Student Project Grows Wheels

by Amy K. Lavender

A project that has been two years in the making is finally coming to fruition as Southwire launches Carrollton’s first-ever bike sharing program with the help of Tanner Health System and students in the first cohort of the University of West Georgia (UWG) Southwire Sustainable Business Honors (SSBH) Program.

Working together, the University of West Georgia and Southwire Company created the SSBH program three years ago with the aim of giving high-achieving business majors in the Richards College of Business a unique opportunity to complete their bachelor’s and master’s degrees in only four years as well as complete internships and receive sustainability certificates.

There’s no other program like it in the nation. And like no other program in the nation, it gives students one-of-a-kind opportunities to shape their community. As part of the unique curriculum, SSBH students complete five projects before completing the program. Each project adheres to one of Southwire’s five tenets: Giving Back, Living Well, Growing Green, Building Worth and Doing Right.

In its second year of the program, SSBH Cohort 1 began its Living Well project. The students were given an open directive to create or improve a wellness program for Southwire employees for $20,000.

“We presented our idea to the board of directors and then CEO Stu Thorn,” said SSBH Program Director Mandy Beaumel. “And, of course, we had to talk with the city of Carrollton and figure out how we could make this work. With all of these parties talking and exploring the idea, it was decided that the city of Carrollton would contract with the company that will maintain the bikes, and UWG, Southwire and Tanner will donate the funds to get the program started.”

The group was sent to Chattanooga, Tennessee to see a successful bike-sharing program in action. Shortly after their return, Southwire began helping them make their program a reality.

“It started as an idea for Southwire employees, but then Tanner Health System and UWG got involved too,” said SSBH Program Director Mandy Beaumel. “And, of course, we had to talk with the city of Carrollton and figure out how we could make this work. With all of these parties talking and exploring the idea, it was decided that the city of Carrollton would contract with the company that will maintain the bikes, and UWG, Southwire and Tanner will donate the funds to get the program started.”

The bike-sharing program will ultimately have 10 stations along the Carrollton Greenbelt – a paved biking and walking trail that winds through town – each with 20 bikes available for rent. Southwire, UWG and Tanner employees will be able to use their company ID cards at the stations, while Carrollton residents and visitors will be able to swipe a credit card. Beaumel said Cohort 1 made getting others on board with the plan pretty easy.

“They really did their homework on this project,” she said. “They researched all aspects of it really well and did a great job incorporating the resources we already had in place, like the Greenbelt, to make it feasible.”

The students are also pretty proud of their work, saying it added another dimension to their experience with the program.

“The bike-sharing program was probably my favorite project of all the ones we did,” said SSBH Cohort 1 student Blair Fox. “It’s an opportunity we wouldn’t have gotten anywhere else. We learned a lot, but it was also a lot of fun.”
Leading by Serving Others: BB&T Lecture Series Features David Daniels

by Victoria Collier

The University of West Georgia’s Richards College of Business recently featured David Daniels, owner and operator of Chick-fil-A in Carrollton, who lectured on his secrets to success as the most recent installment of the BB&T Lectures in Free Enterprise. The series is a vital part of the Richards College of Business learning experience.

UWG President Dr. Kyle Marrero praised the program as he opened the event.

“This series is so important to us because it brings our students together with people who are truly empowering economic development in our region,” he said.

Faculty and students of various majors came together in the Townsend Center to hear about Daniels’ journey to success and the steps required to become a better leader.

Daniels came onto the stage with a bag of chicken biscuits and asked the audience, “What are some things that you think you have to do in order to be successful?”

Students responded with “Have a plan,” “Work hard,” and “Don’t be afraid to fail.” One student’s answer was what Daniels was looking for: having morals.

Being a Servant Leader

Daniels explained that integrity and character drive a person to be a hard worker.

“The word integrity sets up morals and values that make us who we are. It’s up to you all to make sure we don’t lose that. Make decisions that come into alignment with your values,” he advised.

He asked the audience to really think about who they are and what they believe in. Many audience members were moved when he shared his passion for travelling to Haiti where he mentored business owners and volunteered to help young boys recently freed from human trafficking. His passion for helping others puts things into perspective for students and he used this as a teaching moment to explain that integrity and character define who he is as a person and how he responds to situations.

However, Daniels’ biggest secret for success is to become a servant leader in one’s community.

“Your influence is the greatest gift you can give to other people,” he shared.

He said he is a firm believer that self-interest squashes a person’s effectiveness and diminishes their personal success. This method of thinking takes away from learning experiences and only focuses on self-gain. Daniels gave an example by getting on his knees and brushing his assistant’s shoes. He compared this to how Jesus washed his disciples’ feet at the last supper.

“When you truly have a leader’s heart, it really doesn’t matter who you serve […] a true servant leader says, ‘I’ll serve you no matter what.’ To be a servant leader one must look at people as a way to leave significance, not as a means to be successful.”

Daniels explained that a servant leader serves others because it’s the right thing to do and, with this mindset, success will come naturally.

Discipline Yields Smart Choices

Daniels also encouraged the audience to exercise discipline to see success in multiple areas of their lives. He described discipline as, “making yourself do things that you don’t want to do.” He used his own life as an example. Ten years ago, Daniels said he weighed 346 pounds, but through personal discipline he lost more than 100 of those pounds.

“Discipline is making the decision before you’re ever given the choice,” Daniels said.

He urged students to consider the choices they make in life and reminded them that making smart choices requires discipline.

Daniels also shared that a good attitude can go a long way. He explained that one’s attitude is something you can’t hide from the world. He described an “uncommon” attitude as one that separates you from other people. By adopting a positive attitude, discipline and working hard early on, it establishes a good track record and becomes a part of who you are.

“If I can stress anything to you all tonight, it’s that with everything you do and every decision you make, you’re planting seeds for the future,” Daniels said.

Keep Thinking Ahead

“You don’t become successful by accident; you don’t step into greatness by accident. It’s about making great decisions and understanding how to move forward,” Daniels revealed.

He encouraged students to sit down and write out a plan for the next five years. By having a tangible list of goals and a plan, it puts things into perspective for anyone trying to launch a successful career and gives them an idea of how to get where they want to go.

Daniels also highlighted teamwork as a necessary skill for success, because in life you’re going to have to work with people you don’t like and have different opinions. Daniels encouraged audience members to find mentors who will provide an additional perspective and coaches who will help cultivate their skills.

“You have to learn to get along with people and develop relationships because you need to be able to build teams. If you can’t build effective communication and trust with people, it’s going to be really difficult to be in a position where you’re given real responsibility as leaders,” Daniels explained.

Daniels concluded his lecture with an impactful Chick-fil-A commercial that asked people to think of others first, leading him back to his first point: “The secret to being successful is how we serve other people, and looking for those opportunities serves you.”

He challenged the audience to return home that night and think of ways to improve on the skills he listed and to become better servants to others.
UWG’s Richards College of Business Extends AACSB Accreditation

by Amy K. Lavender

Once again, the University of West Georgia’s Richards College of Business continues to showcase their dedication to excellence as the college’s business and accounting accreditation has been extended for another five years by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International.

“AACSB commends each institution for their exemplary work in holding the highest honor in business school accreditation,” said Robert D. Reid, executive vice president and chief accreditation officer of AACSB International. “During this peer-review process, schools must demonstrate alignment with AACSB’s global accreditation standards, as well as how they encourage engagement, innovation and impact across the communities they serve.”

The Richards College of Business achieved AACSB accreditation in business in 1984 and in accounting in 1998. The college has been reviewed every five years by business deans and accounting chairs from across the country to maintain this status.

Dr. Faye McIntyre, Richards College of Business Dean and Sewell Chair of Private Enterprise, said upholding the AACSB’s rigorous standards isn’t the end-game, but rather the reward for a job well done.

“We simply do all the things that a good business school should be doing anyway,” McIntyre said, “and we document it so that when the team comes they can clearly see all the great work that our faculty, staff and students have accomplished.”

McIntyre pointed out that AACSB accreditation helps the college stand out among prospective students as well as prospective employers.

“Many businesses look for AACSB accreditation when they’re hiring,” she said. “And a lot of graduate schools will only accept students who are coming from an undergraduate program with accreditation. This accreditation signifies to students that we have quality programs, that our faculty are staying current in their disciplines, and that we have the support services needed to help our students succeed.”

Faculty say they are excited about the accreditation renewal and that it is proof of what they already know: Richards College of Business is a great place to learn, work and succeed.

“The accreditation is one of many things that makes Richards College of Business a special place,” said Director of External Services and Programs Simone Lee. “It’s a continuous process, but as the end of the day it comes down to our people—our leadership. As dean, Dr. McIntyre continues to set high standards for the college, and she leads by example. Clearly, strong leadership results in high achievement.”

The AACSB is the longest-serving global accrediting body for business schools that offer undergraduate, master’s and doctoral degrees in business and accounting. AACSB Accreditation is the hallmark of excellence in business education and has been earned by less than 5 percent of the world’s business schools.

UWG’s Richards College of Business is one of 780 business schools in 53 countries and territories that have earned AACSB Accreditation. Of those, UWG is one of the 185 institutions that also hold additional specialized AACSB Accreditation for their accounting programs.

My Semester Abroad

by Zeb Ott

I initially learned about Richards College of Business’ French semester abroad partnership during orientation and immediately wanted to attend. Throughout my undergraduate program I didn’t pursue the opportunity, so when I was presented with the chance to continue my masters degree at ISC in Paris, I knew I had to seize it. I’ve had the chance to share the classroom with profound business professors from all over the world, as well as some of the most caring and insightful international students. If it was not for the dedication of Richards College of Business faculty and staff, I would not have been able to make my dream a reality and spend a semester in one of the most fascinating and cultured places in Europe.
Adams sidesteps blocks in drive for NFL career

by Amy Lavender

As a redshirt freshman at the University of West Georgia, Tyrell Adams listened as scouts told him he didn’t have what it took to play professional football.

Agents told him his size and choice of college pretty much blocked him from playing in the NFL. But they didn’t know Adams and the fervent determination that eventually earned him a spot throwing off blocks on the active roster of the Oakland Raiders.

“It’s definitely been a tough journey,” Adams remembered. “But it was a blessing because, at the end of the day, I never could have seen myself getting this far.

“You just have to be consistent,” he continued. “Stop letting different circumstances or the environment around you alter your goals or your vision. If you want it, you have to chase it.”

Staying Focused

That’s the same dogged determination Adams brought to UWG. Playing professional football was his goal, but he knew getting an education had to be his first priority.

“As far as playing on the next level, that was always the dream for me, but I knew that it’s a dream that had to be worked hard for,” he said. “Especially in my circumstances. I was never a big-time player until the end of my junior season. So really football was my plan B. I always made sure to keep my grades up, because I knew that was my plan A.”

It wasn’t always easy to balance school and sports. His friends would ask him how he was managing to keep all the balls in the air. By focusing on his classes, the rest came easily, according to the linebacker.

“Honestly, I think it came down to just making sure I took care of class first. It was crazy, but being alright in school allowed me to free my mind for practice or extra workouts,” Adams said. “It took away the pressure of having to always worry about if my grades were going to be straight for the next semester or if I studied enough for a test. So, I always planned my schedule around class.”

In fact, sometimes keeping his grades up resulted in some extra work on the field. UWG economics Professor Kim Holder recalls Adams’ attending her microeconomics tutoring sessions, but says she was unaware of the impact his attendance had outside the classroom.

“I found out after the semester was over that every time he attended these sessions, he had to run laps because they made him late for practice,” Holder said. “That story of his dedication and hard work has always stuck with me. He is a winner both on and off the field and is a great example of the kind of leaders that we graduate here at UWG.”

Shooting the Gap

While he chased the plan B dream of playing professionally, Adams remained unsure about what form plan A would take. He ultimately found his calling in UWG’s Richards College of Business, although he admits choosing that path was “a little crazy.”

“At first, I was pre-law. I liked the sound of it. But it took me literally half a semester to realize I was going to change my major,” he laughed. “I knew I was really good at math, so I decided I would try business.”

From there, Adams decided to double major in economics and accounting. Even though he got a C in his first accounting class, Adams said he refused to give up.

“Then I got an A in my Accounting II class. I just loved it. It was crazy,” he said. “Most people were complaining, but I loved accounting. So, I switched to accounting and finance because they matched up better for a double major. The rest is history.”

Maintaining an open line of communication with his professors was key to Adams’ success.

“I had a good relationship with a lot of my professors, and they knew that I was serious about my school work. So, I was literally always
in different professors’ offices,” he said. “Students often don’t realize that you just need to communicate with people. They are more willing to help once you create that relationship with them and you show effort on your end.”

Holder said Adams’ willingness to go the extra mile has helped him build his success.

“Tyrell is an extremely hard-working individual who has gotten where he is, not because of luck, but because he has put in a tremendous amount of time, effort and planning,” she said.

**The Long Game**

While Adams is currently going to work at his dream job every day, he says he’s glad he has a quality degree to fall back on.

“Honestly, I know one day it’s going to end. Football is going to end no matter what,” Adams said. “If I have a long, illustrious career, it is still going to end one day. It’s not something I can do for the rest of my life.”

When he does leave the field, Adams says he may start a business, but he’s keeping his options open. In the meantime, he’s planning to create his own mentorship program for young men in Atlanta during the off-season. He wants to provide positive male role models for the boys and young men in his hometown.

“I know a lot of guys are lacking that father figure and that guidance that they need when they are younger, so I wanted to bring a lot of guys that I knew from my career and guys I grew up with who are also mentors in their careers,” Adams explained. “I want to invite all of my friends out to talk to the kids and motivate them, and then do a sports camp the second day. It doesn’t even have to be football, any sport really. It’s still in the brainstorming stage, but this is something I really want to do for my community.”

When asked if he had any advice for current or future UWG students, Adams advised them to stay consistent and try not to worry.

“Some things may get rocky at times, and it may get real cloudy, but you just got to stay the path,” he said. “Don’t get weary. Those countless, long nights in the library can be trying, but there’s a finish line, and you’re getting there. You just have to stay consistent and trust the process. It’s worth it in the end.”

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**Student Continues Success: Crossing off Diabetic Nerve Pain**

by Amy K. Lavender

After a whirlwind of a week that saw destructive weather and travel delays, a road-weary William Cross returned to Carrollton from the 17th annual Rice Business Plan Competition at Rice University with one more prize under his belt.

Cross, an undergraduate majoring in management with the University of West Georgia’s Richard College of Business, competed with his team, VasoCorp, against some of the world’s top universities between April 6 and 8. VasoCorp’s team includes Cross, and his sister, Michelle Cross, who presented their business plan for NeuropAWAY, a dietary supplement for diabetic nerve pain.

The teams for this year’s competition were chosen from nearly 350 entrants to compete in four categories: life sciences; information technology/Web/mobile; energy/clean technology/sustainability; and others.

The Crosses brought home the Manna Award for coming in first place in the second round among the second place finishers of the first round.

More than 163 former competitors have gone on to successfully launch their ventures and are still in business today, and another 20 have successfully sold their ventures. Past competitors have raised in excess of $2 billion in funding and created more than 2,000 new jobs.

“The true measure of success for the Rice Business Plan Competition is the number of teams that launch, raise funding and go on to succeed in their business,” said Brad Burke, managing director of the Rice Alliance for Technology and Entrepreneurship at Rice University, which hosts the event. “The competition has served as the launch pad for a great number of successful entrepreneurial ventures, and the success rate exceeds the national average.”

Of course, Cross already has a head start with his business. For the past few years, he’s been attending business plan competitions like this and reinvesting his winnings in his product and company.

“I was able to buy a $70,000 capsule machine to keep up with demand,” Cross reported. “Before, I was only able to fill as many capsules as I could manage by hand. With this machine, I can make between 5,000 and 6,000 capsules a day.”

However, Cross just began outsourcing production to CebaTech in Florida now that demand has increased.

“I feel like the business is really starting to take off,” he said. “We ordered 4,000 bottles last month and have already sold 2,800. Also, we want to start clinical trials as soon as we can find a doctor to partner with, and at the end of that (two months) ours will be the only product clinically shown to treat neuropathy without further damaging nerves.”

The business plan competitions have also helped Cross make connections. As a result, his product was picked up by HealthMart, which placed NeuropAWAY in 6,000 pharmacies across the Southeast, followed by McKesson, which will take his distribution nationwide.

In the meantime, Cross is working away, trying to keep up with the steady 30 percent increase in sales he sees each month – all while looking to the future.

“Right now, I’m also working on developing a wound care cream that can be used by soldiers in the field and nurses in the ER. It’s my latest project. I always have a lot of irons in the fire,” he laughed.

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For the past few years, he’s been attending business plan competitions like this and reinvesting his winnings in his product and company.
Roundtable Brings Students New Insights

by Amy K. Lavender

Business students at the University of West Georgia recently took advantage of a rare opportunity to meet with faculty and community leaders to discuss major societal topics of the day as well as hear an inspirational message from UWG alumna Missy Dugan, president and CEO of Boys & Girls Club of Metro Atlanta.

The event, the McCalman Executive Roundtable, is hosted each year by the Richards College of Business and supported by Mary Covington, who is a long-time donor and board advisor for the Richards College of Business. The roundtable has been a staple of the unique experiences offered by the Richards College of Business since 1987 and has featured various guest speakers, including former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, former Georgia Insurance Commissioner John Oxendine and Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Health Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald.

The roundtable's most recent installment featured Dugan, who encouraged the students in the room to find their passion, not be afraid to go for it and to do the best they can do each day.

"Because when you go to work every day and you love the people you work with and what you do, whether it be accounting, business strategy, finance or development, it is the most rewarding thing to be able to go to work each day," Dugan said. "Because it's not work. It's a joy to show up each day."

Dugan highlighted people who had made a difference in her life and in her career.

"I had the distinct pleasure of running Newt Gingrich’s offices here in Carrollton as well as some of the offices in Atlanta," Dugan explained. "He was the first person who made a difference in my life, and here's why: Newt never stops teaching. He never stops teaching his audience or his staff."

Dugan said Gingrich taught her a unique lesson when she was just 23 years old. He dropped her off at the McDonald’s on Maple Street and told her to introduce herself to every person in the building and learn one interesting thing about them.

"He told me that I had 15 minutes to do this because after 15 minutes he was going to walk through those doors, and I was going to introduce him to all those people," she said. "But he taught me the power of allowing yourself to do that and the power of connecting with people and finding out something special about them."

Dugan also elaborated on those she takes advice from, saying her father is always the voice she hears inside her head when she’s trying to make a decision. She also shared this wisdom that he instilled in her:

"Most importantly, my dad is the one who taught me that you show up every day," she said. “You work hard every day. You are not given anything; you work for it. You make sure that you’re doing the job you want not the job you have. You dress for the job you want, not the job you have.”

She also advised students to build their own cabinet of advisors to help them through tough decisions in life.

"I call mine my Kitchen Cabinet," Dugan laughed. "They can be anybody, but for me they are four amazing women, and I call them my trusted advisors because sometimes you can go with your gut, but sometimes you can’t."

As part of the event each year, speakers ask the students, faculty and community members at each table to answer a question by discussing the proposed issue and coming to an agreement as a table. Dugan asked the tables two questions: “If money wasn’t a concern, what would you do for a living?” and “If you had to look at our national budget and keep one social service and discard another, which ones would they be and why?”

The question yielded lively discussion and a wide range of answers. Students said they were challenged by the answers but also enjoyed learning more about the different perspectives of their peers, professors and community leaders.
A commitment by the Richards College of Business family to honesty, integrity, professionalism, and accountability for ethical behavior, and respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others.

We are committed to a culture of academic integrity, where members adhere to our shared values in all academic and non-academic endeavors.

What is the Wolf Pact?

Integrity
Do the right thing, even when no one is looking.

Honesty
Be truthfully transparent, build trust.

Professionalism
Act as competent as you are. To be respected, give respect and act respectful.

Ethics
Seek other perspectives and make conscious choices about your actions.