

SUCCESS

SPRING 2018



B
Bungii Jump
How a pair of young alumni took the plunge into the world of entrepreneurship and tech startups





Dear CBA Alumni:

We are excited to present the second issue of *Success*, our magazine from the College of Business Administration. Much of our attention this past year, outside of classes, student competitions, study abroad trips, business research and student career development activities, has been filled with the formation of a new strategic plan for the college. We seek to be transformational in our approach as we consider how to best position the college for the future in an ever-changing higher education landscape.

Out of this effort have come initiatives in three broad areas: reinventing the student experience; expanding our external collaborations; and enterprise sustainability and growth. Our vision is to be a transformational leader in business thought and education through knowledge creation, innovative programs and extraordinary experiences. Achieving this vision means that we will be recognized as a leader in how business education is conceptualized, delivered and experienced. It also underscores the important role of faculty in creating knowledge that influences business practice and is incorporated into the classroom experience.

Our first feature story in this issue highlights a pair of young alumni (page 4) who turned their winning idea from the 2015 K-State Launch entrepreneurial pitch competition into tech startup Bungii, which just closed its Series A fundraising round of \$3.5 million. Their story is an interesting look at the challenges faced in building a startup and the important role that the K-State alumni network has had in their success.

Each summer hundreds of our students take advantage of internship opportunities with organizations all across the world as they look to make the jump from college to career. In our second feature, senior in marketing Jael Whitney gives a first-person account of her summer spent in India (page 6) working for a social enterprise that focuses on offering alternative employment opportunities and education to women who were formerly trapped in the sex trade. Her story speaks to the global nature of today's business environment and the ways our curriculum can be applied to real-world situations around the globe.

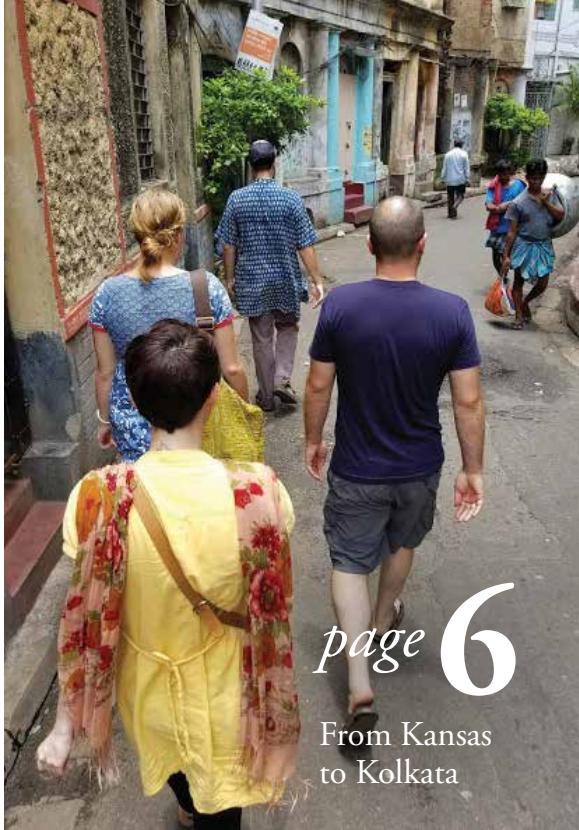
As we continue to evolve our curriculum to best meet the needs of the modern student, many of our professors are including more experiential learning assignments in their classes. A particularly unique experiential learning opportunity was available to students in the fall semester's sports marketing class (page 8), who participated in a hands-on case study of branding, sponsorship and social media with the help of professional drag boat racer — and K-State senior in marketing and accounting — Shelby Ebert.

In addition to providing our students with the education they need for a successful career, our faculty are also dedicated to producing research that will better our community, state and world. One study that has been especially relevant recently because of the impact that hurricanes and other natural disasters had on the nation's economy in the last year was research published by management professors M.K. Kim and Jiho Yoon about how retailers can cope with consumer panic buying (page 10). To read about more of the applied research efforts here in the college, check out the latest issue of our K-State Business Insights research e-newsletter at cba.k-state.edu/research.

One common theme you will find in this issue is “change.” Our college is changing education, changing business and changing lives. I look forward to sharing more as our transformational journey continues, and I hope you will enjoy reading about some of our extraordinary students, faculty and staff in this issue of *Success* magazine.

Best regards,

Kevin Gwinner
Edgerley Family Dean



page 6

From Kansas
to Kolkata

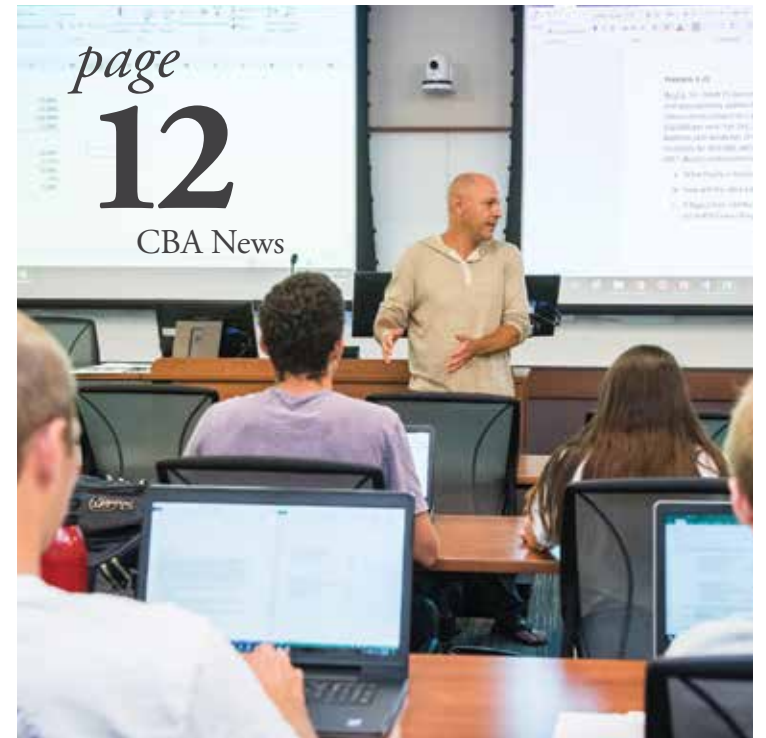


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B BUNGII JUMP

How a pair of young alumni took the plunge into the world of entrepreneurship and tech startups

Ask anyone who has ever owned a truck, and they will tell you that getting asked by friends to “help move a few things” comes as standard as a cupholder.

It certainly seemed to hold true for K-State marketing student Ben Jackson.

“One day in college I had four different people ask me to borrow my truck to help them move things around town,” Jackson said. “I’d like to consider myself a nice guy, but after the fourth time, it was frustrating. The next day I was in class and happened to be sitting next to Harrison, and I mentioned my frustration.”

“It really was pretty random,” said Harrison Proffitt. “We knew each other a little bit, had been in a group project or study group together before, but we weren’t best friends or anything.”

“I’ll never forget it though, because he just nonchalantly said, ‘We should start a business,’” Jackson said. “We had no idea what we were about to get ourselves into, but we walked out of class that day with a simple concept in mind: Tap a button, get a truck.”



wrapping up a Series A fundraising round of \$3.5 million?

“As you can imagine, we were excited about the idea and had all these dreams of building an app right away and dominating the market,” Jackson said. “Thankfully, there were people in place at K-State, like Chad Jackson and Dave Dreiling, who were able to rein us in and show us the right steps to start a business. They said, ‘Slow down. You’ve got a great idea here, but let’s make sure this is real. You need to validate the idea before spending a ton of money developing an app.’ They helped us navigate those early stages of the company a lot better than we could have trying to do it all by ourselves.”

After seeking out the resources available through the college’s Center for the Advancement of Entrepreneurship, the pair decided that the best course of action was to do a test market in Manhattan during summer 2015.

“We both turned down some really good internship opportunities to take a risk and see if this was a viable business idea,” Proffitt said. “The test market went exceptionally well and confirmed to us that there was a need for this.”

In the fall, they entered and won the college’s K-State Launch student entrepreneurial pitch competition. Winning K-State Launch guaranteed them a spot in the Kansas Entrepreneurship Challenge, where their business pitch again took first-place honors, this time against competition from student entrepreneurs from other Kansas Board of Regents’ schools.

“I honestly think you can trace a lot of our success directly back to those competitions,” Jackson said. “It really was a great crash course before we started taking investment meetings, where you are constantly being asked tough questions and are expected to have good answers. Being in front of a crowd on a stage and being able to succinctly and eloquently pitch Bungii and have answers to questions makes you feel a lot more comfortable when you are sitting across from someone in a conference room.”

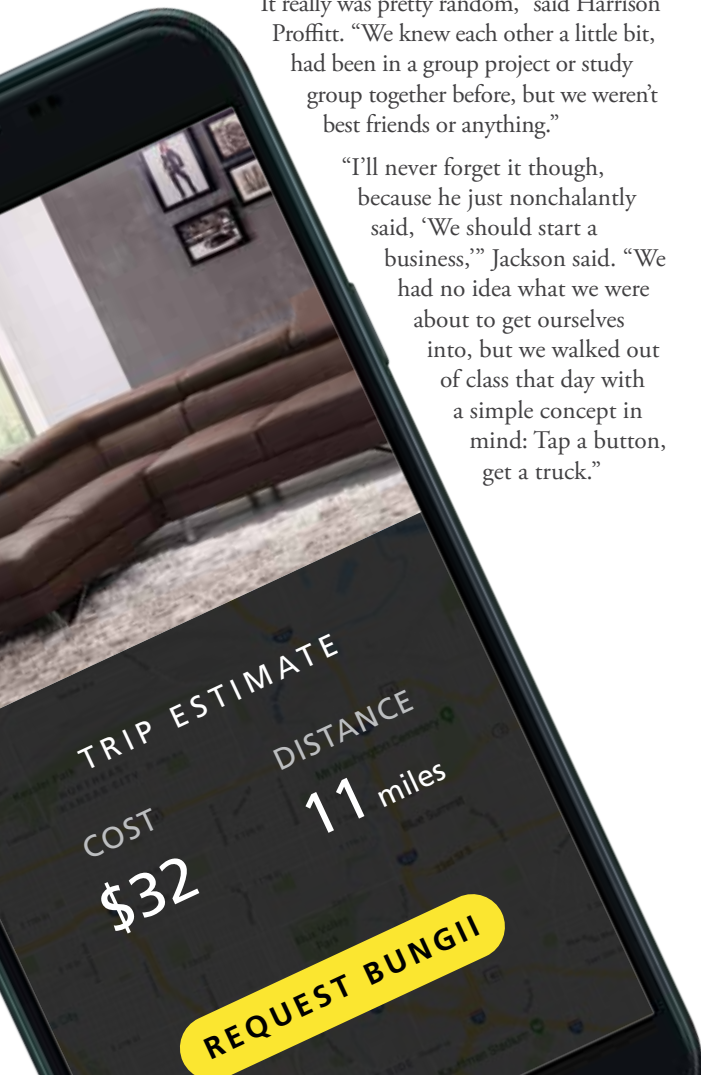
“For me, in addition to that experience, the competitions also just helped us validate the idea and gave us the motivation to see this thing through — that we really did have something here,” Proffitt added.

In the two years since their graduation from K-State’s College of Business Administration, Jackson and Proffitt have taken that simple concept and turned it into tech startup Bungii — an app that puts a pickup and a driver at your fingertips to help move, haul and deliver things across town. Bungii has been compared to other popular ride-sharing apps such as Uber or Lyft. But instead of people, Bungii moves people’s stuff. The service is currently available in the Kansas City, Lawrence and Atlanta markets, with more cities to be added soon.

So how did two college students turn a random exchange before class into a startup that is currently

“I have such a huge appreciation for the K-State alumni network. We wouldn’t be where we are today if it weren’t for some K-State alumni getting an email from two random K-Staters asking for help. The fact that they took the time, read the email and even pursued us has been the reason for our success. We look forward to the moment when we can pay that forward and help the next generation of K-State students with a dream.”

— Ben Jackson





Now that the pair had viable test market data and a pair of entrepreneurial idea contest wins, they knew they would need to raise a considerable amount of money to develop an app.

“I grew up in Europe, and Harrison is from Denver,” Jackson said. “We were at a point where we realized that to get the software done right we were going to have to raise a lot of money. We aren’t from around here and neither of us really knew anyone with deep pockets, so that became a new problem for us to solve.”

“One day we were walking out of class in Calvin Hall when we noticed a wall that listed all of the prominent donors who had contributed to the College of Business Administration,” Proffitt said. “We ended up taking a picture of it and spent the next four days Googling names and doing research. We came up with about 150 email and LinkedIn contacts and sent out an email pitch to all of them. We actually ended up setting up about 25 investment meetings, from which we got a few offers that we seriously considered before signing. So it was through the K-State alumni network that we were able to find an angel investor.”

As a pair of marketing majors, they knew their lack of technical prowess was a weak spot in their efforts to build their company. So, they specifically collaborated with an angel investor who came from a tech background to develop the app. After graduation in May 2016, they moved from Manhattan to Kansas City to begin building their company in earnest, developing a marketing strategy and making sure the software was bug-free.

That November they launched the product in the Kansas City market.

“The hardest thing from transitioning from the idea phase to actually forming a company was launching,” Jackson said. “When we launched, we naively thought we’d be doing hundreds of trips per week and instantly find success, and that just wasn’t the case. Instead, we launched, and I think we did four trips in the first week for a grand total of \$47. After all of our hard work and our hyped-up expectations, it was really tough.”

“At that point, it seemed like there were two options: We can complain and whine about it, say the market isn’t right or it wasn’t meant to be, or we could put our heads down and go to work,” Proffitt said. “We chose the latter.”

They knew that new customer acquisition would be the key to the success or failure of Bungii and began aggressively pursuing new users. A big challenge in the beginning was that there were so many different potential customers for the product — from shoppers using Bungii to bring home large purchases to a contractor using it to have lumber delivered to a job site — making it difficult to know where to focus their marketing efforts.

“I wish I could say there’s been one silver bullet that solved all our problems, but that’s just not the case,” Jackson said. “We focused in on what we thought were the top 10 ways for us to gain customers and began aggressively pursuing them. We have a pretty good idea through our apps’ analytics and through user surveys what efforts are working and what we need to rethink. It just requires a lot of creativity and problem-solving.”

That laser focus on customer acquisition has paid off. Since launching, Bungii has maintained a 30 percent growth rate month over month. Last May, Bungii was named New Startup of the Year by Silicon Prairie News, a technology innovation trade publication that covers 11 states in the Midwest, including Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Iowa.

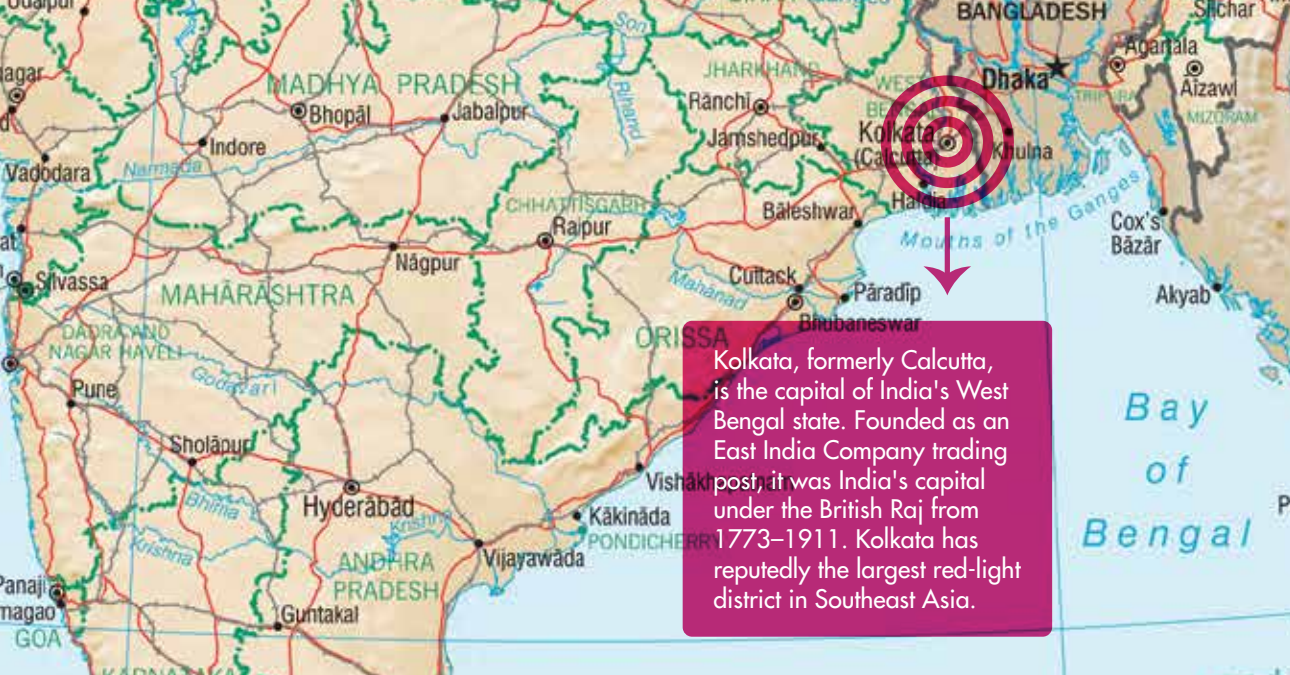
They have 10 full-time employees — all but one of which are K-State grads — in the Bungii office, ranging from customer service, business development, national expansion, driver recruitment, marketing and data analytics. Recruiting drivers has been easier than expected, with more than 350 applications coming in the first two months. That allowed them to choose the cream of the crop and have the best and most dependable drivers in those vital first few months. They currently have more than 100 drivers in the Kansas City market, with 50 more in Atlanta, and will continue to add more to meet demand.

“When first launching, we were very intentional about focusing on customer acquisition channels that were efficient and scalable,” Jackson said. “That’s proven to be highly beneficial as we’re seeing fantastic numbers in our second major market, Atlanta. Understanding how to acquire customers on a fundamental level combined with our recent \$3.5 million funding round puts us in great shape to rapidly expand nationally.”

As the business partners work 70 to 80 hours a week in their drive toward success, they still look back through the rearview mirror and remember that random conversation in a K-State classroom and the tossed-out comeback: “We should start a business.”

“I have such a huge appreciation for the K-State alumni network,” Jackson said. “We wouldn’t be where we are today if it weren’t for some K-State alumni getting an email from two random K-Staters asking for help. The fact that they took the time, read the email and even pursued us has been the reason for our success. We look forward to the moment when we can pay that forward and help the next generation of K-State students with a dream.”





Kolkata, formerly Calcutta, is the capital of India's West Bengal state. Founded as an East India Company trading post, it was India's capital under the British Raj from 1773–1911. Kolkata has reputedly the largest red-light district in Southeast Asia.



Most of the families here survive off of subsistence farming, which only provides for a few months of the year. Weaving meant that these women could provide for their families year-round without having to worry about selling their bodies.

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Senior in marketing Jael Whitney recounts her summer abroad in India working in social enterprise



Last year, I was planning on doing a marketing internship and staying comfortably at home in Kansas City during the summer. Instead, because of a random Facebook post, I somehow found myself in Kolkata, India, living in a slum right outside Sonagachi, the largest red-light district in Southeast Asia.

My summer was a lot different than I had initially pictured it. Instead of a Starbucks' iced white mocha latte, I was drinking cha — spiced Bengali milk tea — twice a day with the ladies who worked at my host business. Instead of suits, I was wearing a salwar kameez — a tunic and flowy pants with scarf. And instead of petting dogs at the dog park, I was petting cows while avoiding five-car lines in two-car lanes.

In India, I was working for Freeset Bags and Apparel, a social enterprise that offers alternative employment opportunities and education to women who were formerly trapped in the sex trade. Many of these women had been trafficked, often as young girls, and brought from all over rural India to Nepal. Still others had chosen that path because of a lack of schooling that hindered their job opportunities.

Up until this point, most of my background in marketing had only been with one of the four P's: promotion. During this summer, I was able to gain exposure to the other three — product, price and place — and use some of the analytics skills I had learned in classes like Marketing Research. As a marketing and sales intern, my main project was analyzing the sales of bags to see which models and configurations were selling best and which could be discontinued.

I also helped the company to transition to India's new goods and services, or GST, tax as we re-evaluated our fair trade scarf retail pricing strategy in light of the new taxation structure. Both of these projects made up the majority of my work time, so I was very glad for the Excel skills I had learned in my MIS366 class. Freeset was also transitioning to selling within India, so I was able to make some sales contacts as well.

When I wasn't working, I was able to visit several other social enterprises in the area that were focused on bringing gender equality to India's women, including Sari Bari, Loyal Leather Workshop and Shomota. I even befriended another American marketing intern who was working at Sari Bari.

I also spent a week at our factories around Murshidabad, a rural part of India a few hours north of Kolkata. These factories, which train women in traditional weaving, were created to help impoverished women in this area, which is one of the greatest sources of sex trafficking in the state of West Bengal. Most of the families here survive off of subsistence farming, which only provides for a few months of the year. Weaving meant that these women could provide for their families year-round without having to worry about selling their bodies.

Another valuable learning experience from my time in India was seeing fair trade from the other end of the supply chain. In a place like Kolkata, where the streets are littered with trash and people carry their heavy work supplies in baskets on their heads, it can be hard to maintain standards of excellence in environmental and labor management. But every day I was at the factory, I saw the 10 principles of fair trade being followed: 1) opportunities for disadvantaged producers, 2) transparency and accountability, 3) fair trading practices, 4) fair payments, 5) no child or forced labor, 6) no discrimination and a focus on women's rights and gender equity, 7) good working conditions, 8) capacity building, 9) promoting fair trade, and 10) respecting the environment.

Just like these principles hung on the wall, they also graced every aspect of the work the women were doing, and in both women-to-women and men-



to-women interactions, I saw dignity being instilled. This was a great relief from the outside world of Kolkata, whose culture dictates that women and men do not speak together in public and often places a lower societal value on females. I passed a sign a couple of times reminding people to "Respect your girl child." Even the public transportation had separate sections for women to protect them from any potential harassment.

Coming back from India, I found my perspectives on both life and business had changed. I had gone there to learn about social justice and gender equality, but after living in a food desert and being hungry all summer, I also learned just how big of a problem food insecurity really is. I was excited to get involved as a marketing volunteer with K-State's food pantry, Cats' Cupboard, upon my return.

In September, I was hired by InterVarsity, the organization that had sponsored me, to help it continue improving the promotion of its summer programs abroad. I have also been able to use my findings in India to guide my Honors Program thesis on social enterprise.

In my professional development overall, I learned just how important the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit was to me in considering potential employers. Wherever I end up working after I graduate in May, I hope to continue to use business as a means of giving back as I press on in my career.

About the Author

Jael Whitney is a senior in marketing with a minor in economics from Overland Park, Kansas. During her time at K-State, she has served as a library ambassador, a study abroad advocate for the College of Business Administration, and the president of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society. In summer 2015, she was a participant in the Fulbright-Scotland Summer Institute. In addition to her work in India, she has also interned with the K-State Center for Engagement and Community Development, Coro Kansas City and MHK Business News.





The Fastest Woman on Water

One-quarter mile. Seven seconds. 180 miles per hour.

You wouldn't guess it when you first meet Kansas State University student Shelby Ebert, but that is how she spends her weekends — a quarter mile at a time, rocketing across the water as a racer on the Lucas Oil Drag Boat Racing Series.



For Ebert, a senior in marketing and accounting from Wamego, Kansas, drag boat racing is in her blood — her father, Todd, has been involved in the sport for more than 28 years. She started racing in the sport's lower levels nine years ago and now has the distinction of being the only female racing at the highest levels of drag boat racing. Until recently though, not many of her classmates knew that

The class began posting on their own Twitter and Facebook accounts and talked to the clubs and Greek organizations they were involved in about Shelby Ebert Racing, hoping to reach other K-Staters. They entered Ebert's boat in the fall homecoming parade and made flyers with her different account handles on them to pass out to the crowd.

"I didn't realize how much went into social media marketing before this project," said Killian Wood, senior in marketing, Junction City, Kansas. "This is the best business class that I've been in. Being able to work on a hands-on project like this has been a really great experience as I look toward starting my career."

The experience has been a good one for Ebert as well. When she traveled to the Lucas Oil World Finals in Chandler, Arizona, last November, the college's Department of Marketing logo was proudly displayed on her boat next to her other sponsors.

"I really appreciate the marketing department's support," Ebert said. "Now when I get back from a race, other students will want to hear about how it went. It's really nice now to know that people care and that my fellow students are in my corner cheering for me."

they were sitting next to the "Fastest Woman on Water."

"This is my fifth year at K-State and until recently, I'm not sure that many people knew that I do this," Ebert said. "I might come home from a race as a champion, and I'd go to class the next week and no one even knew or cared."

That all changed when marketing professor Doug Walker, who teaches a sports marketing class for the college, heard about Ebert's racing career.

"I'm always looking for ways to give the students in this class different insights and opportunities to participate in hands-on learning experiences," Walker said. "When I found out about Shelby and her racing background, I knew I wanted to bring her into the class to share her experiences."

Usually, when Walker brings in guest speakers for the class, they might drive in from another city for the day, but with Ebert, the class had a fellow student involved in professional sports that it could use as a resource throughout the entire semester. The class decided to "adopt" Shelby Ebert Racing for a hands-on case study supporting the course material on branding, sponsorship and social media.

For example, Walker typically devotes a few classes each semester to talk about sports sponsorships. This semester he started that conversation with a question-and-answer session with Ebert.

"It was interesting to get her perspectives on sponsorships, which play a huge role in all sports, but especially motorsports," Walker said. "She went through her whole sponsorship pitch package that she uses to pitch to potential sponsors. That conversation led directly to an assignment for the class to think about sponsorship strategies and different brands that might be a good match for Shelby Ebert Racing. Having a real-life example like that to use for a relevant, hands-on assignment is so valuable."

One area the class quickly identified that they could dig into was helping Ebert expand her presence online through her various social media channels. They wanted to experiment and see how hard it would be to move the needle and build up followers, so Walker asked for volunteers from class members who were interested in social media marketing to form an advisory board to work with Ebert. Ten students ended up volunteering and began meeting with her on a regular basis to work on the project.

"One of the things we focused on was figuring out what our target demographics were and how to reach them," said MacKenzie Morris, junior in marketing, Salina, Kansas, and one of the social media advisory board members. "You really have to think about who your target audience is and then tell your story in a way that will appeal to them. For example, when marketing to young guys, we might focus on the speed and competition, while when targeting women, it might make more sense to highlight Shelby's unique position as the only female on the professional tour."



Learning from the Pros

Shelby Ebert Racing wasn't the only guest speaker to visit Doug Walker's sports marketing class last fall. Professionals representing various collegiate and professional sports teams from around the region came to the class to share their perspectives as part of the Marketing 630: Sports Marketing Speaker Series, including:

- Kansas City Chiefs — Kellen Begnoche, director of activation and service; and Anthony Matthies, director of suite sales
- K-State Athletics — Gene Taylor, director of athletics; Joni Smoller, associate director of athletics, fan experience and sales
- Oklahoma City Thunder — Travis Herman, director, ticket and premium sales; Ashely Barnett, marketing and promotions director; and Tanna Zach, manager, marketing outreach
- Sporting Kansas City — Kayley Hatstrup, director of marketing



How Retailers Can Cope with Consumer

PANIC BUYING

Do supply shortages or consumer panic buying occur in your industry? If so, what should you look out for and what actions should you take to lessen negative effects on your firm?

As supply chains become extended and globalized, firms are more vulnerable to supply disruptions due to a variety of external factors such as supply shortages, adverse market conditions and transportation disruptions.

The direct impacts of supply disruptions are catastrophic as they cascade down the supply chain. The tsunami on the northeast coast of Japan in March 2011 created a severe shortage of Xirallic, a specialty pigment made in a single plant that suspended production for two months. This forced several global automakers, including BMW, Chrysler, Ford, General Motors, Toyota and Volkswagen, to stop taking orders for certain colors using Xirallic. In July 2016, a sudden bankruptcy of a small, just-in-time vendor of acoustic insulation and interior trim parts nearly brought General Motors' most profitable North American operations to a halt.

The indirect effect of supply disruptions also should be noted. Upon detecting any event that can lead to upstream disruptions, consumers often stockpile supplies to mitigate the risk of future shortages. For instance, when rice production in Australia was reduced by 98 percent after a long drought period in 2008, consumers in Vietnam, India and Hong Kong began to stockpile rice, fearing an insufficient future supply — which actually made

the shortage problem worse. Another example came after the radioactive leak at Japan's Fukushima nuclear plant in 2011 when consumers went on panic buying of various products such as iodine tablets (in Bulgaria), salt (in China), red wine and seaweed (in Russia) that were rumored to prevent radiation poisoning.

This consumer stockpiling behavior can immediately affect the decisions of the retailer with respect to both order quantity and inventory level and/or sourcing strategy — i.e. single versus dual/multiple sourcing — and order allocation — if dual/multiple sourcing strategies are selected. This could sequentially influence more upstream suppliers' decisions about pricing and volume flexibility.

As the industry matures, U.S. retailers have witnessed notable changes in competitive dynamics characterized by thinner margins, globally dispersed suppliers, etc. So, how can retailers achieve profit maximization while mitigating the negative impacts of demand distortion due to consumer panic buying?

New research co-authored by management information faculty M.K. Kim and Jiho Yoon, and Ram Narasimhan from Michigan State University, investigated the optimal sourcing strategy of a retailer positioned between a supplier and consumers in a multitiered supply chain by considering consumers' stockpiling behaviors and suppliers' volume flexibility.



SOLD OUT

Their analytical and numerical investigations suggest the following results:

- Consumer panic buying behavior becomes more pronounced when the consumer has experienced supply shortages in the past.
- The demand fluctuation from the consumers' stockpiling behavior is highly affected by retailers' inventory level — a higher inventory level leads to more balanced demands.
- Suppliers' high-volume flexibility — i.e., suppliers' abilities to change output level of products produce — enables the retailer to decrease inventory level so that it can reduce inventory holding cost. Further, the high-supplier volume flexibility allows the retailer to stock more inventories to create more profit when a supplier's reliability is low. This result indicates that from the supplier's perspective, the supplier needs to improve its volume flexibility at a lower cost when it recognizes that the retailer anticipates that its reliability is low.
- Higher-supplier reliability is always better when retailers' purchasing price is stable. The research found this intuition can be supported only when the supplier reliability significantly increases.
- Based on analysis, the marginal increment of supplier reliability deteriorates retailers' profits when the initial reliability is very low. This result suggests that the retailer should find a cheaper but more unreliable supplier or highly reliable but expensive supplier for better profit performance.
- For suppliers, this result recommends that they focus on increasing volume flexibility rather than reliability if they are incapable or unsure of making a significant improvement in their reliability.



Myung Ko "M.K." Kim is an assistant professor of management. His research interests broadly lie in data-driven managerial decision-making in the areas of supply chains, interfirm networks and strategic sourcing. Through this research agenda, he specifically aims to better understand the interorganizational and interpersonal dynamics of multiple supply network entities and their impact on firm-

and network-level performance outcome.

Jiho Yoon is a visiting assistant professor of management. His research interests include developing optimization/data analytics models and determining design principles in the domain of cold supply chain, sustainability and supply chain risk management. Yoon's research employs tools that include deterministic/stochastic optimization, meta-heuristics, machine learning, simulation and statistical analysis.

College of Business Administration launching major in professional strategic selling in fall 2018



Beginning in the fall 2018 semester, the Kansas State University College of Business Administration will launch a major in professional strategic selling, becoming just the 19th university in the United States, and the only one in Kansas, to offer a major in sales.

The Kansas Board of Regents recently approved the new major, which will be administered by the college's National Strategic Selling Institute, or NSSI. The NSSI has been recognized each of the last six years by the Sales Education Foundation as one of the nation's top sales programs and is a member of the University Sales Center Alliance, a professional academic organization focused on best practices and quality standards in sales education.

"We are proud to be a national leader in sales education curriculum, and the addition of this major will allow us to continue to be an innovator in this space," said Kevin Gwinner, Edgerley family dean of the College of Business Administration. "Sales are the foundation of businesses at all levels, and this new major will provide companies with a badly needed resource, resulting in excellent careers for our students — both in the state of Kansas and nationwide."

Since 2013 the NSSI has offered students from any major at K-State the opportunity to earn a certificate in professional strategic selling. The demand for the certificate has grown significantly in the four years since, from 14 students in fall 2013 to 180 students in fall 2017.

According to Dawn Deeter, director of the NSSI, the program features a curriculum focused on the application of selling skills through role-playing and real sales experience. That experiential learning environment puts students in the same scenarios they will encounter in any entry-level sales position. With the addition of a major in professional strategic selling, the college will be able to offer more classes and electives that will further enhance the student experience.

"I talk to companies all the time that rave about the professionalism and preparedness of our students," Deeter said. "When you combine the work ethic and attitude of

a K-State student with the selling skills we offer in our program, you get a dynamic prospect for a firm."

According to Deeter, industry demand is huge for students with an education in professional selling. K-State students earning their sales certificate have found a 100 percent job placement rate after graduation, and each semester more than 20 corporate partners and prospective corporate partners attend the NSSI Sales Career Fair.

"This highly specialized major and nationally recognized sales program reinforces the importance of joint collaboration between academia and corporate sponsorship,"

said Kurt Auleta, senior vice president of Security Benefit, a corporate partner of the NSSI since its inception. "The NSSI provides students with advanced business readiness skills that prepare individuals for the realities of an ever-changing global business environment. This unique program has resulted in high job placement rates while lowering costs and increasing efficiency for new hire programs in the private business sector."

Master of Accountancy program named among top 20 in US

The Kansas State University Master of Accountancy program was recently ranked as the 19th best in the United States according to Online Accounting.

The rankings were compiled by comparing each AACSB-accredited program's average CPA exam score, overall CPA exam pass rate, size of the accounting department and average tuition — with preference to programs with lower costs. Kansas State University was recognized as the third-best program among Big 12 peer institutions according to the rankings, as well as the best in the state of Kansas.

"We have invested a great deal of effort into building an exceptional Master of Accountancy program and we're delighted to receive this recognition," said Brett Wilkinson, head of the Accounting Department.

"Our cutting-edge curriculum and the applied learning opportunities we offer, such as our international study trip, are truly giving our students an edge in the marketplace."

The Master of Accountancy program is a curriculum of 30 credit hours that can be completed in one calendar year.



K-State Master of Accountancy students recently traveled to Australia where they worked with students at an Australian university and visited major international accounting firms and corporations. Another group will travel to Ireland in summer 2018.

“One of the strengths of our Master of Accountancy program is the way we have structured four different specialization tracks: two focused on public accounting — assurance and taxation — and two focused on controllership — financial management and taxation,” said John Morris, director of the Master of Accountancy program. “Students are able to pursue more in-depth knowledge in one of these specialization tracks, which gives them a competitive advantage in the marketplace and a foundation for future career development.”

Boeing executive and K-State alumna Leanne Caret presents College of Business Administration’s fall Distinguished Lecture

Leanne Caret, executive vice president of The Boeing Company and president and chief executive officer of defense, space and security, or DBS, presented the College of Business Administration’s fall Distinguished Lecture on Oct. 31, 2017.

Named DBS president and CEO in February 2016, Caret leads the \$30 billion business, which provides integrated solutions to meet the needs of defense, government, space, intelligence and security customers in the United States and around the world. Countries with a major BDS presence include Australia, the United Kingdom, India and Saudi Arabia.



sustainability solutions for Boeing and select non-Boeing platforms. Before that, she was chief financial officer and vice president, finance, for BDS. Earlier she was vice president and general manager, Vertical Lift, responsible for business growth and program execution for a portfolio of cargo, tiltrotor and attack rotorcraft. Caret joined the company in 1988 and has served in various program management positions in the defense business.

The College of Business Administration’s Distinguished Lecture Series brings successful business professionals to campus. Lectures are given every semester and are sponsored by Commerce Bank and the William T. Kemper Foundation.

You can watch Caret’s full lecture at cba.k-state.edu/CaretLecture.

Sealing the deal: Sales Cat team wins big at International Collegiate Sales Competition

The Kansas State University Sales Cat team beat out a field of 70 of the top university sales programs to win the overall team championship at the 2017 International Collegiate Sales Competition.

Previously, Caret was president of Boeing’s global services and support, an industry leader in providing

Hosted each year in Orlando, Florida, by Florida State University, the International Collegiate Sales Competition is the largest and most prestigious university sales competition in the world.

The Kansas State University team is comprised of students in the College of Business Administration’s National Strategic Selling Institute, which has been named one of the top sales programs in the country for six straight years by the Sales Education Foundation. Making up



the winning team at the contest were Lanessa Aurand, sophomore in business, Belleville, Kansas, and Rachel Kipper, senior in marketing with a minor in economics, Olathe, Kansas.

In addition to their team championship, Kipper also won first place in the individual competition, with Aurand taking home third runner-up honors out of a field of 140 student competitors. This was the second overall team championship win for the pair in the fall, after also winning the E.J. Gallo Sales Competition at the University of Missouri in October 2017. Aurand also won first place in the individual competition at that event.

Sales competitions allow students to test their selling skills against their peers from other top sales schools through role-playing scenarios, including cold calling, case competitions and speed selling. Marketing instructor David Lehman is the head coach for the K-State team.

“We couldn’t be prouder of Rachel and Lanessa’s performance at the International Collegiate Sales Competition,” said Dawn Deeter, professor of marketing and director of the National Strategic Selling Institute. “Having success in these competitions helps bring recognition to what we are doing at K-State to prepare students for successful and fulfilling careers in sales. They also provide a great opportunity for our students to network with their peers and interact with employers from around the country at career fairs and workshops.”



Class Notes

2016

Jonathan Slaney (FIN) is an accountant for Accent Controls Inc., a government contractor and electrical engineering firm in North Kansas City.

2002

Jared Gudenkauf (FIN) is a financial advisor with Merrill Lynch in Leawood, Kansas. He was recently named to “America’s Top Next-Generation Wealth Advisors” list published by Forbes.

1987

Gary Stark (ACCT, MBA ’91) is an associate professor of management at Northern Michigan University, where he was recently named as the university’s teaching and learning scholar.

1986

Connie Brown is the owner of The Brownstone, a wedding and event venue in Topeka. The Brownstone has a rich architectural history, being originally designed by K-State architecture students in 1927 as a dairy barn. Brown and her husband, Steve, bought the 90-year-old barn in 2016 and renovated it before opening to the public in 2017.

The Brownstone, Topeka, KS



Student Spotlight



Sai Pradeep Medarametla

Name: Sai Pradeep Medarametla

Hometown: Hyderabad, India

Major: Master of Business Administration

What led you to choose K-State?

I got my bachelor’s degree in engineering back in India, and I knew that I wanted to come to the United States to get a master’s in industrial engineering. I applied to several schools and ended up deciding that K-State’s programs had the most value for what I needed. Industrial engineering has a lot of overlap with the business world, so while I was working on my master’s, I took a couple of business courses that allowed me to develop a relationship with Dr. Chwen Sheu, who leads the MBA program. When I asked Dr. Sheu for career advice, he encouraged me to enter the MBA program as a way to differentiate myself in the workforce.

How has the MBA program opened doors for you?

Over the summer I interned with AT&T Big Data, which is an innovative office within AT&T that tries to take advantage of the massive amounts of data that AT&T has and extract value from it. We worked in an office of 100-150 people that was separate from other aspects of AT&T’s business. Everyone there is working on projects that leverage insights made through big data into cost savings or revenue increases for the company.

What kind of projects did you work on?

The main project that I worked on for the summer was trying to come up with a model that could use data from social media to predict how much a movie would make at the box office. We had the data for every tweet that was made in English for a six-month period, and were able to establish a relationship between the number of times a movie was mentioned in the four weeks leading up to its release and how that affected the box office receipts for its opening weekend. Using my model, we were able to predict movies’ opening weekends with about 85 percent accuracy.

In what ways were you able to apply what you’ve learned in the MBA program to your internship?

Most of the data analytics skills that I have come from things I’ve learned in MIS 665 — Data Analytics and MIS 670 — Social Media Analytics. The project that I worked on at AT&T was like an optimized version of a project I had worked on for class. Having that background made walking into a fast-paced environment like AT&T Big Data less intimidating and gave me the confidence to speak up when I had ideas in meetings.

What do you hope to do with your degree after graduation?

Essentially, I want to be in a position that acts as a bridge between management and data scientists. Since I have both technical and management degrees, I want to be able to bridge the gap between the two and provide better business solutions with the data we have at our disposal.

Do you have news you’d like to share in the next issue of Success? Drop us a note at SuccessMagazine@k-state.edu and let us know what’s going on in your life!

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K-State's College of Business Administration is among the less than 5 percent of institutions worldwide to hold the prestigious AACSB accreditation.

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