As a marketer, I research and teach the four P’s of the profession — product, place, promotion and price.

It is with that theme in mind I present the University of Kansas School of Business annual report. This year, we’ve focused on our three P’s — physical facilities, people and programs, all of which enhance the rich history of this great school.

Our people serve as our most valuable assets, and our alumni continue to make headlines for their leadership in the public and private sectors.

In this report, you will read about business Jayhawks — faculty, staff, students and alumni — who represent our institution with pride.

Another important indicator is the growth in demand for our business programs. Our student credit hours taught has grown by nearly 10 percent from the previous year even as the quality of students admitted continues to rise.

As you’ll read in our cover story, it has been a bustling year of development in our new building project, slated to open for classes in 2016. We’ve nailed down a design and construction began this summer.

We wait with great anticipation for the new physical facilities as we continue to invest in our people and our programs.

It is truly a remarkable time for the KU School of Business. With your help, Kansas will continue to be “where business is going.”

Rock Chalk.

Neeli Bendapudi
Dean, H.D. Price Professor of Business

from the DEAN

The mission of the University of Kansas School of Business is to prepare students for careers in the practice of business and management by maintaining a leading business school that fosters the creation and dissemination of knowledge in a changing global environment.

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KU SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
The University of Kansas
The 2013-14 academic year brought welcome news to the school’s MBA programs.

Both ranked among the top 50 public MBA programs, according to U.S. News & World Report’s 2015 “Best Grad Schools” list, the premier academic rankings organization.

The Full-Time MBA came in at No. 82 overall, 47 among publics, and Working Professional ranked 85, tied for No. 49 among publics.

Full-Time and Working Professional MBA Programs rank among the top 50 public MBA programs.

The school’s ranking jumped 27 spots in the 2015 report, and 40 spots over the last two years, making it the biggest jump of any Full-Time MBA program in U.S. News & World Report’s rankings.

Over the past two years, both MBA programs were streamlined, now offering an 18-month option for full-time students and nine graduate certificates for working professionals.

The track provides insights into the integrated customer experience.

“From understanding what customers need and want, to delivering the most relevant product or service to the customer in the best way, the new track’s core business competency crosses over disciplines in marketing and supply chain management,” MBA program director Catherine Shenoy said.

Along with the MSCM track, MBA students can now focus their studies on finance.

Nearly 60 percent of recent MBA graduates have gone into some type of finance position, Shenoy said, and finance professors teach a significant set of electives for the program, so a defined full-time MBA track in finance was a natural fit.

In discussing a potential new track, employers and faculty alike were excited about the possibility for a hybrid marketing and supply chain management track, she said.

Graduates of the new MSCM track have a wide range of career placement opportunities, Shenoy said, including roles as marketing analysts, brand managers, retail managers, supply chain analysts, purchasing managers and other supply chain-focused careers.

“We have so many strong consumer brands in this region,” said David Byrd-Stadler, MBA career services director. “Brands such as Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Garmin, Sprint, Payless ShoeSource, among others, make a natural fit for our students looking for careers in marketing and supply chain after their MBA.”

The track also has considerable value to a student interested in general management or strategy consulting, Shenoy said, and provides an important skill set for budding entrepreneurs.

“Many new ventures fail from lack of focus on the integrated customer experience,” she said. “Some of the world’s most successful startups found early success because of their focus on marketing supply chain management, such as Walmart, Zara, Apple and Amazon, and many others have excelled because they have been able to deliver, in a unique way, a product or service consumers want.”

SCHOOL LAUNCHES PART-TIME MASTER OF ACCOUNTING PROGRAM

The School of Business has expanded its Master of Accounting program to include a working professional option at the Edwards Campus in Overland Park this fall.

The program allows professionals with accounting undergraduate degrees to pursue their graduate degree part-time. MAcc Director Lisa Ottinger said the Working Professional MAcc program welcomes students with diverse career backgrounds and allows them the flexibility to complete their graduate degree while continuing to work. Students attend evening classes and can start in the fall, spring or summer. Courses at Edwards Campus will be taught by the same faculty as the full-time program on the Lawrence campus.

KU Edwards Campus Vice Chancellor Dave Cook said the MAcc degree is an excellent addition to the graduate degree offerings at the Edwards Campus.

The corporate focus of the program’s coursework nicely complements the needs of working professionals, he said. “This program will not only prepare professionals to fill highly demanded jobs in the accounting field, but also fills CPA exam eligibility.”
For years, a government contract was keeping employees at Cottonwood Inc., busy making tie-down straps for the U.S. military. But more recently, the recession took its toll, dropping work flow to 60 to 70 percent.

With 160 employees with intellectual disabilities, Cottonwood turned to the Kansas Impact Project (KIP) to get their employees back to work.

“Work has always been a really strong component of what we do at Cottonwood,” said Peggy Wallert, director of community relations and development. “Work is important for everyone, and that doesn’t mean it would be different for someone with a disability.”

For 30 years, Cottonwood Industries has provided light industrial services such as packaging, commercial sewing, manufacturing, assembling and warehousing to local, regional and national clients. Through Cottonwood Industries, the not-for-profit Cottonwood Inc., provides employment and residential services to people with developmental disabilities.

As the effects of the recession started hitting Cottonwood, it wasn’t getting enough orders to keep employees working at capacity. While attending a Rotary Club meeting, Wallert heard Dean Neeli Bendapudi speak about KIP, the school’s new consulting program for first-year MBA students.

Cottonwood’s KIP team was challenged to develop strategies to generate additional revenue by bringing in new business and expanding existing business. Students searched for a pool of potential clients by identifying those similar to existing customers and potential users of similar services.

After months of research and strategizing, the KIP team found that Cottonwood was doing a lot right, but it needed to stretch its imagination when it came to generating leads, Wallert said.

Cottonwood wasn’t the only one to benefit from the partnership, Wallert added. She was pleased her organization had the opportunity to influence business students and show them what nonprofits can do for society.

“We’re not just asking for help,” she said. “We can teach them, too. They can see what a workforce can do. And we think it’s important for people in the workforce to know people with disabilities have more ability than disability.”

SCHOOL WELCOMES NEW RESEARCH FACULTY

Niki den Nieuwenboer
Assistant Professor of Management

Nieuwenboer joins KU this fall as an assistant professor of management. Most recently, she served on the faculty of the Leavy School of Business at Santa Clara University. In 2008, she earned a doctorate in management studies from Rotterdam School of Management at Erasmus University in the Netherlands. Her experience in industry includes consulting for KPMG in business ethics and fraud prevention. Nieuwenboer has been published in Annual Review of Psychology, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, and Journal of Business Ethics.

Alexei Marcoux
Visiting Assistant Professor of Management

Marcoux will spend two years in Lawrence as a visiting assistant professor in the management and leadership area. He currently serves as an associate professor of business ethics at Loyola University in Chicago. He’s held visiting professorships at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School and Yale Law School. Marcoux holds a doctorate in applied philosophy from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. His research has most recently been featured in Journal of Social Entrepreneurship, Corporate Governance and Business Ethics, and Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

UNIVERSITY PROMOTIONS, ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

As the new academic year begins, the School of Business welcomes new researchers, says goodbye to retiring professors and congratulates promoted faculty.

Jide Wintoki has been awarded tenure and promotion to associate professor of finance.

Associate professors Vince Barker and Kissan Joseph have been promoted to full professors.

Burcu Bolukbasi
Assistant Professor of Management

Bolukbasi also joins the school’s management and leadership area this fall. She earned a doctorate in industrial relations and human resource management from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where her research focused on team information sharing, transactive memory systems, collective efficacy in team research, leadership and other management-related topics.

Peter Ping Li
Visiting Assistant Professor of Management

Li ventures to Lawrence in the fall as a visiting scholar. Since 2010, he has served as a professor of Chinese business studies at Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, where he is responsible for research and teaching on management issues within and beyond the contextual boundaries of China. Prior to this post, he held faculty positions at California State University Stanislaus in Turlock, California, and University of Dubuque in Iowa, among other universities. He holds a doctorate in international business from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

MBA students help get employees back to work.

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Supply chain program earns top rankings

The School of Business was recently ranked No. 25 on a list of top supply chain undergraduate programs by Gartner.

The survey studied 40 university programs from across the country, taking into account each program’s scope, size and industry value. Through the survey, Gartner also found signs of improvement in education that translate to better supply chain talent, a positive for the industry as a whole.

There’s good news for supply chain students, too. In addition to average salaries being up 10 percent since 2011, the survey found that the average starting salary for undergraduates is $53,584, and top students can command $25,000 or more beyond that. In many cases, supply chain graduates are accepting higher starting salaries than finance and accounting majors, the survey found, and placement rates are 85 to 100 percent.

The supply chain program benefits from a strong advisory board, which includes former School of Business dean Joe Bauman. “Supply chain management that gets products and services to customers with low expense and investment is a winning strategy,” he said. “KU is educating the men and women who will lead this strategy for their future employers.”

Student wins scholarship for women in supply chain

Junior Hannah Bremer was awarded the AWESOME scholarship, which will provide her the opportunity to go to the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals Conference in September 2014.

The scholarship was created by the AWESOME (Achieving Women’s Excellence in Supply Chain Operations, Management and Education) Initiative, which was established in 2013 to advance women’s roles in supply chain leadership.

Bremer said she thought the conference would be a good opportunity to interact with supply chain professionals.

“You learn the technical things in school, but you don’t know the nuances unless you hear people having genuine conversations,” Bremer said. “I’m looking forward to acting like a fly on the wall and moving through and hearing what they have to say.”

Bremer was nominated as KU’s candidate and then chosen along with four other students from 10 top universities.

Roger Woody, an executive lecturer of supply chain management and director of SCM external development, said the conference is invaluable because of the industry exposure it will provide. He said Bremer will be able to meet professionals from a variety of companies and countries and learn more about their experiences in supply chain.

CSCMP celebrated its achievement at its annual global conference last fall in Denver, giving Arai exposure to professionals around the world. In addition to the recognition at the conference, she was featured in CSCMP’s Supply Chain Quarterly magazine and invited to participate as a speaker and panelist in a young professionals session at the conference. It was the first year the award was given, and Arai said that makes the accomplishment a little more special.

“When it came to the selection of the recipients, there was no one to whom we could be compared,” she said. “Therefore, we were chosen to set the bar for future recipients.”

Arai plans to go back to school and hopes this award will help her get into a great MBA program. While at KU, she was a member of the Supply Chain Management Club. She credits the business school for giving her the opportunity to help the club grow.

Roger Woody, SCM external development director at KU, nominated her for the award.

“She is certainly one of the most energetic of any student I’ve known,” Woody said, “and she has continued to exhibit that energy in her young career.”

Arai is from Overland Park and is currently a project lead in the Mexico strategic transitions group in global outsourcing/procurement.

Keiko Arai graduated from the School of Business with a supply chain management degree several years ago and is already turning heads in the industry.

In August 2013, the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP) announced that Arai is one of three recipients of the Young Professionals Emerging Leader Award, which recognizes up-and-coming supply chain management and logistics professionals 30 years old and younger who contribute beyond what is required of them and have the potential to influence the profession in the future.

Arai works at Bell Helicopter Textron in Fort Worth, Texas, a job she landed after attending a business school career fair. She also participated in Textron’s two-year-long leadership development program in integrated supply chain management.

Roger Woody, SCM external development director at KU, nominated her for the award.

“My student body will certainly miss her,” Woody said. “And she has continued to exhibit that energy in her young career.”

Arai is from Overland Park and is currently a project lead in the Mexico strategic transitions group in global outsourcing/procurement.

Lt. Cmdr. Morrissey has been selected for a fellowship with FedEx in Memphis, Tennessee, where he will spend one year learning about executive level decision-making and expand his professional supply and logistics education.

Morrissey was one of four Supply Corps lieutenants and lieutenant commanders from around the country to be selected for the program, including representatives from Duke University, University of Pennsylvania and NAVSUP Fleet Logistics Center Puget Sound. After he completes his fellowship, he will serve a three-year follow-on tour in one of the Supply Corps key supply chain management assignments to apply the skills and ideas gained from his experience.

MBA student chosen for supply corps fellowship

This fall MBA student Owen Morrissey will represent the United States Navy and KU by participating in the Training With Industry program.
SEASON OF LECTURES

The 2013-14 academic year brought a host of opportunities for students and community members to hear from leading figures in industry, academe and public policy, including a recent Nobel Prize recipient.


Serial entrepreneur Jim McKelvey spoke to a packed house of undergraduate students May 5 in Eaton Hall. He's most notable for co-founding Square Inc., a card reader that accepts payments through mobile devices, with Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey. The event was hosted by the KU schools of Business, Engineering and Journalism.

Stanford University professor Alvin Roth, winner of the 2012 Nobel Prize in Economics, discussed his Nobel-winning research on market design April 1 at the Lied Center. His talk, “Not for Sale! Repugnance as a Constraint on Markets,” was part of the Bold Aspirations Visitor and Lecture Series, hosted by the School of Business and Office of the Provost.

Fortune 100 CEO of TIAA-CREF Roger Ferguson Jr. presented “Ethics and the Financial Services Industry” as the 2013 Walter S. Sutton Lecture Sept. 16 at KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park. TIAA-CREF is the leading provider of retirement financial services in academic, research, medical and cultural fields.


Entrepreneur Bill Frezza talked millennial innovation and an uncertain future Feb. 11 at the Lied Center. His lecture was part of the Dean’s Executive Lecture Series.

Karen Olson, founder and president of Family Promise, a national organization dedicated to fighting homelessness and poverty, spoke on her journey into nonprofit work from her beginnings in consumer goods marketing. Family Promise is a nonsectarian network of volunteers and religious congregations spanning 41 states and 182 affiliates, including Lawrence.

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School honors Capitol Federal, Hallmark CEOs as Distinguished Alumni

In April the business school honored its 2014 Distinguished Alumni Award recipients, Don Hall Jr., president and CEO of Hallmark Cards, and John Dicus, chairman, president and CEO of Capitol Federal Savings Bank. They were recognized for their dedication to business excellence, community service and commitment to the university.

Don Hall earned his MBA from KU in 1983 and has worked at Hallmark since 1971. He has worked in multiple areas of the business from manufacturing and sales to product development and creative. He took over the company’s top position in 2002 and is the third generation of the Hall family to lead the privately held business, which was founded in 1910 by his grandfather, J.C. Hall.

He is active in the Kansas City community as a member of the MRRGlobal Board of Trustees, KU School of Business Board of Advisors and Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce board. He is the current chairperson of the Civic Council of Greater Kansas City. He also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

John Dicus earned a bachelor’s degree in business from KU in 1983 and went on to earn an MBA from KU in 1984. He has worked at Capitol Federal Savings Bank since 1985, when he started as a bank officer, working his way through the ranks to president and COO, in 1996.

He serves as director and trustee for a variety of organizations, including Stormont Vail Healthcare, Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Greater Topeka, Capitol Federal Foundation, Washburn University Endowment and KU Endowment Association. In October 2012, Capitol Federal Foundation pledged a $20 million lead gift for construction of the new School of Business building.

The School of Business established the Distinguished Alumni Award in 1998 to honor outstanding graduates. To date, 48 alumni have been recognized with the award. Past recipients include investor David Booth, entrepreneur Philip Anschutz, former Goldman Sachs executive Robert Kaplan, Corner Corp. co-founder Clifford Illig and Empire Bank chairman Mike Michaels.

JILL DOCKING

KU MBA alumna Jill Docking made headlines October 2013 when Lawrence Democrat Paul Davis announced her addition to his 2014 bid for Kansas governor.

“A civil commitment and community are vital to the success of democracy,” Docking said, “and my husband, Tom, and I take seriously our commitments to our city and our state.”

Since earning her MBA in 1983, Docking has spent more than 25 years in the financial services industry and credits her business background for guiding her political career.

“The skills learned in the business classroom — to analyze data and make sound decisions on policy — are critical in both the public and private sectors,” she said.

In 2010, Docking received the School of Business Distinguished Alumni Award.

CLIFF ILLIG

Cliff Illig, co-founder of Gerner Corp., continues building Kansas City as a national hub for soccer. In July, Sporting Club announced plans to construct a $75 million National Training and Coaching Development Center that will serve as a home for the U.S. Soccer Federation and its national teams. The 190-acre complex of 16 soccer fields will be located in Kansas City, Kansas. Sporting Kansas City took home the MLS Cup in 2013. Illig graduated from the School of Business in 1973.

FRANK FRIEDMAN

Frank Friedman, a 1979 KU graduate, was named CEO of Deloitte LLP the U.S. arm of the international professional services firm, making him responsible for more than 65,000 professionals in nearly 90 cities in India and the United States. Friedman has served as its chief financial officer since 1991. Deloitte’s Kansas City office has 270 professional staff, according to a survey by the Kansas City Business Journal. Deloitte LLP had $13.9 billion in revenue last year.

BRYAN GRIFFIN

Business alumnus Bryan Griffin was recognized last summer by the Kansas City Business Journal as a 2013 Chief Financial Officer of the Year.

Griffin is CFO and a member of the executive management team for Overland Solutions Inc., a company that provides outsourcing services for the insurance industry.

The awards program honors the Kansas City area’s top financial executives. Applicants were judged for their contributions to the companies’ growth and financial success, their roles in corporate management, strategic involvement and community service efforts.

Griffin was one of three recipients chosen for the medium-sized company category. He helped guide OSI toward improvements and profitability by working with his peers and the CEO.

Since graduating from the School of Business in 1987 Griffin has worked for Deloitte and Wells Fargo. He joined OSI in 2004.

THOMAS AND SCOTT WARD

Thomas and Scott Ward, co-presidents of Russell Stover, the Kansas City-based sweets market leader, sold the company to Swiss chocolate maker Lindt. Russell Stover generates annual sales of about $600 million according to Forbes. The company operates four chocolate factories in the U.S. and a chain of 35 retail outlets. According to the company, the Valentine’s Day favorites can be found in more than 70,000 drug stores, card and gift shops and other outlets throughout Canada and the United States. Thomas earned his bachelor’s degree in business from KU in 1980, Scott in 1979.
While some companies think shaking up their top management team will limit complacency and improve firm performance, research by a School of Business professor shows that’s not always true.

A new study by Jim Guthrie, who is also the school’s new associate dean, said that although turnover in the highest levels of management has been shown to produce positive results for firms, too much turnover damages the performance of the company. Sometimes, Guthrie said, companies are too trigger-happy in removing top management and they overestimate the positive effects of turnover.

Much research exists about why people choose to leave a job, most focusing on middle management, Guthrie said, but the purpose of this research was to examine the effects of turnover at the highest level of management. As the most significant decision makers with the most influence on a company, the researchers wanted to see how companies perform after the exit of top executives.

The research, titled “Turnover at the Top: Executive Team Departures and Firm Performance,” was published in June in Organization Science.

“Even within management research, there is this idea out there that top management teams get too complacent, too committed to the status quo, and therefore shaking things up will improve performance,” Guthrie said. “And there is a certain extent to which that is true.”

What companies don’t always take into account, he added, is the tacit knowledge executives have, such as social connections, industry relationships or organizational knowledge.

“The implication is that turnover not only erodes performance by depleting organizational skill banks but, perhaps more dramatically, by altering the social structure and fabric of an organization,” the research states.

Guthrie said companies don’t always understand the value of a person’s firm-specific experience. Their experience is sometimes overlooked, and there’s a predilection in thinking that change is always a good thing.

“Certainly you need to change top executives when they’re not performing well or skill sets are obsolete, but I think a lot of firms take this too far,” Guthrie said. “Companies often underestimate the value of employee retention.”

Using data from 367 firms representing 134 industries, researchers used a mathematical model to compare firm performance with top management team turnover, taking into account industry characteristics, instability, munificence, complexity and the firm’s own performance history. Findings show that as rates of top management turnover increase, firm performance tends to suffer.

The ill effects of turnover at the highest level of management are reflective of the effects studied on lower level turnover. As turnover increases, productivity goes down and it can also lead to insecurity in other parts of firm, Guthrie said.

“What’s equally important is what happens to the people left behind when a top executive leaves,” he said. “It’s basically a cautionary tale. Don’t necessarily think that if you’re in a volatile industry, changing people at the top will improve things.”

The article is coauthored by Jake G. Messersmith, University of Nebraska; Jeong-Yeon Lee, University of Kansas; and Yong-Yeon Ji, Towson University.

“The implication is that turnover not only erodes performance by depleting organizational skill banks but, perhaps more dramatically, by altering the social structure and fabric of an organization,” the research states.

As the global economy moves past the Great Recession, scholars and policymakers are taking time to reflect on the housing crisis in hopes of avoiding another meltdown.

Finance professor Bob DeYoung traveled to the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas in November to host a global conference on that topic.

The event, “Housing, Stability and the Macroeconomy: International Perspectives,” brought together thought leaders in housing markets, housing finance and the macroeconomy, DeYoung said, including professors from Oxford University, the Wharton School at University of Pennsylvania, University of California, Berkeley, and University of Chicago, among others.

“The conference addressed how to avoid another housing bubble without choking off economic growth,” DeYoung said.

The conference also examined how the crash in housing prices resulted in a recession, why the economies of some countries suffered more than others, and how home mortgage finance and bank regulation could be changed.

Keynote speakers included David Miles, a member of the Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee, which sets base level interest rates in the United Kingdom’s financial markets, and Robert Shiller, a Yale University economist who received a 2013 Nobel Prize in economics, known for his early identification of the U.S. housing bubble. Shiller created the widely used Case-Shiller home price index for U.S. real estate markets.

DeYoung, the Capitol Federal Distinguished Professor in Financial Markets and Institutions, was approached to lead the conference by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and International Monetary Fund, co-sponsors of the event. The Journal of Money, Credit and Banking, which DeYoung co-edits, published the conference proceedings.

He serves as director of the Center for Banking Excellence, housed in the School of Business.

Gergacz’s paper, “In-house counsel claims against a corporate employer and access to privileged corporate communications: An analysis and a proposal,” appeared in the journal in fall 2013. The paper evaluates in-house legal counsel’s dual role in wrongful discharge claims against a corporate employee and its effect on privileged corporate communications.

“I feel very honored to have my work recognized by the Journal of Financial Crime,” Gergacz said. “Its editorial board consists of legal scholars from throughout the world and I am pleased that they selected my piece for this distinction.”

Gergacz is also the author of the leading legal treatise, “Attorney-Corporate Client Privilege 3rd edition.”
KU students cleaned house at the ConocoPhillips Accounting Challenge in April, taking home prizes for first, third and fourth place.

Students were divided into teams of three, each student from a different university, to compete in the challenge. The three winning teams included business school students Morgan Shapiro (first), Kara Notvedt (third) and Adam Baker (fourth). Notvedt attributes her success to vital skills she learned from KU courses and professors.

“I felt prepared going into the case competition because the accounting program and business school at KU hold their students to a higher standard,” Notvedt said.

Both Notvedt and Morgan Shapiro strongly encourage KU students to seize opportunities like the accounting challenge. It’s important for students to network early on in their careers and it will end up paying off, Shapiro said.

“I gained more confidence talking with people that held powerful positions within a company,” Shapiro said. “Not only did I get to network with the employees of ConocoPhillips, but I also had a lot of fun at their offices.”

The School of Business has begun revamping its executive education program to increase outreach and develop more educational opportunities—a move that benefits the business school and university as a whole.

Dave Byrd-Stadler, formerly the director of employer relations and MBA Career Services, is stepping in to oversee the overhaul of the executive education program.

“It’s important for us to have a strong executive education program because it enhances the opportunities for faculty and increases engagement with the business community,” Byrd-Stadler said.

The school currently has two long-running executive education programs, including one with the American Business Women’s Association national conference. Previously, the program didn’t have an employee assigned to manage it full-time, and the extra attention will help expand its reach, Byrd-Stadler said. The new outreach initiative will aim to attract more companies, nonprofits and individual professionals in the area and across the country.

The school will offer both open enrollment programs and customized programs.

“Customized programs are great for the school because it really allows faculty to engage with organizations,” Byrd-Stadler said, “and the organizations get a program that’s tailored to their needs.”
Convenience stores aren’t a glamorous business, but QuikTrip CEO Chet Cadieux has made his company a desirable place to be by creating a culture centered on its most important resource: the employees.

“I want to focus on the culture because that’s what makes us who we are,” Cadieux said at a School of Business talk at the Lied Center in January. With about 800 students, faculty, staff and community members in the audience, Cadieux shared what makes QuikTrip a company routinely ranked one of the best companies to work for by Forbes magazine.

Dean Neeli Bendapudi and her husband, senior lecturer Venkat, are well-versed in all things QuikTrip as they published a paper on the company’s business culture and strategy in the Harvard Business Review.

Cadieux, who started working at QuikTrip at age 16, is in charge of the company’s 685 stores and 14,000 employees. With $11 billion in sales annually, Quiktrip is currently ranked No. 30 on Forbes magazine’s largest privately held companies.

Founded by his father in 1958, QuikTrip’s success relies on recruiting and retaining the best of the best, Cadieux said. With an average starting salary of $40,000, the company is picky when it hires and has a clear vision of who will fit the company’s values. Employees either love working at QuikTrip or hate it, Cadieux added, but with a 15 to 16 percent turnover rate, almost all within the first three months, most people seem to love it.

“The reason we do what we do is to provide an opportunity for our employees to be successful,” Cadieux said. “The single most important resources for a company are its people.”

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SCHOOL ROLLS OUT NEW MBA CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

The MBA program will introduce its new graduate certificates this fall, offering eight areas of in-depth specialization and a business foundations certificate.

The certificates, taught at the Edwards Campus in Overland Park, will allow students to earn credit-bearing graduate coursework in management education. When completed, a certificate provides official recognition on a transcript and resume.

“Certificates demonstrate to employers your competency in specific areas of management,” said Dee Steinle, administrative director of masters programs.

As a relatively new concept in higher education, certificates appeal to a diverse audience for a number of reasons.

“Someone who has an MBA may want to update their skills in a different area of specialization,” Steinle said. “For someone else, it may be that they need a piece of management knowledge rather than a full degree program.”

Students without a business education are welcome to the certificate program, but they may need to complete a couple of prerequisite courses. Certificates are designed to be taken as a stand-alone study but can also work in tandem with the curriculum for students already in the Working Professional MBA program.


The Foundations of Business certificate comprises the first five courses of the Working Professional MBA, making it an easy transition into the full graduate program. Additionally, if students complete a certificate before they have an MBA, all of their courses from the certificate will transfer and count toward an MBA if they decide to pursue the full degree.

More information about certificates is available at MBAcert.ku.edu.
With funding secured for the new School of Business building, efforts turned to nailing down the design in 2013-14.

In April, nine months after its initial visioning session, the team tasked with creating a new home for the school finalized architecture and design plans. The four-story, 155,000-square-foot building will be the largest facility at KU to be funded through private support. The building, which will cost $65.7 million, will open its doors for classes in fall 2016.

“This new space will foster partnerships between industry and academe,” Dean Neeli Bendapudi said. “There will be a buzz to it, a sense of business being done in real time. Our team has come up with a space for true interaction and innovation.”

The structure is built on two wings, north and south, joined by a central atrium. Nineteen classrooms and 202 offices will feature state-of-the-art multimedia, including in 350- and 125-seat auditoria, and labs and spaces to enable flexible, student-centered learning and research.

“The new school is designed to be a destination point,” said Jim Guthrie, associate dean of academic affairs and co-chair of the building committee. “It honors KU’s rich architectural history while pushing us toward more student-oriented teaching methods. The new building will support our aspirations and our mission of teaching and knowledge creation.”

Located on Naismith Drive and across from Allen Fieldhouse, the School of Business will form a new southern gateway to the KU campus, said Dave Broz, principal architect and KU alumnus. The building will feature ample natural lights and views, sustainable roofs and materials.

The building is designed to focus on the student experience by creating a welcoming space to learn, Guthrie added.

“We want students to feel comfortable sticking around, working and socializing,” Guthrie said, “and we don’t want them to feel like they have to disappear after their classes.”

Undergraduate students will have convenient access to academic advising and career services, located on the first floor off the central atrium. The new undergraduate hub includes 12 interview rooms for industry meetings and professional development, and the business school’s current student help area will be expanded to include six breakout rooms for team projects and individual coaching.

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The school will house an expansive, transparent space for centers in entrepreneurship, international business and business communication, and a number of other research-based centers.

During the planning process, the architecture team led benchmarking trips to corporate spaces, incubators and business schools in Dallas, Chicago and Kansas City, among other locations, taking inspiration from Deloitte University, University of Chicago’s Booth School of Business and Cerner Corporation’s headquarters.

Hired in July 2013, Gensler, a Chicago-based global architecture, design and planning firm, where Broz is based, served as the project’s design architect, with Gastinger Walker Harden + Bee Triplett Buck (GWH+BTB), of Kansas City, Mo., as its local partner.

The School of Business also announced the name of its new building this year as Capitol Federal Hall. Capitol Federal Foundation’s $20 million lead gift is the largest gift ever committed to the School of Business and the largest single gift ever given by the foundation. The donation is also one of the largest gifts contributed to Far Above: The Campaign for Kansas.

To kick off the year, the school held a groundbreaking ceremony at the Lied Center with Gov. Sam Brownback, alumni, donors and community members. KU leaders and major donors joined the governor and Bendapudi on stage, which was built as a reproduction of the iconic New York Stock Exchange balcony.

“IT is truly a great day to be a Jayhawk,” Bendapudi said at the ceremony. “It was my mission, in returning to KU, to bring this new building project to reality. We gather today because of the truly moving support of our alumni and friends, our benefactors who made this happen.”

Bendapudi thanked all donors and supporters of the project, whether they “gave $20 or $20 million.”

“This new facility will have a lasting impact on the state’s economy, as KU and its business school play a vital role in preparing and educating future Kansas business leaders,” said Gov. Brownback at the ceremony. “The new building reinforces my vision of driving economic growth in Kansas through entrepreneurship and innovation — and this new building will give KU’s business programs the resources to do so.”

After relocating the tennis courts that previously sat on the new building site, construction on the building began in July.
INTERROGATOR SPEAKS ON PATH TO SADDAM HUSSEIN’S CAPTURE

A packed auditorium warmly welcomed Eric Maddox this spring as the 45th lecturer of the J.A. Vickers Sr. and Robert F. Vickers Sr. Memorial Lecture series.

Maddox, an interrogator for U.S. Department of Defense, is considered “the mastermind” behind the capture of war criminal Saddam Hussein. His lecture, “Finding Saddam,” kept people on the edge of their seats while he told his story.

Before Maddox’s famed search, he worked as a Chinese linguist in Los Angeles and followed the 2003 Iraq war on television with the rest of America. When he was called to Baghdad to join the force to find Hussein, he had never actually conducted an interrogation.

After his first interrogation, a ripple effect launched and led him to more valued members of the puzzle that would reveal Hussein’s location. His one-day mission turned into months of 16-hour interrogations, little sleep and relentless determination. He discovered the traditional interrogation methods he was taught were unsuccessful, which inspired him to find and create his own style of interrogating.

“‘How to sift through truth and lies is like sitting with a customer,’” Maddox said. “‘It’s a negotiation. When I teach interrogation, the fundamental principle for an interrogation is — if you identify the needs of the prisoner, and address their needs, they’ll address your needs.’”

Thousands of interrogations, dozens of failed raids and constant push-back from superiors grew heavy on Maddox’s shoulders, but it did not keep him from seeing all his hard work through. It was on Dec. 13, 2003 that they finally captured his “ace of spades.” Hussein in the same city he predicted he’d be. Maddox’s interrogations produced intelligence that successfully led to the historic day.

After sharing his story, he accepted questions from the audience. People asked a wide variety of questions ranging from, what role Chinese plays in his career to how he’d adapt his interrogations to different cultures. It was one of the last questions that clearly defined the lecture’s application to business.

“‘So I decided I would bring in a translator. They lifted the hood off of him—I froze and asked ‘So what brings you in today?’”

As a junior at KU, an unexpected phone call from a professor put Bill Plybon back on track to major in accounting. More than three decades later, Plybon and his wife, Suzanne, have made a $100,000 gift to create the Allen Ford Tax Fellow fund in honor of Allen Ford, the Larry D. Horner/KPMG Peat Marwick Teaching Professor of Professional Accounting.

The Plybons live in Atlanta, Ga., where Bill is vice president, secretary and deputy general counsel for Coca-Cola Enterprises. He earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting from KU in 1982, and a law degree from Emory University School of Law in 1986.

Plybon changed his major from accounting to general business after working through Ford’s difficult intermediate accounting course. He planned to apply to law school and knew he needed a high undergraduate GPA. When Ford learned of Plybon’s change in majors, he tracked him down at his fraternity house. “He said, ‘I heard you dropped out of accounting, and I wanted to tell you that that’s a mistake. I think you should stay in accounting, you can do it, and it will be good for your career,’” Plybon said.

“‘I am overwhelmed by Bill and Suzanne’s generosity and flattered that Bill gives credit to me for contributing to his success,’” Allen Ford said. “‘A phone call to a good professor’s phone call provided a moment for a student to make significant contributions — in and out of the classroom. The intangible income generated for the professor is both awesome and non-taxable.”

Since 2004, Plybon has worked for Coca-Cola Enterprises, where in 2010, he was part of the team that negotiated the $14 billion sale of its North American bottling territories to the Coca-Cola Company. Before joining Coca-Cola Enterprises, he was a partner in the trial and appellate practice group at the law firm of Alston & Bird in Atlanta, where he helped lead the investigation of Enron Corporation.

“‘So much of what I’ve done in my career, I can trace back to that moment when Allen Ford called me, and I decided to go back to accounting,’” said Plybon. “‘It was completely pivotal.’”

Plybon credits his KU professors for the knowledge they instilled in him.

“‘That’s how knowledge comes to you, through the professors,’” said Plybon. “‘They teach the literal accounting — the debits and credits — but they also teach about becoming a professional — and that makes all the difference.’”

At Ford’s urging, Plybon returned to his original major and to his longtime plan of following not only in his father’s footsteps, but also his grandfather’s — his father was an accountant; his grandfather an attorney.

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“I was told to interrogate (a man)... without ever having interrogated anyone before,” Maddox said. “‘We were in this six by six room with wooden windows, a chair for the prisoner, one for me and one for my translator. They lifted the hood off of him—I froze and asked ‘So what brings you in today?’”

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INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS INSTITUTE GETS NEW NAME

Beginning this fall, the Institute for International Business will become the Center for Global Business Studies, turning its emphasis to student experience for greater global business competence.

To prepare students for an increasingly complex marketplace, the center will provide students the opportunities to be globally workforce ready when they graduate. Additionally, the new building will have dedicated space to international programs.

“The move to the new building may be a good time for a new branding of international programs in the school,” said John Hedeman, director of student international experiences.

The center has three significant areas of focus: students, faculty and corporate partners. Hedeman will lead efforts for students, Professor Tailan Chi will lead efforts with faculty and Professor Melissa Birch will lead efforts related to corporate partners.

PROGRAM WILL HELP STUDENTS ACHIEVE ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

In the spring, a new student-business accelerator called KU Catalyst began offering work space, mentoring and access to capital for budding student entrepreneurs.

E. LaVerne Epp, executive chairman of the Bioscience and Technology Business Center (BTBC), said KU Catalyst is a joint venture between BTBC and the School of Business. The program is operating from the newly expanded wing of the BTBC building, located on west campus, until KU Catalyst’s home in the new School of Business building is finished in 2016.

“If a student has an idea for a company, we will provide space for that student to help germinate that company and germinate that idea,” Epp said. “Our interest is to help the students create the company, help the company get going and then keep the company in Kansas.”

Epp said that previous to the KU Catalyst, the BTBC already enjoyed a good working relationship with the Center for Entrepreneurship partly because they are both interested in the same thing: creating business. Until now, the university hadn’t provided the resources for students to turn a business idea into a successful startup.

Lei Shi, a doctoral candidate in electrical engineering, is part of a project that is developing a radar system for small, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), more commonly known as drones. Shi plans to take an entrepreneurship course and create a business plan. After that, he hopes for more assistance through the KU Catalyst.

“I’ve been an engineer-in-training all my life,” Shi said. “All of this entrepreneurship stuff is brand new to me. The KU Catalyst and all the support it offers will be extremely useful. About a year ago this was just an idea in my head. With the addition of the KU Catalyst and entrepreneurial program, it looks like we’re going to at least take a stab at it, instead of just dreaming.”

All KU students are welcome to apply to the KU Catalyst program.

NEW RESEARCH CENTERS GROW SCHOOL’S INDUSTRY FOOTPRINT

As the business school awaits new physical facilities, it turns to the creation of new centers of research to strengthen its ties with industry through strategic partnerships.

“By connecting the knowledge creation taking place among our faculty with legitimate challenges facing our corporate partners, we’re able to further the school’s goals while benefiting businesses,” said Julie Murray, who leads corporate partnerships for the school.

Over the last year, the school has worked with industry leaders to create four new centers of research, giving the opportunity for businesses to be fully engaged in knowledge creation through financial, research and student placement support.

Contact Julie Murray at jmurray@ku.edu to learn more about partnership opportunities.

CENTER FOR BUSINESS ANALYTICS RESEARCH

Its mission is to advance the science and practice of business analytics by bringing together corporate executives, faculty and students to promote research, outreach and teaching in the areas of business analytics.

Director Prakash Shenoy

CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS AND SOCIETY

This center is related to the management, ethics and economics of business and how business relates to society as a whole. All executive education and professional training services offered by the business school will be developed and promoted through this center.

Director Laura Poppo

CENTER FOR INTEGRATED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

This center focuses on critical thinking skills and rigorous problem formulation methodologies related to the customer experience. The areas of research include the analysis of marketing and distribution effectiveness, consumer behavior patterns, customer satisfaction, customer lifetime value and operational effectiveness. The center mission is to enhance a company’s insight and understanding of consumer behavior and purchasing patterns.

Director Kissan Joseph

Research Director Laura Poppo

CENTER FOR GLOBAL BUSINESS STUDIES

This center coordinates and supports the internationalization of students and faculty while guiding the school’s strategy for international initiatives, curriculum and policies. Melissa Birch and John Hedeman will collaborate with Tailan Chi on this center’s projects.

Research Director Tailan Chi

COMING SOON The school is developing a new research center for supply chain management. Stay tuned for more information.
Each November since 2008, Global Entrepreneurship Week has been celebrated internationally to encourage and inspire innovation. This year, the School of Business celebrated the week with a focus on social entrepreneurship.

“We continue to see an increasing interest in social entrepreneurship from students,” said Charlotte Tritch, associate director of entrepreneurship programs and the event coordinator.

The daylong celebration, titled “Strengthening Communities and Growing Economies through Entrepreneurship,” was kicked off with a student competition. Teams of KU students presented their ideas for ways to promote economic growth in Wyandotte County, specifically Kansas City, Kansas.

The event included a panel on social entrepreneurship, moderated by KU alumna and chief executive of Silicon Prairie News, Regan Carrizales. Panelists included Jeremy Farmer, Lawrence city commissioner and chief executive of Douglas County food bank Just Food; Wyandotte County Commissioner Ann Brandau-Murguia; entrepreneur and KU alumnus Munro Richardson; Andrew Stanley, KU alumnus and founder of VolunteerMark; and John Gordon Jr., executive director of Kansas City nonprofit Boys Grow.

The day ended with comments by U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran on the role of public policy in promoting entrepreneurship. Moran, a longtime advocate of entrepreneurship and innovation as a path to economic prosperity, returned to KU for the second year in a row to help the business school celebrate Global Entrepreneurship Week.

With more than 130 participating countries, the global event has become the world’s largest celebration of innovators and job creators who bring ideas to life, drive economic growth and expand human welfare.

“Global Entrepreneurship Week is a perfect platform to expose students from across campus to the concept of social entrepreneurship and shows how students can use entrepreneurial thinking to solve today’s social challenges,” Tritch said.
The fall semester marked the first ever Silicon Prairie News startup job crawl in Kansas City, sponsored by the School of Business.

The job crawl allowed Kansas City-area university students to network with entrepreneurs and learn more about the startup community. Startups and organizations involved in the crawl used it as an opportunity to involve students in the startup community.

Foster Casterline, a May 2014 KU information systems graduate and primary organizer of the crawl, worked with the startup community and said he believes students can get a competitive advantage by working for a startup during their college career.

“There’s a lot more pressure on you, and you’re going to have to work a lot harder,” he said, “but you’re going to learn so much more about it and how to run a company.”

Brittany Mascio, event coordinator at Silicon Prairie News, said the organization wants to partner with universities to spread the word about the startup community and inform students of opportunities. She said events like the job crawl allow students to see a range of career options.

“It opens their eyes to other options they might not have been aware of,” she said.

Students arrived first at EyeVerify, a member of the Kansas City Startup Village. The village is a community of 25 startups, founded to provide support for entrepreneurs and students of opportunities. The village students in the startup community.

The job crawl ended at the Kauffman Foundation, where students were able to network with startups that are hiring.

Nate Olson of the Kauffman Foundation founded the One Million Cups program, which allows entrepreneurs to present their ideas to an audience and receive feedback. He encourages more students to attend the event as a way to be involved in the startup community, because he wants to keep talent local.

“Our interest is keeping talent in the region and getting smart people to start companies and to work in companies,” he said.

Participants also toured BetaBlox, which serves as an incubator for startups, assisting them with law and tax issues. BetaBlox presented its current projects to students and told them about the type of employee they are looking for.

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“Our interest is keeping talent in the region and getting smart people to start companies and to work in companies,” he said.

“Items it was an opportunity that was there that we just took advantage of,” said Foster Casterline, one of the group’s founders. “We had the resources, we had the team of people already in place who were interested in this kind of thing.”

Coral started in February and has already completed five projects for area businesses, startups and even the School of Business.

“I think a lot of students are interested in coding, but it’s hard to get experience,” said Stephanie Spicer, another founder of Coral.

Most of the students in the group don’t plan to be developers full-time, Casterline added, but it’s important to have experience working with code because many professionals will encounter it at some point in their careers. Additionally, working with real customers and deadlines is a more beneficial learning experience than something like a web tutorial, he added.

The group has about 10 members who are mostly business school students, but there are also a few engineering students. One of the group’s long-term goals is to attract students from all majors and backgrounds, Spicer said.

“We’re definitely looking to expand,” she said. “That’s one thing we thought would be cool for Coral to do, is to bridge the gap between the different schools. On campus there’s not a whole lot of collaboration like this.”

While the group has mainly focused on web design and development in its early projects, it hopes to expand into other kinds of digital development and design, Casterline said. Diversifying the team to include students in graphic design, journalism and other areas of study will not only expand the company’s opportunities, it will provide many new perspectives for students, he added.

“They can learn from students they don’t currently have the opportunity to learn from,” he said.

Although Casterline graduated in the spring, he’ll continue to help with strategic planning for the group. Spicer, a senior in information systems, said the group’s next big task is finding a way to keep it sustainable. The first semester in business was a pilot period, but now they need to structure their company, create job descriptions and find the most efficient ways to handle workflow.

“We want students to feel like it’s their business,” Casterline added.

For more information about Coral, visit builtbycoral.com.
A JAYHAWK, A CATTLEMAN
Fourth-generation rancher builds on family’s brand

To the west, you can eye Pike’s Peak off in the distance from Bob Cage’s cattle ranch in the prairie lands of eastern Colorado. This 37,000-acre piece of land is one of four ranches in Colorado and Texas, all owned and operated by the extended Cage family.

Currently, his ranch holds nearly 900 cows and 40 bulls.

Cage’s pasture near Wild Horse, Colorado, was first purchased by his grandfather in 1950 in a “handshake deal” with the Kemper family of Kansas City and UMB Bank fame.

It’s a family connection that ultimately played a role in helping Cage decide on a university.

“I just knew that I’d go to school in the Pacific Northwest,” he says. He recalls touring Lewis and Clark and the University of Oregon among other schools in the region.

Ultimately, the University of Kansas won his heart.

In 1999 he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in business administration and quickly accepted a position in commercial lending in Kansas City.

While moving up the corporate ladder, he soon realized that banking was not an industry in which he planned to stay.

A few years later, he applied for a loan and took control of Cage Ranch, becoming a fourth generation cattleman.

BUSINESS SCHOOL MEMORIES
Cage has a three-ring binder full of papers from his human resource management class, taught by Ron Ash. He reflects on those notes every time he makes a hiring decision, he says.

“He’s one of those guys I think about fondly,” Cage says, “though there’s no way he’d ever remember me.”

Cage considers lecturer Jeff Morrow his most influential instructor at the university, noting Morrow’s many successful business ventures, including Yello Sub, once right off campus, where The Oread Hotel now stands.

“He was such an outgoing, funny, personable person,” Cage says, who took courses from Morrow in small business management and entrepreneurship.

He says Morrow used his own businesses as live case studies in the classroom, illustrating skills like how to effectively negotiate with a banker and how to deal with real cash flow issues.

A CAREER CHANGE
“I can’t remember the last time I bought a tie,” he says with a laugh. As a cattle rancher in eastern Colorado, Cage realizes his vision of success is a departure from the typical Jayhawk in business.

Ask him how he identifies his current career and the answer is surprising.

“My number one job is caring for the grass, the land,” he says. He considers his relationship with the land a symbiotic one. His success as a cattle rancher relies in large part on the condition of the prairie.

The main worry that keeps him up at night is rain, an increasingly rare commodity in his part of the country.

“You’ve heard of the ‘million-dollar rain’ and there’s a lot of truth to that sentiment.” One recent snow, in early May, made the difference in what he calls some of the greenest land he’d seen in years.

Cage has been able to leverage his ranch’s strong reputation in agriculture to sustain the success of his father and grandfather, all while diversifying the ranch’s portfolio.

He’s in the early stages of extending the Cage Ranch brand into retail, including a line of pet products.

Cage takes great pride in his work but views the ranch as something bigger than his property and livelihood.

“This isn’t mine,” he says, “it’s just my turn to do it.”

Cage resides in Parker, Colorado, with his wife, Christi (a fellow 1999 KU graduate), and their two daughters, Addison and Bronwyn, both 8.
About 20 students participated in the school’s inaugural study abroad trip to Israel in January. The school teamed up with Technion - Israel Institute of Technology for the two-week program focused on entrepreneurship, innovation and technology. Students visited startups, met with business leaders and learned about the area’s culture and history along the way.

The man tasked with growing the Kansas economy through School of Business innovation was honored with a service award this spring.

Wally Meyer, director of entrepreneurship programs, was a recipient of the 2014 Steeples Service to Kansans Award.

According to an announcement by Danny Anderson, dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, this annual award was endowed in 1998 by Don and Tammy Steeples to honor Don’s parents, Wally and Marie Steeples.

The accolade recognizes faculty who provide significant service to the people of Kansas as a purposeful extension of their teaching and research.

RedTire, a KU entrepreneurship program that pairs retiring small business owners with successors, finalized two matches this spring.
As retirement loomed, Casey Thomas knew he would eventually have to sell his animal hospital of more than 30 years. He spent seven years preparing to sell his business without an inkling of who would actually buy the Junction City veterinary practice.

“My wife and I knew we were entering the latter days of my practice,” Thomas said, “and we knew we wanted to keep the business strong until we sold it.”

They updated equipment and technology, modernized procedures and capabilities, all in preparation for a unknown successor.

But Thomas didn’t make his desire to retire known until he received a postcard from the RedTire Program. “It was exactly what we were looking for — exactly what we needed at the right time,” he said.

After months of due diligence and negotiations, RedTire brokered its first official match, February 2014, closing the sale of Flint Hills Veterinary Hospital to Julie Ebert, Kansas State University alumna and fellow doctor of veterinary medicine.

“Vets are well-trained in medicine and surgery and, to a certain extent, business management,” Thomas said, “but most of us rarely sell a practice until we’re ready to retire.” RedTire provided not only an introduction to a willing buyer, but also gave Thomas a structure to begin negotiations, he said.

The Redefining Retirement program, known as RedTire, matches graduates of Kansas Regents institutions with business owners who are looking for a successor. The initiative, operated by the KU School of Business and its Center for Entrepreneurship, focuses on small- and medium-sized businesses in rural Kansas.

“You hope that when you nurture a business for 30 years, you’ll find a successor who will come in and provide clients the level of care that they’re used to, and I’m sure Dr. Ebert will do that,” Thomas said.

RedTire addresses a major challenge for small businesses in rural America by matching businesses needing replacement management with qualified candidates. The program helps both parties navigate the transaction and provides business counseling as new owners grow the business and create jobs.

“We are overjoyed by the completion of RedTire’s inaugural transaction,” said Wally Meyer, director of KU’s entrepreneurship programs. “Flint Hills Veterinary Hospital provides an essential service to the Junction City and Manhattan communities and we’re thrilled to provide support for these veterinarians so they can realize their respective goals of retirement and business ownership.”

KU partnered with the College of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University to raise awareness about RedTire among small business owners around the state.

“We’re proud of the exemplary performance of both veterinarians since their graduation from Kansas State,” said Ralph Richardson, dean of Kansas State University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. “And we’re pleased to work cooperatively with the RedTire program and KU to assure a successful outcome.”

Thomas said RedTire played a critical role in making the transaction happen. “RedTire took us from a place where we didn’t know each other, didn’t know much about the sale, to where we were ready to make the agreement formal,” Thomas said. “I truly believe that, without RedTire, this deal would have never happened.”

As a public institution, we are committed to the growth of Kansas,” said Neeli Bendapudi, dean of the KU School of Business. “As a business school, we are proud to find private sector solutions to social challenges. RedTire typifies entrepreneurship in action.”

RedTire is currently assisting 20 business owners as they seek new ownership to preserve their businesses in communities across Kansas. The program is a free service and is financed by the KU School of Business and a grant from the Economic Development Administration. Since launching in 2012, RedTire has been called a “national model” for addressing rural small business succession planning by Forbes.com.

Thomas has simple advice to other small business owners looking to RedTire for succession planning: “Build a healthy practice and you’ll have a healthy sale.”
During the three-day event, MBA students from nine conference universities competed to solve a business problem proposed by Kansas City-based Sporting Innovations. The competition tested MBA students on the core competencies of management including teamwork, leadership, problem solving and presentation skills, said Catherine Shenoy, director of MBA programs. With the additional pressure of a time limit, case competitions are a particularly creative way for students to test their classroom knowledge.

“The competition lends more urgency and focus to the process of coming up with a solution,” she said. “It helps hone really important analytical and communication skills that are used every day in the business world.”

With each university sending its top MBA students, the event was also an important opportunity for students and their advisers to network with each other, as well as with area business leaders and company executives who served as competition judges.

“This is an opportunity for all of our peer schools to showcase their top MBA students,” said Dee Steinle, administrative director of masters programs. “You get to see the best of each program.”

Although students were competing against one another, the event also focused on building strong ties between fellow universities and MBA programs. While the students were competing, advisers had the opportunity to tour campus, as well as network with their fellow advisers from Big 12 universities.

“For the first time since it began eight years ago, the School of Business hosted the Big 12 Case Competition in Lawrence this spring,” Shenoy said. “Even when we are competing for students, it’s still a very collegial competition. It’s a great way to strengthen our professional network.”

The School of Business was ranked No. 25 on the Best for Vets: Business Schools 2014 list. Military Times releases the annual list of the top colleges, business schools, employers and other organizations for veterans. To determine the ranking, Military Times released a survey and analyzed answers from the colleges and universities that responded.

The ranking considers schools’ resources, tuition, programs and GMAT scores, among other factors. Military Times also released a list of the best universities for veterans in the fall, and KU as a whole ranked No. 23 on the list.

The School of Business and the University of Kansas have created programs and support for veterans and reserve and active duty soldiers including the MBA with a concentration in petroleum management and the Master of Science in Business Supply Chain Management and Logistics, as well as other non-academic programs and services.

Dee Steinle, administrative director of masters programs, said a variety of university and business school programs were factored into the ranking, but one of the most important was the MBA program.

“In particular, there was a point of interest on the MBA program because I think it’s a very familiar commodity across schools,” Steinle said. “While I think all of our programs played into it, the MBA was probably the most recognizable program that they circled back to.”

The business school provides a variety of programs tailored to the needs of veteran and current military students. Steinle said the MBA with a concentration in petroleum management is particularly beneficial to Navy officers who are looking for new skills.

“We have a specific part of our MBA program that allows supply corps officers from the Navy to come to KU, earn an MBA and take hours within the School of Engineering as well to reshape their careers into fuels officers,” she said.

Greg Freix, director of the Master of Science in Business Supply Chain Management and Logistics, said while both the business school and the university have strong programs for veterans, they’re working on initiatives to further improve services for veterans. One such initiative is a veteran legal services center, which would be run through the School of Law in Green Hall. Law students, supervised by faculty, will assist veterans with legal issues surrounding veteran’s benefits claims.

“We’re trying to better identify the veterans on campus in a way that meets with legal requirements,” he said. “We’re trying to better serve the veterans on campus as we pull together folks from all these different areas.”
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