four-month Olympics position called for Fuerstenberg to coordinate all travel arrangements – from flights, hotels and transportation in Rio de Janeiro to seats at Olympic events and other tourist destinations – for 1,000 top-tier guests of NBCUniversal executives. And once all of that was squared away, there were hundreds of special requests to sort out.

“We had to take into account things like dietary restrictions, requests for first-class travel or a room with an ocean view, and figure out the person to talk to about it,” Fuerstenberg says. “It’s a lot of juggling and remembering whom to go to about what.”

“I’d never left North America before. It’s been my goal to get a job with travel so I’m really happy my first job let me do that,” she says. “It’s been amazing to be able to work with the Olympics because it only happens every two years.”

“We didn’t have any resources,” says Mann. “Trying to keep the costs low pushed the students to think outside the box. They worked hard and got businesses and students on board to donate services and products.”

In return, Mann’s students gained invaluable real-world experience and practical skills from the new independent study course that Mann modeled after a similar one taught here more than a decade ago. After surveying students in her retail marketing and management classes during the fall, Mann decided there was enough interest to resurrect it.

“Students often get disengaged in a passive learning environment,” says Mann, who hopes this project becomes the template for a permanent course that supports an annual fashion charity event. “But they were so invested in this experiential project. Among many other things, they learned how to think on their feet.”
Helane Becker '79 has had a long, successful career in the financial sector. She is currently managing director and senior research analyst at Cowen and Company, where she oversees the airline, airfreight, and aircraft and container leasing industries. She was recently included in the TipRanks list of the Top 25 Wall Street Analysts.

In 2016, Becker decided to “name” one of the student study rooms located in the Feliciano School of Business Atrium, and to also endow a student scholarship. “I have been very fortunate in life and career, and I owe a great deal to Montclair State,” she says. “A few years ago, I agreed to join the Feliciano School of Business Advisory Board, which gave me insights into the challenges faced by the School. I decided it was time to give back to a place that gave me the tools I needed to have a successful career. I wanted to name the study room because the space makes it easy for students to work collaboratively, and teamwork is critical in business. I also decided to name a scholarship, which is provided to female students in the School of Business, as I wanted to give students, preferably female students, a ‘head start’ while still in school.

“I feel that my gifts have already had a significant impact on the School and its students, and I look forward to continuing to work closely with the School over the coming years.”

2016 Scholarship Recipient Heather Bailey:

“I hope to someday work for the marketing department of a record label or radio station. I believe that my degree in marketing will help me reach out to people who are in need of the power of music.”

Make A Difference

Your gift to the Feliciano School of Business can change a student’s life, and can provide you with valuable tax benefits. For more information, please contact Anne Murray, Director of Development, at 973-655-3129 or murraya@mail.montclair.edu.

From attending events on and off campus, to reading up on the latest University news, you have access to exclusive benefits and services. These services and resources are just some of the benefits of membership in the alumni network. For information, contact Jenna Villani, Associate Director of Alumni Relations, at 973-655-7872 or villanij@mail.montclair.edu.
The Future of Real Estate Incentives in New Jersey

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

ANTHONY R. COSCIA
Anthony R. Coscia regularly advises infrastructure funds, private equity firms, technology companies, not-for-profit organizations and investor-owned utilities. He also has specific experience in the area of redevelopment finance and has worked extensively on infrastructure development projects.

In addition to his private practice, Coscia also serves as chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak). Previously he served as chairman of Amtrak’s Finance and Audit Committee. Coscia’s contributions to Amtrak are the result of his June 2010 appointment and his 2015 second term reappointment by President Obama to the Board of Directors.

TIMOTHY J. LIZURA
President and Chief Operating Officer, New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA)

Timothy J. Lizura joined the EDA in 1996 as part of the Authority’s real estate development team. He held various leadership roles, eventually assuming the position of senior vice president of finance and development, managing the Authority’s business practices and financing activities. Lizura became president and COO in 2012.

For the EDA, Lizura has served as a member of the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Planning Authority and as a designee to the South Jersey Transportation Authority. In addition, he served as the interim executive director for the Fort Monmouth Economic Redevelopment Authority during its formation in 2010. He is currently a board member of NJ NAIOP and on the Advisory Board for Rutgers Business School.

For more information and to register, visit business.montclair.edu/events