

# INSIDE

*The College of Business Administration*

NICHOLLS  
STATE UNIVERSITY

Spring 2006 • Vol. 14, No. 1

## Strategic Planning Retreat

The CBA is currently working to develop a five-year strategic plan as part of the requirement for new AACSB standards, and recently held a Strategic Planning Retreat at the Lumen Christi Retreat facility to advance this process. The retreat provided participants the opportunity to give input on the strategic direction of the College, as well as the mission and vision statements. The 60+ attendees included faculty, alumni, advisory board members, students and facilitator Dr. Sandy Hartman, UNO JPMorgan Chase Management Professor.

New CBA faculty member Dr. Chad Turner saw the retreat as an opportunity to speak with local business people about the problems and opportunities facing the CBA, saying "It is fun to take a group of smart and creative people, all from different perspectives and backgrounds, and have them look at the same set of issues. The fact that there was a broad consensus on many items makes the outcomes and suggestions from the retreat that much more meaningful."

MBA student Melissa Wiley feels the retreat "Not only resulted in strategic goals, but also created a great opportunity to build relationships between participants. I observed an exemplary group of people collaborating for the greater good with an ultimate respect for each other. I walked away from the retreat feeling proud to be part of this College. In spite of many challenges, I have no doubt that this College will continue to be a strong and resourceful organization."

### College of Business Administration Strategic Plan

#### Vision

The College of Business Administration is to be recognized as a leader in business education.

#### Mission

The College of Business Administration prepares students to contribute to a dynamic global economy and diverse workforce as well-educated, responsible business professionals by continuously improving its teaching, research, and service.

#### Strategic Goals

- Increase Recognition and Visibility
- Enhance Academic Programs
- Enhance Resources
- Maintain AACSB International Accreditation

## Alumna endows scholarships at Nicholls



Vicki Romero Briggs of Birmingham, Ala., a Nicholls State University alumna, recently donated \$100,000 to establish endowed scholarship funds in accounting and nursing at the university. Pictured at the check presentation from left are Dr. Shawn Mauldin, dean of the College of Business Administration; Dr. Sue Westbrook, dean of the College of Nursing and Allied Health; Donna Lawson Bonvillain of Lake Charles, sister to Briggs; Colleen Romero of Birmingham, Ala., daughter of Briggs; Dr. David Boudreaux, vice president for institutional advancement at Nicholls; and Richard Reso, associate director of development at Nicholls.

## College of Business welcomes new executive advisory board

The CBA would like to welcome several new members to its Executive Advisory Board. Consisting of successful local business people from different walks of life, the Board will help provide new ideas and strategic direction to the College.

Several board members actively participated in the recent strategic planning retreat. "I wanted those people engaged from the very beginning of the strategic planning process," says CBA Dean Shawn Mauldin, "and I'm seeking their input on various aspects of the CBA. We'll need their help and feedback to achieve our goals. I want them to be very involved in who we are and what we're doing."

Veteran board member Mr. Allen Danos is impressed by the

"quality and enthusiasm" of the new members, adding, "My goal [as a board member] is to have Nicholls graduates well-prepared to enter the workforce. Business needs are constantly changing and we need to make sure the CBA prepares its graduates for these changes."

New board member Mr. Toby Brady is excited about the opportunity to assist the CBA, and says "Nicholls State University and the CBA are invaluable assets to the students, graduates and ultimately, the businesses who hire these individuals. Through continuing dedication and academic excellence, the CBA can and will continue to prepare graduates with the tools necessary to succeed in today's work environment."

### College of Business Administration 2005-2006 Executive Advisory Board

\*MR. CHRIS BOLLINGER

Executive Vice President • Bollinger Shipyard

\*MR. TOBY BRADY

Vice President • LATELCO

MR. JAMES J. BUQUET, JR.

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President • Buquet Distributing Co.

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\*MS. DIONNE CHOUET

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President • Montco Offshore, Inc.

MR. DONALD PELTIER

Attorney at Law

\*MR. GREG STOCK

CEO • Thibodaux Regional Medical Center

\* denotes new members

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## A message from Dean Mauldin

We kicked off the Spring semester with a bang. However, instead of a hurricane it was a Strategic Planning Retreat held at the Lumen Christi Center. The purpose of the retreat was to provide feedback on the College of Business Administration's vision and mission, and to develop long-term strategic goals through a multi-stakeholder process. Participants included faculty, students, alumni, and executive advisory board members. The retreat provided an opportunity for stakeholders to have a voice and sense of ownership in the College of Business Administration (CBA). As we move forward under the new AACSB International standards, the strategic plan will allow us to embark on a process of periodic reviews of the strategic improvement progress. The vision, mission, and long-term strategic goals are provided on page one of the newsletter.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of the CBA Executive Advisory Board. The board is represented by successful businessmen and businesswomen from various backgrounds and will meet twice a year. The primary purpose of the board is to discuss broad strategic directions for the College, provide advice and counsel to the dean, and assist in fund-raising activities. As previously noted, the board was very active in the strategic planning process. They are truly committed to ensuring that the College continues to provide a quality business education. I am extremely humbled by the quality of the advisory board and appreciate their involvement in helping fulfill our mission. A complete listing of the board members and their affiliations is provided on page two of the newsletter.

The faculty in the CBA continues to be involved in many new and worthwhile initiatives, some of which are presented in this newsletter. One that I am particularly excited about is the changes to our MBA program. The purpose of the changes is to attract more non-traditional students and students with non-business academic backgrounds. One of the changes is a reduction of the foundation requirements – those courses required to prepare students for graduate-level business study – from 24 hours to 12 hours. The new foundation courses, open only to graduate students, will allow those with non-business backgrounds to streamline into the core courses more quickly. Another change will be the addition of several electives and a refocusing of the core courses. In addition to the many initiatives undertaken by faculty, they continue to provide quality instruction, research, and service. You could not find a more engaged faculty who are dedicated to making sure that the students are prepared to compete in a changing and dynamic global workplace.

There is a changing of the guard on the CBA Alumni Association Board. On behalf of the College and alumni, I would like to thank Craig DeGravelle, Bill Riviere, Tim Gallagher, and Leo Hebert for their years of service. I would also like to thank Katina Samanie, Stacey Nichols, Tara LeBoeuf, and Dana Martin for their willingness to take over the responsibilities of the CBA Alumni Association. I am confident that they will do a great job. I encourage you to become involved in the CBA Alumni Association. In the event that you would like to participate on the board or in any other capacity, please let me know or contact Katina at [www.katina@gisy.com](mailto:www.katina@gisy.com).

In closing, I would like to thank our alumni for their continued support of the College of Business Administration. Your successes and accomplishments make it easy for me to promote the CBA to all of our constituents. I hope that you will continue to maintain your alliances with the CBA.



## Message from the Alumni President

As we encounter a new year, I would like to announce that the CBA Alumni Association has selected new officials for the coming year. I, Katina Samanie, am delighted as President to announce the new board members as:

- Katina Samanie, President, Accounting 2005
- Stacey Nichols, Vice-President, Human Resource Management 2004, MBA 2006
- Dana Martin, Secretary, Marketing 2000
- Tara LeBeouf, Treasurer, Accounting 2005

I would like to thank Craig DeGravelle, past president, and his board members for their dedication, time, and efforts. We promise to uphold your standards.

The CBA Alumni Association is currently moving forward in helping to improve the College. While the engraved brick fundraising has been a great success, we are still taking orders. The cost of an engraved brick is \$50 with proceeds benefiting the CBA. As bricks are purchased they will be laid in the center courtyard of the College. For your convenience, a form is included in the newsletter for you to invest in this memorable purchase.

Our board has decided on a few goals that it will strive to address in the coming year. Our main goal is to increase membership and support for the CBA Alumni Association. Nicholls State University is surrounded by an enormous number of its business alumni who remain in the Bayou

Region. There are so many wonderful things going on within our College. I challenge you to join us in support of our alumni by updating your contact information and paying your membership dues of \$10. By keeping an accurate contact file, we will be able to

notify you of our upcoming events such as our homecoming social in the fall at Fremin's. It is our main objective as an organization of CBA Alumni to keep our College's standards high by recognizing its great academic record and keeping our campus a place where students want to be. By providing your support with fundraisers such as the brick drive and making your \$10 membership donation, we will be able to continue our support of the College.

We are open to new ideas and new faces. Join us now in helping the College of Business Administration achieve its goals. Thank you.



## Farewell message from Craig Degravelle

I have had the great fortune of serving the College of Business Administration as the President of its Alumni Association for the last few years. I cannot think of a better way of giving back to an institution which has given me so much. I am proud to have served in this position, but I feel that it is time to step aside and allow someone else to serve.

Along the way, I have had the opportunity to work with several individuals to reach our objective of helping the College of Business drive into the future. As officers, Bill Riviere, Tim Gallagher, and Leo Hebert have proven to be a tremendous asset to the CBA Alumni Association. They have given their spare time to devote their efforts to the goals of this organization. I cannot thank them enough for their valuable part in our endeavors, and without these individuals, this organization would not have enjoyed such success.

I have had a wonderful time serving you, and I wish to continue to give my time and effort in any way possible. It is here that I say goodbye, and I wish my successor luck in her future endeavors. Thank you again.



## Zyber provides valuable work experience and job offers

The Zyber Pharmaceuticals Internship Program, one of the most innovative and successful internship ventures in the CBA to date, began in 2002 with a simple conversation between friends—in a deer stand! With ample time for discussion, local business successes Milo Meacham and Kelley Laughlin chatted with CBA finance professor Dr. John Lajaunie about the pharmaceutical company they had begun three years prior. The conversation led to collaboration with several CBA faculty members and initiated an internship program that would ultimately provide pharmaceutical sales experience for students, as well as valuable employees for Zyber.

The competitive process begins each spring when Zyber requests resumes from students interested in the internship. With the assistance of several Nicholls business professors, the company then chooses five students to each receive a 30-minute interview with Zyber executives. Only the most diligent, motivated, competitive students who have distinguished themselves with a strong

work ethic and solid interpersonal skills are chosen for the interviews. According to Dr. Lajaunie, “Zyber is looking for people who don’t take the easy way out and want to succeed—people who are distinguished from the pack. They want the best and the brightest.”

The chosen intern begins the nine-month, compensated journey at Zyber’s Gonzales headquarters with basic office training. Next the intern is placed on the road with a veteran sales representative where he/she experiences the sales process first-hand. Toward the end of the program, the intern is even assigned part of the territory to service unaccompanied. As Dr. Lajaunie explains, “The interns are doing the job. That’s invaluable!”

Lajaunie describes the CBA sales program as a “launching-pad” for successful interns, and believes that “If it weren’t for our professors turning out such qualified students, this relationship never would have happened”

Dr. Chris Cox, professor of marketing and assistant dean of gradu-

ate programs and special projects, has a similar respect for the thriving connection that has been generated through CBA students and Zyber. “It’s been a very productive relationship for both of us. Our people have done well in their company, and they have certainly been good to us. They’ve provided opportunities for our students that very few students at this stage in their experience and career would have. I think they also see that we have really good people here. It’s a testament to our students that they are ready for these kinds of career opportunities. It also says something about our program—that we’re helping the students get there and be ready for these opportunities.”

In the four years since the inception of the program, CBA has given Zyber a Vice President and three full-time salespeople. With this spring semester the company will select another intern to begin the process.

Lajaunie and Cox view the relationship as a win-win situation for both the students and the company. Cox describes our students as “a perfect fit for that kind of a company. They’re hungry, they’re aggressive, they think quickly on their feet, they have good communication skills, they have a good understanding of the sales process, and they’re trainable. When you put all those things together it makes for a good candidate, and I think Zyber has thought so as well.” Lajaunie adds, “We’re very pleased to have this relationship. The management of Zyber has been instrumental in keeping this going.” Mr. Meacham and Mr. Laughlin have provided tremendous support to Nicholls students and the CBA.

## Join us!!!

### Chamber of Commerce Card Exchange

The College of Business Administration will host the Thibodaux Chamber of Commerce Business Card Exchange on May 11th from 5-7 pm in the Ponder room (108 White Hall) and courtyard. The event will provide an opportunity for networking and interaction among faculty, staff, alumni, advisory board members and area businesses, and will give attendees the chance to



witness new and exciting technology and developments taking place in the CBA. If you are interested in attending or would like more information, please contact Susan Arcement at 448-4241.



# Student Success Stories

## Rogers receives accounting position in New York

When Trey Rogers decided he wanted a great accounting job in New York, he enlisted the help of College of Business Administration professors Breaux, Cashen, Chiasson, and Mauldin to help him make contacts in NY. In a matter of weeks he was in contact with three firms looking for graduating accountants, and two months later he flew to NY to interview. By the time he graduated in December 2005, Trey had been offered an auditing position with Eisner LLP, a large regional accounting firm in New York City.

### Rogers

His responsibilities have consisted mainly of auditing for financial services clients, investment partnerships and broker-dealers. He audited his first commercial client in March. "It's a very interesting and exciting job," he says, "I have learned so much and continue to learn more every day.

Rogers recognizes that Nicholls provided lessons that helped him make good decisions and ultimately led him to NY. He feels the faculty at Nicholls, especially in the College of Business and Accounting Department, were very interested in his education and his future. "The professors, secretaries and counselors are willing to go the extra mile in helping their students succeed in everything they do. The professors challenge students to the fullest of their capabilities, but also understand that learning should be fun and interesting," says Rogers. "I believe Nicholls gave me the fundamental skills and knowledge needed to grow into a mature, competent, efficient accounting professional that is ready for any challenge."

He is currently preparing for the CPA exam and plans to stay with public accounting at Eisner upon completion. "I just plan on taking things as they come and hope that I put myself in the right place at the right time."

## Trosclair

Drake Trosclair began his professional career in 2003 as a Human Resources Generalist for Terrebonne General Medical Center (TGMC). With little experience and a new HR Management degree, he accepted the offer, defying tremendous odds normally working against new HR graduates. "The job gave me an opportunity to build on the fundamentals I learned at Nicholls, and introduced the basics of HR, including the hiring process, employee relations, reporting, and workers compensation."



Trosclair

In December 2005, He accepted his current position as a Human Resources Administrator for J. Ray McDermott. He is primarily

responsible for recruiting for McDermott's Morgan City, LA facility. He believes the job will help him to grow professionally and reach various career goals he has set for himself.

He credits the College of Business Administration with providing a challenging program that prepared him for the business world. He describes the program as tough, recalling, "You had to be willing to work for a degree, just like in the working world. Nicholls taught me to balance my work and personal life in order to be successful." He also remembers the instruction he received, saying "I remember all the times the professors were there to help me when I had a question." He believes his experiences at Nicholls helped him excel as a professional through the strong foundation built in the HR Management Curriculum, and would recommend the CBA for anyone who is looking for "a great education to truly prepare them for the business world."

## The Entre Lab - A New Business Incubator Opens on Campus (and alums are invited...)

The Entre Lab is under construction as this newsletter goes to press. Occupying 525 sq. ft. in a corner of Shaver, across the little courtyard from the Dean's office, our first business incubator has already attracted \$100,000 in start-up funding. The University's Building User fund is putting up \$25,000 for the renovations, and the Louisiana Board of Regents has added \$75,000 for technology.

"Business incubators are like chicken incubators – only for new businesses," says Prof. Tom Bryant, the Bollinger Endowed Chair in Entrepreneurship and launch Director of the Entre Lab. "They are designed to shelter and protect businesses in their early stages, then increases their chances for successful launches." The Entre Lab will have low-cost space, work areas, the best computers and software we can find for startup entrepreneurs, a really enriched

and supportive environment – and lots of fellow entrepreneurs. Faculty, staff, and community mentors will help to ensure that participants get the best available advice and coaching.

Alumni are welcome to apply for entry into the Lab. Just like current Nicholls students applying, they will need to demonstrate to the Managing Board that they are between the "good idea" and "market-viable" stages. If that sounds like you, give Prof. Bryant a call at (985) 448-4179. Both Resident (24/7 access) and Associate (non-resident, access to workshops, library, etc.) members are encouraged.

Other alumni are also very welcome to serve as coaches, mentors, and expert advisors. If you'd like to volunteer a bit of time to help us develop the next generation of job-creators in this region, drop a line to Prof. Bryant at: Tom.Bryant@Nicholls.edu.

# NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Business Administration

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EARNED EXCELLENCE



THE BEST BUSINESS SCHOOLS  
IN THE WORLD

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