

MITCHELL

SPRING 2020

SOUTH AT HOME
STUDENTS AND
FACULTY ADAPT TO
DISTANCE LEARNING

LEAVING HOME
MITCHELL AMBASSADOR
CLASS OF 2020

HOME FIELD ADVANTAGE
HOW SOUTH'S COACHES
ARE ADAPTING







TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPRING 2020

- 2** From the Dean's Desk
- 3** Meet Jack Stover
- 4** South at Home
- 10** Home 2.0: Catching up with Yulia Fedko
- 12** Managing from Home 101
- 14** Stay at Home I: 2020 Alumni Fellows
- 17** Stay at Home II: 2020 Scholarship Recipients
- 20** Close to Home: Experiential Learning In Action
- 22** The World is My Home: Ermanno Affuso
- 24** Leaving Home: Mitchell Ambassadors Class of 2020
- 28** Home by the Sea: Justin Scott
- 29** Sweet Home Alabama: Introducing PhD Cohort 7
- 32** Back Home Again: Distinguished Alumni Awards
- 34** Home Field Advantage: South Coaches Adapt
- 40** Stay at Home III: Three People, One Story
- 41** Invest in the College

FEATURED LEFT: South is Home. A bright yellow bicycle and rider give life to a mostly empty campus.

ON THE COVER: South at Home. MCOB students adapt to distance learning in their homes and hometowns.

BACK COVER: Four of our graduating Mitchell Ambassadors pay tribute to The Beatles' Let It Be, the group's final studio album.

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
MITCHELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

BOB G. WOOD | DEAN

EMMY RIESKE | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

DIANA NICHOLS | DIRECTOR CREATIVE SERVICES

SCOTT DONALDSON, ELIZABETH GELINEAU, MIKE KITTRELL | PHOTOGRAPHY

FROM THE DEAN'S DESK



“Like many other universities, the University of South Alabama closed its physical campus mid-semester and transitioned all classes to our online platform.”

—BOB WOOD

TO GET INVOLVED AND STAY CONNECTED, FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND VISIT OUR WEBPAGE AT [SOUTHALABAMA.EDU/COLLEGES/MCOB](https://southalabama.edu/colleges/mcob)



@MCOB.USA



@USAMCOB



USA Mitchell College of Business



@USA_MCOB



University of South Alabama
Mitchell College of Business

May 2020, the end of another spring semester. Students are graduating and moving on to their first job or graduate school. The college is preparing for orientation and registration of the incoming freshman class. That being said, May 2020 is unlike any experienced in most of our lifetimes.

Like many other universities, the University of South Alabama closed its physical campus mid-semester and transitioned all classes to our online platform. Our transition went smoothly without any major bumps in the road.

I want to thank the Mitchell College faculty for making this so; individuals went above and beyond to make this happen and ensure that the student experience was not overly affected. I also want to thank our students for embracing this change and for their willingness to adapt quickly to a new academic normal. This issue shows many examples of how the students, faculty, and staff made it work. The issue also has a number of non-pandemic-related articles including this year's class of Mitchell College Alumni Fellows, student scholarship and award winners, and other people of interest.

It goes without saying that the personal and economic effects of the pandemic are tragic. We know the current consequences; the future unknowns are more unsettling. Media outlets provide round-the-clock coverage of the situation. Thank goodness that more and more stories of positives are being shared. I'd like to mention a few. The COVID-19 shutdown has reduced air pollution by as much as 60% in major cities. In addition, famous and not-so-famous individuals across the

globe are stepping up in a major way. A concert by a group of international stars raised \$128 million for the World Health Organization. A number of manufacturers are increasing production of needed medical items while others are converting operations to meet the need for the products. Chefs of closed restaurants are volunteering their services to provide meals for those in need. John Krasinski of *The Office* and Jack Ryan fame has created a weekly SGN (Some Good News) Network broadcast on YouTube; look for it if you haven't seen it.

As I close this letter, I would like to relate what I've personally experienced during the last weeks. My wife and I have had the opportunity to converse with our neighbors and others (socially distanced, of course) more than at any time in the past. I've noticed more people walking and riding bikes than ever before. People are spending more quality time with family, especially in multi-generational activities. Overall, everyone seems to be finding time for the important things that really matter. These are all good things.

Until we meet again, make sure that you appreciate others. Reach out to friends and acquaintances. Over tip your food delivery drivers and waiters at restaurant pickup lanes. Say thank you.

Take care. Stay Safe.

Bob Wood

Dean, Mitchell College of Business

Meet Jack Stover

Jack is a great example of today's Mitchell College of Business student. He is a bilingual member of Kappa Sigma fraternity pioneering the College's program in International Business. A global mindset underlies everything that he does. During his academic career, he received scholarships totaling over \$53,000. Stover is a recipient of the Mitchell Scholarship, Kubik-Hooker Scholarship, Mitchell College of Business Experiential Learning Scholarship, Study Abroad Scholarship for Critical Languages and a two-time recipient of the Study Abroad Scholarship from the Office of International Education.

"I have learned greatly about the immense value of education beyond the classroom, especially in the power of networking, expanding transferrable soft skills, and becoming an effective communicator." —JACK STOVER

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Jack has completed seven internships as an undergraduate student.

- Helmsing Leach Law Firm
- Center for Real Estate and Economic Development
- Airbus, Finance
- Austal, Business Development
- Austal, Supply Chain
- Cokelat nDalem, Indonesia
- Navy Federal Credit Union

354

Internship credits awarded in 2019–2020

MCOB STUDY ABROAD

MCOB students have traveled to nine countries:

- Australia
- Chile
- Ecuador
- France
- Germany
- Hong Kong
- Portugal
- South Korea
- Spain

11

MCOB international study abroad partnerships

BEYOND SOUTH

Check out Jack's international stats:

MILES TRAVELED

60,042

DAYS SPENT ABROAD

148

COUNTRIES VISITED

3

{SPAIN, FRANCE, INDONESIA}

Students come from over **25 different states**.

The top States sending students to MCOB are **Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Louisiana, Georgia and Illinois**.

\$632,833

under management by the Jaguar Investment Fund

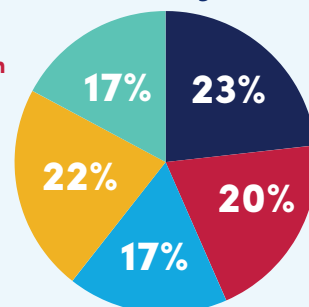
B

260

students certified on Bloomberg Terminals

SENIOR BREAKDOWN BY MAJOR

Accounting
Business Administration
Economics & Finance
Management & General Business
Marketing & International Business



50% Males graduating in International Business
50% Females graduating in Economics & Finance

"I feel so fortunate to have been able to study abroad so extensively. I have learned so much about multicultural understanding, the power of culture and language, and the mind-altering experiences we can have when viewing the world through a different lens."

—JACK STOVER

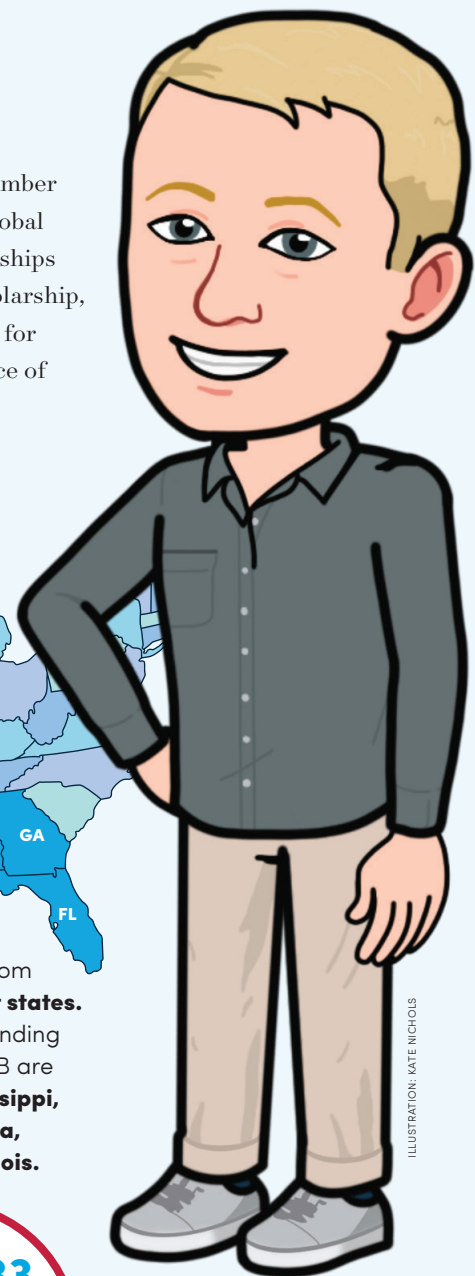
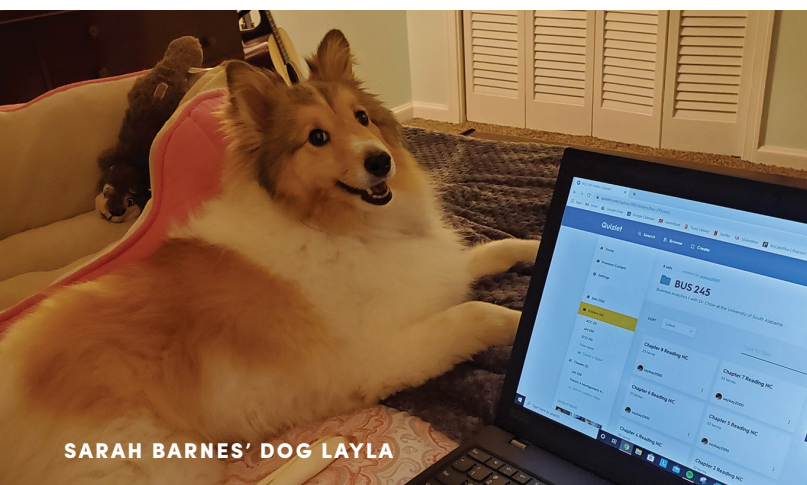


ILLUSTRATION: KATE NICHOLS

South at Home

STUDENT VIEWS OF THE TRANSITION
TO ONLINE LEARNING



SARAH BARNES' DOG LAYLA



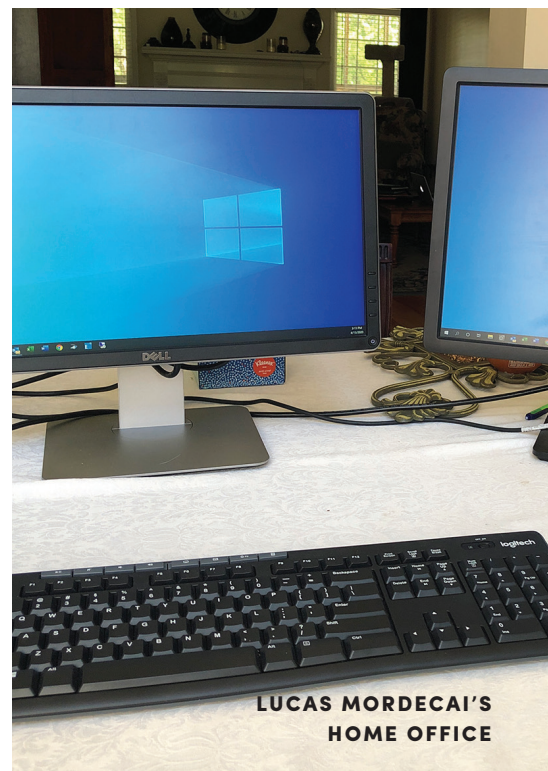
SARAH BARNES' SUNRISE



SAVANNAH STEPHENS



SARAH BARNES



LUCAS MORDECAI'S
HOME OFFICE

Andrea Prgomelja

With the recent outbreak of the virus, it has been a challenge to acclimate to a new norm. Online classes have not been as bad as I thought they would be but it has been a challenge to learn from watching videos because I am a hands-on learner. All of my professors are doing a great job of keeping in contact and helping me succeed. Thankfully, I have been able to work and continue to network virtually. It has been a challenge not being able to see my MCOB family and not knowing what the next day will bring but I am hopeful for the future. This transition has helped me realize the importance of technology, but it has also really made me appreciate human interaction as a whole (and that is something that I will not take for granted once we get back to campus).

Savannah Stephens

Moving online has been a mixture of positives and negatives. I didn't realize how much I missed my family until this happened and I'm extremely grateful for this extra time I get to spend with them. However, I really miss my friends and my daily routine. I miss going to work and I actually hate not being able to go to class. One of my favorite parts of

classes being online is that I can dress however I want for class. I can wear a nice shirt with pajama pants and no one even knows. Since I work every day when we're on campus I have to wear jeans to work and class. Due to all these changes, I haven't worn jeans in a month (I really hope they still fit) and it has been amazing. One thing that helps me throughout the day is working out. Before the pandemic, I never worked out. I actually avoided the gym like it was the plague (or the Coronavirus in this day and age). Working out has given me something to do and makes me feel better and healthier. It's also nice to get outside and run.

Lucas Mordecai

Life has been good with classes and work online. The transition to online classes has been seamless. I have an internship with a local accounting firm, Russell, Thompson, Butler, Houston LLC, where they have graciously allowed me to continue working remotely from Huntsville. My home office/conference room doubles as the family's dining room table. Also, I've gotten in the habit of going on a run around the pond in my neighborhood early in the morning before I start work. I hope that

everything is good with the faculty and staff back at MCOB.

Sarah Barnes

Since transitioning to online classes, I have moved back home to Wetumpka, Alabama. This has meant eating breakfast during class, which has caused multiple debates over the best cereal brand, and a lot of zoom study sessions with friends. This transition has caused me to pick up some new hobbies, like gardening and baking. My parents are working from home too which has led to some interesting disagreements, like arguing over who gets to get the mail or water the garden (we are all looking for any excuse to leave the house these days). I might have even spent a couple of hours on weekends driving around to find the perfect spot to see the sunrise so I could get out of the house. My favorite part of this transition has been using my extra free time to take long walks with my Sheltie, Layla, who has been enjoying all the extra attention, even if it means staying up late and studying. This is definitely a weird time, but I am excited to get back on campus this fall because I will appreciate it all more, except maybe walking to class in the rain.

Maggie Overstreet

Moving from classes in-person to online has been tough, to say the least, and has taught me a lot. I have better time management skills—specifically, being able to manage the abundance of time I have on my hands now and how to allocate it for my online classes. At USA, I lived on campus with my two sisters, so when the school closed, we had to move back home. Since returning home, I found myself spending most of my time, apart from schoolwork, doing mindless things like being on my phone, sitting around doing nothing, or getting into silly arguments with other family members. With my family being stuck at home with nowhere to go, we made two goals: to spend more time with each other and to spend more time outdoors. In order to start spending more quality time with each other, we had to find something to do. Gracie, my sister, and I dug out my dad's old college miniature pool table from the attic. I went to my grandmother's house and found some old board games including Monopoly, double-sided checkers and Chinese checkers. Since the weather has been so nice and sunny lately, we have decided to spend our days outside and evenings indoors. Our first project was to clean up the yard and the old garden area and build a bonfire. We added potting soil to the garden area and planted tomatoes, zucchini, and beans (my choices) along with squash, colored bell peppers, habanero peppers, jalapeno peppers, and herbs including spearmint, green and purple basil, and chives.

Amber Walker

The transition to online classes definitely has not been easy, but my professors in the Mitchell College of Business have gone above and beyond to accommodate students and have taken our various situations into consideration. They have done everything from moving due dates to holding extra Zoom meetings to clear up any confusion. While I prefer a face-to-face format over online classes, everyone at South has handled this very unexpected situation with grace. I packed up all of my belongings in Mobile and came back to my hometown near Huntsville, AL a few weeks ago. Since I've been home, I've been keeping up with my classwork and watching TV shows and movies I hadn't previously had time to watch. This has also been a great opportunity to spend time with my family because they're all working from home. I have been actively involved in the Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization this semester and have enjoyed attending the organization's virtual meetings each week. As the weather has gotten nicer, I've been working on classwork outside. Even though this is not how I envisioned the end of the spring semester, it has reminded me of how grateful I am for the people in my life and has taught me to avoid taking simple things—like seeing my friends in person—for granted.

Jack Stover

Life at home is fairly normal and consistent for me. I wake up at the same time every day and am completing my internship remotely working around 32 hours a week from Monday through Friday; I did gain an hour of sleep each night since I no longer have to commute to my internship. I have Zoom class meetings from 12:30-3:15 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I usually take a one-hour walk after work or class each day and then I spend my afternoons working on homework and attending Zoom group assignment meetings. My two dogs are much happier that I'm home all the time and they certainly make school and work a little more fun when they distract me. I have two work stations set up: a work desk in my living room and a class desk in my bedroom. It keeps me in the right mindset depending on what I'm doing at the time.

Maddie Mitchell

For quarantine, I came home to St. Louis, Missouri to spend time with my family. During this time, I've been helping my grandma navigate teaching her new online class, keeping up with school work, playing Mario Brothers with my sisters, doing lots and lots of baking and babysitting my cousin while my aunt is busy working at the hospital. Although I was sad to leave South and the warm weather, I appreciate the extra family time. It's one of the few chances I have left to spend an extended time with them before graduating next spring.



MAGGIE OVERSTREET'S HERBS



JACK STOVER



MAGGIE OVERSTREET'S
BACKYARD BONFIRE





COURTNEY WILLIAMS



KHANG LUU ON ZOOM



MEGAN SMITH'S CAT

Courtney Williams

This is not how I saw my Spring 2020 semester going. My schedule since moving to online classes due to COVID-19 has changed drastically. My mom is a Type-1 diabetic and my elderly grandmother lives with us so I have two highly at-risk individuals to worry about. When it is shopping day, I wake up early to try and beat the crowds and I make sure to thoroughly disinfect before coming back home. I feel like I have more school work now. I keep a well detailed planner, set alarms on my phone and triple check the due dates for assignments because if not, I will forget. At first, my days did not have structure and that was not working out well. Now I wake up at the same time every day, do my morning routine, do school work, workout, have my evenings free to do what I want, and then bedtime. I work wherever and whenever I can find a quiet place. Sometimes that means my bedroom or outside, early mornings or late nights. This transition has taught me to slow down and what is important to me. I never thought I would live through something like this. It is different, but I am adapting because that is what I must do.

Khang Luu

Like many other graduating seniors, I was excited to walk across the stage at my graduation in May. It was promising that we would make tons of memories before my friends and I start our own adventures. Sadly, we were not able to do what we had planned due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, we are able to make it better. The first online class

meeting was different but engaging. I saw the same faces as I normally would in my regular classroom. I no longer looked at the backs of those who used to sit in the front of me anymore, so I could tell whether or not my friends were paying attention to the lecture. That part was interesting. It's incredible that our school adopted new technology allowing us to have a very similar experience as we would in class. Many professors, classmates and I have been highly diligent to ensure productivity. The technology also enables me to effectively provide tutoring services to other students. With the presence of these valuable resources during this circumstance, no words can describe how grateful I am. Besides school, I made many decisions regarding activities that would occupy my time. The outcomes from these decisions were not always desired. For example, I tried cutting my hair. It turned out better than I had expected after my first regrettable attempt. I had a chance to finish learning some songs on my piano. I participated in arts and crafts projects to create many beautiful artworks. One of my creations was for Ms. Anna, my mentor and friend. She did not have her family picture taken before her dad passed away, so I started recreating an art piece to capture their moment together. At a time like this, sharing a short moment of happiness means a lot to everybody. By having a positive mind, with some inspiration within, we can all stay strong and hope for a better tomorrow.

Megan Smith

As the world around us changes, I have come to realize that there are several unchanging things in my life. One of which is the ever-constant presence of my family. They are what has kept me going thus far in life and I am so full of love for them and their willingness to help ease my burdens. I have thoroughly enjoyed being home and being around them and my three cats. Another unchanging thing would be my passion for anything arts related (painting, sewing, writing, reading, etc.) I have taken time through this quarantine to apply self-care and do what I love. I painted a pair of shoes, made several motivational posters and even started making face masks for my family. I plan to donate what we don't use to those who are risking their lives on the frontlines helping others. I'm not going to lie, online classes are not the best. They are quite challenging, but I know the University and the professors are doing everything in their power to help us. These circumstances are anything but ideal. However, we can get through it! Human beings have accomplished much in the face of adversity and, often, the greatest inventions, business ideas and leaders have come out of hard times such as these.

A good attitude makes a world of difference. I know for a fact that we can pass this tough time with flying colors if only we focus on the good and help where we are able.



SAM PENQUE



SAHILEE WAITMAN



SHELBY GUIDRY

Sam Penque

Transitioning from in-class to fully online is a struggle for sure. Going from a structured schedule to one where spending all day in pajamas makes perfect sense is interesting. I try to keep a sense of time by spending my day as I would in a traditional class; otherwise, I would spend twelve hours on a computer without realizing it. I think that the hardest part is deciding on the time for school and the time not for school. However, I find that by exercising self-discipline and not spending time in my pajamas, I find myself indulging in my mom's food, which seems to have brought back that freshmen 15. I do spend a good amount of time on the lake, fishing and kayaking. I also enjoy being around my dogs who hang out on the bed next to my desk. The transition has definitely been a struggle but, overall, I am happy to be home.

Sahilee Waitman

Being a student in quarantine is certainly an unexpected plot twist in my senior year. I definitely miss being around students and having simple day-to-day interactions. However, every day I find a new way to remain in the loop of student life and the changes we are all facing. All of my organizations are still having virtual meetings and proceeding as usual, which I thoroughly enjoy. It is also safe to say that Zoom and social media outlets have become every student's best friend over these past few weeks. Although everything has transitioned to an online platform, I feel as if I got to know our MCOB professors and fellow classmates in a new way. We hold interesting conversations before class meetings start, we have one-on-one office hours etc. Between online classes, organizational meetings and my remote internship, I am staying productive and busy!

Shelby Guidry

Since the quarantine was put into place, I was still considered essential at my place of work. I continued going in every day and working full time at my accounting internship. When the University officially shut down for the rest of the semester, I was required to move out of my sorority house and move into a different dorm. Housing wanted to ensure that social distancing was being practiced on campus, so they allowed me to get an individual room to have somewhere to stay while I continued working. Now that my internship has ended, I am finishing up my online classes and will graduate at the end of the semester.

Visit our Youtube channel to check out our South At Home video [youtube.com/watch?v=w7ECUAFA5ql](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7ECUAFA5ql)

HOME 2.0: CATCHING UP WITH YULIA FEDKO



Mitchell Magazine
recently caught up with Yulia Fedko,
an MBA graduate and entrepreneur. Originally
from Russia, Yulia is taking advantage of the
opportunity to blaze a new path.

Where are you from and what brought you here?

I was born and raised in Russia, in the city of Vladivostok. It's a port city on the Eastern side of Russia bordering China and North Korea. My mom gave me the idea to come to the States when I was 18 years old. After visiting, as part of a summer work and student travel program, I returned to Russia to finish college. After a third visit to the States, I decided to return and get my master's degree in engineering. This is how I found the University of South Alabama. I never thought I would end up in Mobile, but I guess it was just meant to be!

What struggles did you face coming to South?

When I applied to South, I could barely speak English — my English was terrible. To this day, I don't know how I got admitted to South. As part of the admissions process I had to take the GRE. My math score was good but my English score was not so I had to retake the exam. On my second attempt, my math score went up (I got the highest score you could get in math) but my English score was still not high enough. The University accepted me on provisional status. After two semesters of receiving all A's, the University granted me full status. I soon completed my Master's Degree in Engineering.

What did you do after getting your Master's in Engineering?

My English had improved but still needed more work. Almost all of the open jobs required an American citizenship, which I did not have at that time. I struggled to find an engineering job. For no reason, I decided to visit Hobby Lobby one afternoon. I had no reason to do so; I didn't even know what Hobby Lobby was. At the time, I had no friends, no family, no money and very little English, so I went to Hobby Lobby. I remember thinking at the time, "What do I want? Why am I here?"



My eyes landed on a book about soap making; I bought it, went home, read it and thought, “This is so cool.” I went back to Hobby Lobby and bought the supplies to make soap.

How has your interest in soap making evolved?

As I began making soap, I wondered if I could make soaps that are not only pretty but were also good for the skin. I did a lot of research and attended a soap making class in Georgia. I returned and started making soaps. I didn’t know a lot of people at the time, so it was just me and my soaps; my apartment resembled a soap factory. Soon my apartment was FULL of soaps- every color, shape and smell. I couldn’t take it anymore so I started giving them away to my neighbors, people from my church and even random people on the street. They told me to sell them, not just give them away. This is how I formed my company, Zapah Naturals. In Russia, Zapah means “aroma,” so it means “natural aroma.”

How did you expand Zapah Naturals?

Once I got comfortable making soap, I wondered if I could make creams and lotions. I flew to New York for classes in lotion making, candle making, soap making and cream making. Soon I was making any and every bath and body product available and they were all natural. This was the beginning of my company. I then realized that I didn’t know anything about business, especially doing business in a foreign country with different cultures,

laws, and regulations. I decided to go back to school to get an MBA.

What was it like to get your MBA?

In Russia, if you enter a profession, you have to stay with it. If you want to change fields, you have to start all over at the beginning. In the U.S., you can be anything you want to be. I put my business on hold while I finished my business degree. While I was in the MBA program, the University opened the Student Recreation Center. I had never really exercised before, and after starting I fell in love with it. Sarah Schrenk, the director of SouthFit, said, “Yulia, you are here almost every day. Why don’t you start teaching classes for us?” I had to overcome a major fear of public speaking; English is not my first language and I was worried about how people would react. It took me a couple of years, but I got my group fitness certification and started teaching rec center classes the last semester of my MBA. I loved it. I was mad at myself that I didn’t do it sooner.

How do you stay involved with the Student Recreation Center?

In May 2016, I graduated with my MBA and became a U.S. citizen. After that, I went home for the first time in eight years to visit my family. When I returned, I wanted to keep teaching classes, but only students and faculty can teach classes and I was neither. Following some advice from Sarah, I talked to the Health and Kinesiology Sports Department about becoming an adjunct faculty member. They hired me and I am now a faculty

member and can continue working at the rec center.

How are you merging the soap making business and fitness?

I remember thinking, “Okay. I love teaching at the rec center, taking business classes and making soaps, but I am not making as much money as I would like to, so where do I go from here?” I had an idea to broaden my business—I could teach fitness classes and open a gift shop to sell my soaps and the other products that I make. Then I met Lori Huber. We both had a similar idea: teaching fitness classes and providing a space to sell our products. That’s when we came up with the idea to start our own business.

Tell me about BWell.

Opening soon in West Mobile, BWell is one business with three parts: fitness classes, a gift shop and something that is still under wraps. The custom fitness classes will include yoga, Pilates, boot camp, dance, body sculpt and more. The gift shop will have custom made soaps, lotions and other personal products, jewelry, workout gear, and other items — something for everyone on your list. The third concept will be the first of its kind in Mobile. BWell is open to the public and will not require memberships or contracts.

You can find Yulia's Products at **zapahnaturals.com** or visit her on Facebook at **[@ZapahNaturals](https://www.facebook.com/ZapahNaturals)**



MANAGING FROM HOME 101

By Joy Washington

Management Experts Share Best Practices for Working Remotely from Home

At the beginning of March 2020, only about 5.3 percent of Americans worked from home.

As more states have established stay-at-home or shelter-in-place orders, increasing numbers of employees have begun working from home to slow the spread of COVID-19. “With the increase of telecommuting, organizations are looking for best practices to ensure high levels of productivity,” Dr. Jeanne Maes explained.

Through their study of virtual teams, Dr. Maes and Dr. Teresa Weldy have compiled a list of proven successful practices for employees working from home and offer established leadership strategies of successful managers.

TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES WORKING FROM HOME

- Create a dedicated workspace away from high-traffic areas and envision that you are going to the office. Some have found it helpful to ‘dress for the office’ even if it is at home.
- Set work/leisure boundaries with yourself and with others in the house.
- Identify your peak performance period and make that time a priority, developing a routine.
- Stay connected with colleagues for support.
- Keep an upbeat attitude.

TIPS TO HELP MANAGERS LEAD SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL TEAMS

- Lead by example.
- Be mindful of cultural differences in making critical leadership decisions.
- Model collaborative behavior.
- Support a strong sense of community.
- Define clear roles for team members.
- Practice mentoring and coaching throughout the organization.



Dr. Jeanne Maes is a professor of management in the Mitchell College of Business and ombudsperson to faculty for USA. A seasoned dispute resolution professional, facilitator, executive trainer, and consultant, Maes’ areas of expertise include communication skills, conflict management organizational development and change, partnering, team-building and leadership.



Dr. Teresa Weldy is an associate professor in the Mitchell College of Business at USA. Her research interests include training effectiveness and transfer, training evaluation, the learning organization, transfer and evaluation of training, learning improvement and assessment and business communications. Her teaching interests are in business, management, communications, and training and development.



STAYING HOME I:

2020 ALUMNI FELLOWS

*Our Annual Scholars' Night was cancelled due to the pandemic.
We recognize the night's honorees in the next two articles.*



Alexis Atkins

Alexis Atkins, vice president of human resources/principal in co-ownership of Budweiser Busch Distributing, Inc., of Mobile, is a 1997 graduate of the University of South Alabama with a major in human resources.

Atkins is a member of the University of South Alabama Board of Trustees, the Jaguar Athletic Fund board, the Mitchell College of Business Executive Advisory Council, and Feeding the Gulf Coast (formerly the Bay Area Food Bank), of which she is the past chairman. Atkins is also past president of the University of South Alabama National Alumni Association and Executive Women International.

At Budweiser Busch Distributing, Atkins provides comprehensive management of human resources for the beverage distributor, ensures compliance and enforcement of all state and federal mandates regarding employment, and is responsible for policy development and administration, risk management, and administration of employee records and benefits.

Atkins and her husband, Michael, reside in Mobile and have five children.



John J. Bassett

John J. Bassett is the retired Owner and CEO/President of Renaissance Petroleum Company, LLC (“Renaissance”). Before founding Renaissance, he was the CEO/President of Middle Bay Oil Company (“MBOC”), a Mobile-based, publicly traded oil and gas company. Previously, Bassett served as CEO/President of Bay City Energy Group, Inc.

MBOC was formed through the consolidation of 27 partnerships and six mergers. In 1997, Bassett grew the company’s reserves from approximately \$1 million to over \$260 million. Birmingham News named MBOC the best company in the state of Alabama, being first in two-year returns to shareholders (254.17%) and the biggest one-year stock price gainer (254.2%).

Bassett earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Marketing and Logistics from the University of South Alabama in 1991. While at South, he lettered two years in baseball. He serves as a director of the Jaguar Athletic Fund, is a member of the Mitchell College of Business Executive Advisory Council, and remains very involved in the growth of the University.



Jim Estabrook

James B. “Jim” Estabrook Jr. is the former president of Pascagoula-based Estabrook Motor Co., which was founded by his father in 1951, and several other automotive-related enterprises. Estabrook is the recipient of the Ford Motor Company Distinguished Achievement Award and the Toyota President’s Award. Estabrook Motor Co. is now run by his two sons, David Reed Estabrook II and James Andrew Estabrook. He also served on the Hancock Whitney Board for over 25 years, with 13 of those as Chairman of the Board. During his time as Chairman, the Bank grew from \$5.9 billion to \$30.6 billion.

Well known for his community involvement, Estabrook has served as director for community organizations such as: The Salvation Army, The Boys Club, The Economic Development Foundation, The Kiwanis Club, The Singing River Mental Health Assn., South Inc. and The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce.

Estabrook received his degree from the University of South Alabama in 1967. He and his wife, Martha White, belong to the Singing River Yacht Club and enjoy spending time on the water with their four grandchildren.



Pete Hayes

Pete Hayes is a highly accomplished leader, executive, company officer and board member who has consistently demonstrated sustained, long-term success. Hayes is very effective operating at the highest levels in business and government in multicultural environments. After 35 years leading significant divisions within major companies, Hayes now focuses his skills and experience on venture capital, private equity and other activities.

Hayes is Founder & CEO of Middleburg Venture Partners, a boutique advisory firm that focuses on strategy, insight, innovation and investment in the TMT sector (Technology, Media & Telecom). He is also a Blu Venture Investor partner. Blu is a venture capital-investment company that supports early-stage entrepreneurs.

Hayes sits on the board of eight companies whose focus ranges from communications and coding to luxury consignment & vintage marketplace. He recently completed a five-month role as interim CEO for The Imagine Group. Hayes also is a member of the Mitchell College of Business Executive Advisory Council. Pete lives in Middleburg, Virginia with his wife, Mary.



Jerry Lathan

Jerry Lathan is founder and CEO of The Lathan Company, a historic-restoration company whose projects include the Smithsonian Institution Arts and Science Building, the Trump International Hotel at the Old Post Office, the Beauvoir Mansion and other properties.

An alumnus of the Mitchell College, he is also owner of Big Easy Studios in New Orleans. He is the former finance chairman and vice chair of the Alabama Republican Party and led the UNESCO Haiti Earthquake Architectural Team. He has received the Louisiana Society Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation (2016), was the Alabama Republican of the Year (2008) and has received a number of other awards from the American Institute of Architects and others.

Lathan's latest project is the development of Carillon Oaks, developing properties with resort-level amenities for communities that would otherwise lack independent-living, assisted-living or memory-care facilities. Lathan is also a member of the Mitchell College of Business Executive Advisory Council. He and his wife, Terry, live in Theodore, AL and have two children.



Arlene Mitchell

Arlene Mitchell is a civic leader and Mobile philanthropist whose family has generously supported the University of South Alabama.

Mitchell, who attended the University of Pennsylvania, has served on various boards, including the Mobile Preschool for the Sensory Impaired, Senior Citizens Services of Mobile, the Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama, the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, the Dauphin Street Synagogue Sisterhood and the Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center. Mitchell is a past president of the Board of Directors of the Community Foundation of South Alabama.

Mitchell is a previous recipient of the Mobilian of the Year Award. In 1997, the Arlene F. Mitchell Philanthropy Award was established in her honor.

Mitchell was married to the late Mayer Mitchell, brother of Abraham A. "Abe" Mitchell. For their extraordinary contributions, USA's Mitchell Center, Mitchell Cancer Institute and Mitchell College of Business were named to honor the Mitchell family. Mitchell is a member of the USA Board of Trustees. She has four children.



STAYING HOME II:

2020 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

**ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

Savannah Stephens

**ALLEN, ALLEN & FOSTER,
CPAS ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP**

Katie Welch

**BRIAN L. MCGUIRE
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
IN ACCOUNTING**

Kayla McMillian

**DR. FRANK R. URBANCIC
SCHOLARSHIP IN
ACCOUNTING**

Katelyn Cowie
Ashley Krantz

**ELAINE AND JOHN "J.D."
BAXTER ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP IN
ACCOUNTING**

Manuel Cedenio

**HARDIN-EAVES ENDOWED
ACCOUNTING SCHOLARSHIP**

Gracie East

**HARTMANN, BLACKMON &
KILGORE, P.C. ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP**

Christopher Rider

**LANG FAMILY ENDOWED
BOOK SCHOLARSHIP**

Logan Etheridge

**LAURA AND WAYNE DAVIS
ACCOUNTING SCHOLARSHIP**

Jessica Fair

**LUTHER E. CLEMENTS
SCHOLARSHIP IN
ACCOUNTING**

Joseph Collier

**MOSTELLAR & SHREVE, LLP
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN
ACCOUNTING**

Amara Baltimore

**OUTSTANDING
ACCOUNTING STUDENT
AWARD**

Katelyn Cowie

**ALABAMA YOUNG BANKERS
ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP**

Hunter Loper

**ALOYIS SONNEBORN
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

Lajarvis Weed

**ALTON R. BROWN, III
AND TONI GOUBIL BROWN
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
IN REAL ESTATE**

Casey Ditekowski
Nikolas Hughey

**CHRISTOPHER J. WEIGEL
FINANCE SCHOLARSHIP**

Ethan Flowers

**CLIFTON C. INGE
LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP
IN ECONOMICS AND
FINANCE**

Larry Dixon

**DOUGLAS L. WHITMORE
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN
FINANCE**

Kelsey Edwards

**DR. DONALD L. MOAK
ENDOWED MEMORIAL
SCHOLARSHIP**

Hunter Bormann
Susan Mariel Chavez Buezo

**OUTSTANDING ECONOMICS
STUDENT AWARD**

Elizabeth Bothwell
Cassidy Schwoebel

**OUTSTANDING FINANCE
MAJOR AWARD**

Quy "Annie" Vo

**OUTSTANDING REAL ESTATE
STUDENT AWARD**

Heather Trinh

**PAT AND ADEN "JACK"
COOPER ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP**

Ashley Wheeler

**PNC BANK ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP IN FINANCE**

Nia Gilleylen

2020 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Continued

**ROBERT AND JOSEPH
HUNSADER MEMORIAL
SCHOLARSHIP IN
ECONOMICS AND FINANCE**

Angel Cox

**THE FIRST, A NATIONAL
BANKING ASSOCIATION
ENDOWED BOOK
SCHOLARSHIP IN FINANCE**

Samuel Penque

**WHITE-SPUNNER &
ASSOCIATES INC. ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP IN REAL
ESTATE**

Ashley Wheeler

**CARL N. & JEWEL O. MELTON
ENDOWED ENTREPRENEUR-
SHIP SCHOLARSHIP**

Ethan Flowers

**DEPARTMENT OF
MANAGEMENT
SCHOLARSHIP**

Bradley Benton

**DR. DONALD C. MOSLEY, SR.
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN
BUSINESS**

Daniel Watts

**DR. EDWARD L. HARRISON
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Julianna Abrams

**DR. MARK WEAVER
ENDOWED ENTREPRENEUR-
IAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Andrea Prgomelja

**DR. MICHELLE L. SLAGLE
MANAGEMENT
SCHOLARSHIP**

Taylor Barton

**DR. PAUL PIETRI
ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP
IN MANAGEMENT**

Andrea Prgomelja

**EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SCHOLARSHIP**

Amber Walker

**MOBILE SOCIETY FOR
HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP**

Adeline Wilcox

**OUTSTANDING
MANAGEMENT STUDENT
AWARD**

Logan Tribble

**WARREN AND KATHY
NICHOLSON ENDOWED
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SCHOLARSHIP**

Julianna Abrams

**DR. GRANT M. DAVIS
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
IN MARKETING**

Reagan Chandler

**MARGIE MALONE TUCKSON
ENDOWED MARKETING
SCHOLARSHIP**

Jonathan Lam

**MICHAEL B. NEELY
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
IN SUPPLY CHAIN
MANAGEMENT**

Christina Crandall

**NORMA AND JESS ICENOGL
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN
PROFESSIONAL SALES**

Shania Haymer

**OUTSTANDING MARKETING
STUDENT AWARD**

Victoria Power

**BBVA COMPASS ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP IN THE
MITCHELL COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS**

Jessica Fair

**CHRIS & ELIZABETH MELTON
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

Blake Batchelor

Brenda Landa-Silva

**CLARENCE M. FRENKEL, JR.
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

Anne Gilbert

Kevin Pham

Charles Pope

Yan Yang

**DAN & JUDY GRAFTON
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

Taylor Grider

**DON AND SANDRA
MCCRORY BOOK AWARD
IN THE MITCHELL COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS**

Sarah Brewer

**DR. CARL C. MOORE
SCHOLARSHIP IN THE
MITCHELL COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS**

Mohammad Sammy Alkhatib

**HELEN & ROBERT SELLERS
SCHOLARSHIP IN BUSINESS**

Rebecca Culberson

**HOLLIS & CARMEL
SHUMOCK ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP IN BUSINESS**

Laura Brinyark

James Muhammad

**JACK R. BRUNSON
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
FOR EXCELLENCE**

August Noll

Amy Toler

**JAKE AND PAT GOSA
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
IN THE MITCHELL COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS**

Siew Andrew Hii

Savannah Stephens

Courtney Williams

**KISH DU FAMILY ENDOWED
STUDENT ASSISTANCE
AWARD**

Nichole Ford

**MICHAEL C. AND PATSY B.
DOW ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP**

Katherine Roberts

**MITCHELL COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS 50TH
ANNIVERSARY SCHOLARSHIP**

William Bishop

Ellie LaPorte

Melanie Watson

**MITCHELL COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP**

August Noll

**MITCHELL SCHOLARS
PAY IT FORWARD**

Alyssa LaCoste

**NEW HORIZONS CREDIT
UNION UNDERGRADUATE
SCHOLARSHIP**

McKenna Royer

**PEGGY AND JOHN SEIBERT
FAMILY ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP**

Brittani Forman

Anna Henley

**PFILIP AND LUELLA HUNT
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP
IN BUSINESS**

Justin Wilkerson



REGIONS BANK ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

Julianna Abrams
Margaret Burnett
Rebecca Culberson
Brenda Landa-Silva
Caroline Long
Michael McGowan
Brianna Morris
Sarah Brewer

RICK & JULIE HARVEY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

Lindsey Ballard

RUSSELL AND CAM STILL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

Caitlin Crownover
Amber Walker

STIMPSON BROTHERS LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP IN BUSINESS

Hunter Gaines
J'mya Kite

TERRY S. BARKIN MEMORIAL SHOE STATION ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN BUSINESS

Joseph Collier
Jensen Graddick

THOMAS CORCORAN ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR ADULT STUDENTS IN THE MITCHELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Kiana Giles
Jalissia Poe

TOMMY AND KATHY ZOGHBY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING

Eric Jackson

TURNER SUPPLY ENDOWED BOOK SCHOLARSHIP IN BUSINESS

Kayla McMillian





Close to Home

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN ACTION



*by the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and the Mitchell College of Business
Photography courtesy of Mobile Oyster Company*

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) is a division of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. The program brings together institutions within the community to address on-going environmental issues. MBNEP interviewed intern Gage Swann, a senior management major at the Mitchell College of Business. Swann pays bills by working at the Mobile Oyster Company, an off-bottom oyster aquaculture operation in the salty waters on the west end of Dauphin Island.

OK, senior at USA, former offensive lineman and recently licensed charter boat captain Gage Swann, how did you become involved in off-bottom oyster aquaculture?

Before I got into all those other things you mentioned, I was just a Theodore High School graduate looking for a summer job while waiting for my first semester at Huntingdon to begin. My dad was actually the person who

recommended I look into working for an oyster farm. Somewhere along the search, I got in contact with a man who managed an oyster farm out in Bayou La Batre, back when there was a co-op of farmers out of the mouth of West Fowl River. He lined up a training day for me, and from that moment, I have been working in off-bottom oyster aquaculture. Since then, I have joined the team and am currently working for Cullan Duke at the Mobile Oyster Company.

Describe a typical work day at the Mobile Oyster Company.

Our days at the Mobile Oyster Company usually begin around 8:00 AM, when my buddy, Aaron, the other team members and I meet to finish our morning coffee and discuss the goals we want to accomplish for the day.

Sometimes we have a perfect day on Dauphin Island, and we use those days to maximize the work we do caring for

the oysters on the farm itself. Every oyster farmer has a few basic obligations to the farm to grow and maintain beautiful oysters.

The most important obligation is making sure you have enough oysters counted and ready for a harvest. Having these bags already made up a few days before hand helps harvest run smoothly and in a quick time frame, which is really important during the summer time.

Another task we do on nice, calm days would be desiccating our oysters (by raising and flipping our cages). During the summer time, it is recommended we do this once a week or at least once every two weeks. This practice dries the outside of our equipment and the oysters to limit any sort of biofouling. Biofouling is basically growth of barnacles and algae on our equipment and oysters. Flipping the cages is the reason our oysters come out so clean with so few barnacles or other growth on them.

Desiccation involves lifting oyster grow cages above the water surface for 24 hours, usually once per week, to control biofouling of oysters and baskets and to rattle the oysters, chipping off new growth, which, along with waves and boat wakes, produces a rounder, deeper-cupped oyster more valuable on the half-shell market.

The rest of our time on these types of days involves us splitting bags of growing seed oysters (to reduce bag density), so that the oysters do not overburden equipment with their increasing size and weight. We also spend time hand sorting and counting oysters for our harvest bags.

During the winter time, we get really strong north winds which makes working the farm in our location too much of a risk. We spend these days repairing any broken equipment, like worn down oyster grow cages for example, and also servicing our work boat.

With regard to environment issues, what stressors to wild oysters are oyster farmers able to avoid or control? What stressors present the major threats to farm-cultivated oysters?

I'm no expert on what has happened to our natural oyster reefs over the years but I do believe off-bottom oyster aquaculture helps avoid some of the obvious things that hurt the natural reefs.

Oyster drills (the primary oyster predator) usually are not that big of a problem for us because of the fact our oysters stay in the top of the water column, rather than on the bottom.

We are also able to avoid any issues with sediment covering oysters during big storms or from boat wakes, etc., again, because we are at the top of the water column.

As to stressors for oyster farmers: hurricanes and strong storms. These

storms have the ability to take a toll on oyster farms and the equipment itself. Even when farmers don't sink their gear, strong storm surge and currents can bury our bags on the bottom and also chafe our main lines.

Water quality: Things like red tides and shutdowns due to high counts of sewage-related bacteria in the water are also hard to predict and leave us idle for many weeks.

What is most rewarding about oyster farming?

I particularly like seeing our customers post pictures of our oysters on social media or hearing from people who say it is the best oysters they ever tasted.

How has your education at MCOB prepared you for your internship at the oyster farm?

Initially, I attended Huntingdon college where I played on the football team. After my sophomore season, I suffered a severe knee injury, leading me to the decision to end my football career and move back home to focus on work. I transferred to South Alabama and began to pursue my degree in business management.

All my life I knew I wanted to own and operate my own business, either running charter boats or farming oysters. I knew that to do this well I needed a business degree. Also, I figured it would help me gain an advantage in two competitive industries.

My education through the Mitchell College of Business has helped me in many different aspects of my career. First and foremost, it has taught me the importance of a work ethic, especially when trying to succeed as an entrepreneur. There are all kinds of little things that you learn in class that you may think you didn't retain until you have to apply that lesson in the field! One of the biggest lessons though is the

confidence MCOB has given me to go out there and meet new clients, take risks, and have fun while you do it!

How have you been affected by the Internship Program?

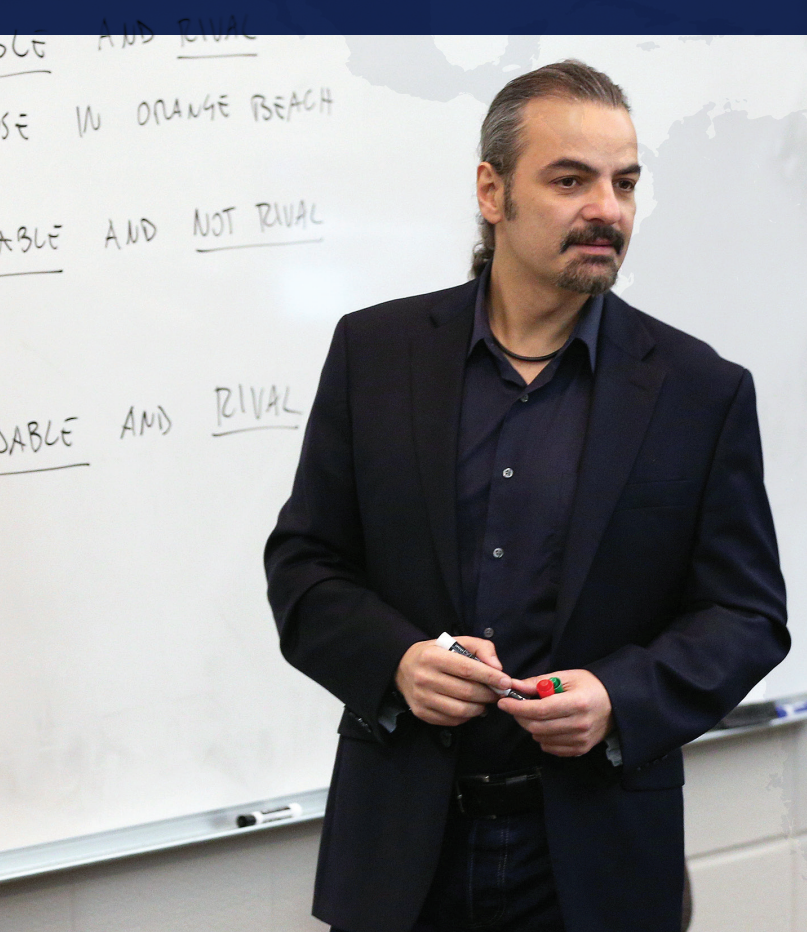
The internship program through the Mitchell College of Business has been one of the best experiences I have encountered during my time at the University of South Alabama. My internship may have been a little different than others; however, instead of working as an employee at The Mobile Oyster Company, my advisors at South challenged me to think and strategize more like a manager of the company. I found myself applying concepts that I have learned in my classes to our daily work on the farm. One example of applying concepts to the farm is how we applied the Kaizen method that we learned in Total Quality Management on how we could cycle through cages in a quicker, more efficient manner.

All-in-all having this internship right before graduation is a good way for students to get a jump start into a career that they might not have thought about until taking part in the program. Or, in my case, it trains students who might already be starting their career to think more critically and strategically about their work. One of the major take-aways I have gotten out of this internship is that if you want to implement a strategy at work, things will not change overnight. I had to remind myself every day what the end goal for that strategy was and what steps I had to take to reach that goal. I just want to express my appreciation for the staff and advisors of this program for challenging me to think outside-the-box and really motivate me to finally use the ideas and concepts we have been taught over the years.

For more about the Mitchell College of Business Internship program or to set up an internship, please contact Megan Bennett at mebennett@southalabama.edu.



“I experienced the challenges first-hand faced by students in different learning environments including language barriers, cultural differences, and difficulty in understanding lectures.” —**ERMANNO AFFUSO**



THE WORLD IS MY HOME

ERMANNNO AFFUSO — FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR

Dr. Ermanno Affuso, Associate Professor of Economics and Finance at the University of South Alabama Mitchell College of Business, recently received a Fulbright Specialist Award to visit the Technical University of Kosice (TUKE) in the Slovak Republic twice in the next three years.

Affuso will continue his work to deliver a variety of educational and training activities aimed at sharing knowledge and establishing partnerships between institutions and communities in the U.S. and abroad. He is one of only 400 U.S. citizens to receive this award. According to the United States Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, “Recipients of Fulbright Specialist awards are selected on the basis of academic and professional achievement, demonstrate leadership in their field and their potential to foster long-term cooperation between institutions in the U.S. and abroad.”

The U.S. State Department of Education and Cultural Affairs describes the program as, “the flagship international education exchange program sponsored by the

U.S. Government and is designed to build lasting connections between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. The Fulbright program is funded through an annual appropriation made by the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of State. Participating governments host institutions, corporations and foundations around the world and also provide direct and indirect support to the program which operates in over 160 countries worldwide.”

As a first-generation college graduate, Affuso made it his goal to improve the lives of others through education and research. He trained in Italy, Poland and the United States. Affuso said, “My academic journey has been cross-cultural, cross-disciplinary, and incredibly fulfilling. I was trained as an engineer in Europe and as an economist in the United States. I experienced the challenges first-hand faced by students in different learning environments including language barriers, cultural differences, and difficulty in understanding lectures, among other challenges.” With his international experience and several areas of

expertise in Applied and Quantitative Economics, it comes as no surprise why Affuso was granted this award.

At TUKE, Affuso will offer a series of lectures on Special Topics in Econometrics to doctoral students and faculties who wish to re-engage in active research. He will also provide a series of seminars to stakeholders from the local business community to counterfactually compare business practices of the State of Alabama and the Kosice Region. These areas are economically similar. Both regions received generous financial investments from the U.S. Steel Corporation, and they are both experiencing rapid economic growth associated with the manufacturing sector.

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of State temporarily suspended the Fulbright program. The Fulbright commission informed Dr. Affuso that, once the program is resumed, he will receive an additional extension to his three-year Fulbright tenure that consists of the duration of the temporary suspension plus an additional year.



Leaving Home

THE MITCHELL AMBASSADOR CLASS OF 2020





Emily Daughenbaugh

Major: General Management

"Life has this beautiful way of opening doors when you least expect it. How they open is sometimes never known. But does that not only further justify the magic and the possibility of the thought, that there is more to life than that which meets the eye." —

Tania Elizabeth, *The Tier of Eternal Grace: The Souls Cry*

Emily Daughenbaugh grew up attending South games and cheering on the Jags. As a senior in high school, she had her eyes set on college miles from home but recognized the advantage of staying close to home. When she started at South, she realized it was meant to be. "I love the University of South Alabama; it is my home close to home."

Daughenbaugh appreciates the opportunities that she has been afforded at South. "Being a Mitchell Ambassador, part of soccer intramurals and other groups have made memories that will last a lifetime. I plan to use my knowledge and skills that I have learned these past four years to move to the next level. Through the help of the Mitchell College of Business, I have obtained an internship at the biggest shipbuilding company in Alabama."

Following graduation, Daughenbaugh hopes to get a full-time position at Austal USA, where she plans to work through the ranks and ultimately become a purchasing manager. She also plans to return to the Mitchell College of Business to complete her MBA.



Shelby Guidry

Major: Accounting

"Someday, everything will make perfect sense. So for now, laugh at the confusion, smile through the tears, be strong and keep reminding yourself that everything happens for a reason." — John Mayer

Originally from Ocean Springs, Mississippi, Shelby Guidry came to the University of South Alabama to pursue a degree in business. Graduating with a degree in Accounting, she plans to stay in Mobile to get her MBA at the Mitchell College of Business.

Reflecting on her time as an Ambassador, she is reminded how honored she is to have received a leadership position that not only pushes her out of her comfort zone but also allows her to grow and succeed. "Being able to sit in on executive board meetings, talk to potential new students and have round table discussions with business professionals were a few things I really enjoyed about the program."

Through the Mitchell Ambassadors program, she was given the opportunity to work two internships during her time at South. She interned with the marketing team at MCOB and with the tax team at Avizo Group, an accounting firm in Fairhope. "Without the help of Dean Wood and the MCOB faculty/staff, none of this would have been possible, so I am truly blessed to have created a network of people who truly care about my success."



Paola Hernandez

Major: Accounting

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Coming from the small town of Hayden, Alabama, Paola Hernandez knew she wanted to move to a bigger city for college. "South seemed like the perfect fit for me after hearing about the Mitchell College of Business and everything it had to offer." As a first-generation student, Hernandez wanted to begin a legacy of which her family would be proud.

During her freshman year, Hernandez began working at the Biomedical Library and accepted an internship at Cunningham CPA in Fairhope. "Splitting my time between two jobs, school, and organizations has been hard, but I think it has been well worth it to gain much-needed experience."

Hernandez was actively involved in SGA as an MCOB Senator but wanted to find an organization focused in the Mitchell College of Business. "I was excited to receive an offer to join the Mitchell Ambassadors. I have enjoyed the events I have attended and the network opportunities that have been provided to us. I feel as though MCOB has prepared me beyond my expectations, and I am so grateful for the opportunities I have been given."



Khang Luu

Major: Accounting

“As you start your journey, the first thing you should do is throw away that store-bought map and begin to draw your own”
—Michael Dell

When Khang Luu came to the United States, the idea of college was not even a thought. “At the time, working towards my high school diploma felt like I was jumping out of an airplane without a parachute. Until the moment when I held the diploma in my hands, I realized then, that only education could brighten my future.”

Since submitting his application to South, Luu has been dedicated to becoming an accountant. “South opened its doors and welcomed me as it believed in my ability. The University has shown me so many different things that I would have never known. Until now, I have never been so proud of myself because I am graduating and becoming an accountant. I am very thankful to my family, the faculty and staff here at South, and my friends, who have never stopped supporting me through this journey.”

Luu’s long-term dream is to gain industry experience, obtain his Ph.D. and return to the University as an accounting professor. “This dream is to give back the knowledge from what I have learned.”



Lucas Mordecai

Major: Accounting

“Excellence is not an act, but a habit. You are what you do repeatedly.” —Unknown

Lucas Mordecai grew up in a great family with a mother who taught him the value of an education. “My mom has obtained three undergraduate degrees and was passionate about passing on her love for learning to her kids.”

When it came time to decide where to go to college, the choice was really easy. “I visited South my freshman year of high school and knew that this was where I wanted to be. However, it had very little to do with the education and much more to do with the warm weather and close proximity to the beach.”

Mordecai started out as a biology major and had planned to become a doctor. However, he quickly found his strengths were in business. “My time spent in the Mitchell College of Business has been extremely formative in the investment I’ve received from faculty and staff, as well as beneficial in showing me the best way I can invest my time and talents.”

Following graduation, Mordecai will begin working with South Alabama’s Campus Outreach in campus ministry.



Ian Peek

Major: Finance

“‘You miss 100 percent of the shots you don’t take.’ —Wayne Gretzky” —Michael Scott

Ian Peek, a second-generation Jaguar, has a deep family history with South. He grew up with USA, watching many of its historic moments unfold. “I was there when the bell tower was dedicated, when Coach Jones was introduced as the first head coach of the football team and in 2008 when South made it to the NCAA tournament in basketball. I always knew I wanted to come to Mobile and attend South Alabama because it felt like home.”

Peek enjoyed his time as an Ambassador. “Being an Ambassador has given me opportunities for growth through amazing networking experiences, top-notch executive speakers, and outstanding leadership. I am so grateful to have been chosen as an Ambassador, and I cannot thank Mr. Mitchell, Dean Wood, and the faculty and staff of the Mitchell College of Business enough for their impact on me and the others in this program.”

Following graduation, Peek plans on obtaining both his MBA and law degree and pursuing a job as a sports agent and/or financial advisor for athletes.



Jack Stover

Major: International Business and Spanish Language & Literature

“Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not.” —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Jack Stover came to the University of South Alabama with big goals and aspirations. “Thanks to the generosity of the Mitchell family and the incredible support of the Mitchell College and USA, I have had no lack of success in achieving my goals and ambitions.” Jack is a double major in International Business and Spanish Language. Jack had many experiential learning opportunities within the College. “Being a Mitchell Ambassador has allowed me to grow as a professional and as an individual by pushing me to actively engage and network with people from all areas of the Mitchell College - students, faculty, alumni and administration.” Following graduation, Jack plans to pursue an MBA. Given his studies in Spanish, past experience with the Indonesia Society (USINDO) Summer Studies program and study abroad in Chile, Jack is primarily looking for programs in Spain, Indonesia and Chile. He has a clear goal for the road ahead. “Eventually, I envision working in a corporate career in the future and, hopefully, in an international strategy position for a Fortune 500 company, working my way towards an upper-management role in due time.”



Jolie Thompson

Major: Business Management with a concentration in Entrepreneurship

“Welcome to the real world. It sucks. You’re gonna love it.” —Monica Geller

Jolie Thompson came to visit South on a whim. “I needed to use up my “college days” and knew Mobile was the farthest my mom would let me drive without an adult. As soon as I stepped out of the car, I knew I was home.” During her college years, Thompson enjoyed many new and varied experiences. “I started dating my high school best friend, now-turned fiancé, went through some very difficult family issues and struggled with my own identity. However, through all of those changes, South and the Mitchell College of Business were my constants.” Thompson looks forward to the journey ahead. “I am very excited about where the Lord is leading me in these next phases of my life. As I journey into the workforce, I am consistently reminded that I would not be where I am today if not for the Mitchell Ambassadors. This organization has truly taught me what it means to be part of a team. The friendships I have made while in this group are truly extraordinary and something I will never take for granted.”



Sahilee Waitman

Major: Economics

“Growth and comfort do not coexist.”
—Ginni Rometty

Sahilee Waitman is a second-generation Jaguar. Her father attended the University in the 80’s, where he played on the USA basketball team. “After his passing, I decided I wanted to honor him by attending the same university, so I moved from my home in the Netherlands to Alabama.” Waitman quickly became involved with extracurricular activities such as the Student Government Association, Southerners, Mortar Board and Mitchell Ambassadors.

Through Mitchell Ambassadors, Waitman had ample opportunity to connect and network with various alumni. “Whether it was through executive leadership sessions they presented at our College, meals that we shared with them, or mentorship phone calls that the dean set up, becoming a Mitchell Ambassador provided me with an unmatched level of professional engagement which allowed me to grow extremely confident in my executive skills over time.”

Waitman shared, “I initially chose this University with a blind eye.” If given the choice again, she said, “I would choose this specific University, the Mitchell College of Business, and the Mitchell Ambassador Program all over again.”



Home by the Sea

PHD STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:
JUSTIN SCOTT

Mitchell College of Business PhD student, Justin Scott, has done his fair share of travel. Traveling coast to coast with dozens of states in between, there is not a lot Scott has not seen. Serving as a recruiter for Pensacola Christian College, he spent years planning VIP guest events, scheduling conferences and delivering recruitment presentations.

Through his travels, Scott noticed a deficiency in most high schools. “Their horizons seemed to be narrower than I remembered from my time in high school.” Scott had a desire to contribute to something bigger than himself. “I realized the route to influencing society for good was through training societal leaders. Much changes in society through just one generation. Access to that generation begins in a classroom.” This realization led Scott to transition from the road to the classroom.

Scott knew a doctoral degree would provide him with the tools necessary to not only conduct meaningful research but also mentor future leaders through classroom instruction. So, he began his search. Scott had already committed to a DBA program with a different university when he heard that the Mitchell College of Business was transitioning from a DBA to a PhD program. “I immediately inquired about joining the MCOB.

The program offered residency-based courses without requiring that I uproot my family to live in a college town and become a traditional PhD student. Differentiating themselves from other DBA programs by attaining PhD status moved MCOB head and shoulders above other options.”

Accepted in Summer of 2019, Scott was one of 20 students comprising PhD Cohort Seven. Scott sums up his experience in the program in one word—Revolutionary. “My research skills have been sharpened while future opportunities have increased dramatically. By future opportunities, I mean collaborative opportunities afforded through the connections established with faculty and fellow cohort members.”

The faculty in the MCOB PhD program understand students already have full-time commitments with work and families, which is why they try their best to take a balanced approach in giving assignments and feedback. Scott has experienced just this in the program. “They don’t water down our content. They balance offering robust studies with realistic demands. That balance is refreshing and challenges me to offer a similar style of teaching for my students.”

For Scott, this program has been about more than just research; he has

learned what it takes to be a good faculty member. “Interacting with the faculty has taught me how important it is to be a normal guy. For better or worse, stereotypes exist that define professors. As an aspiring professor, it’s easy to slip into those stereotypes and imply to my students that I’m smarter than they are or, worse, that I don’t need to continue learning. The MCOB faculty, for the most part, always seem willing to hear new ideas and remain open to implementing those new ideas. That’s incredibly refreshing!”

The program requires dedication and an investment of time. Scott believes, “Earning a PhD requires more perseverance than it does raw cognitive ability. Sure, there’s a prerequisite amount of intelligence required, but the process (and it is a process) simply requires hard work. Basically, it requires a willingness to give up present satisfactions knowing that future benefits will vastly outweigh immediate satisfaction.”

“To me, South offers the place where my life-long career in academia began. It’s the foundation where I build everything else. It means it’s okay to have fun and be normal, but it also means there’s a time for rigorous workloads and a demand for excellence.”

SWEET HOME ALABAMA:

INTRODUCING PHD COHORT 7



NAEMA ALBIMANI



LIPIKA ARIF



MELANIE BOUDREAUX



SARAH CARRAHER



ASHLEIGH CONNOR



ANDREA FLOYD



STEPHEN GILES



JENNIFER HENDERSON



ABBY HOLIFIELD



AMANDA LEDET



KELLY MANIX



DENA MITCHELL



MATT OGLESBY



NICOLE ARNETT SANDERS



JUSTIN SCOTT



EMORY SERVISS



JENNIFER ZOGHY

COHORT 7

The Mitchell College of Business is excited to introduce the newest cohort in the PhD in Business Administration program. This year's cohort consists of 17 students from six different states and one foreign country. This group is particularly unique as it is the largest cohort to date accepted into the PhD program. We are excited to welcome these bright new students and look forward to watching their success.

NAEMA ALBIMANI

Hometown: Oman, Middle East

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I am an entrepreneur and would like to teach business at universities with a concentration in management, and specifically the major of entrepreneurship, after I graduate from the Mitchell College of Business.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

NAEMA ALBIMANI

Hometown: Mobile, Alabama

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

My dedication to teaching and research in management in a higher educational setting inspired me to pursue my Ph.D. in Business. I am always passionate to keep myself engaged in the learning communities for improving and challenging my knowledge. Involving with teaching and learning, I will be able to keep upgrading myself as well as my students.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

MELANIE BOUDREAUX

Hometown: Houma, Louisiana

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I am passionate about helping companies manage and motivate their people. Therefore, I am looking to further my knowledge in the Human Resources Management field through research and, ultimately, utilize this information to improve businesses.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

SARAH CARRAHER

Hometown: Dallas Fort Worth, Texas

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

The people who believed in my ability to complete an advanced academic degree, including my junior college, 4-year college and graduate school professors

and my husband and sons. My passion for research and writing was also a strong motivation.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

ASHLEIGH CONNOR

Hometown: Gulfport, Mississippi

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

Obtaining a PhD in Business Administration has been a lifelong goal. It is my belief that achieving this goal will expand my knowledge of management and statistics while advancing my career as a commercial real estate appraiser.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

ANDREA FLOYD

Hometown: Hattiesburg, Mississippi

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I have a personal passion for the field of business and look forward to adding to my knowledge and research.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

STEPHEN GILES

Hometown: Prattville, Alabama

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I originally looked into the Mitchell College of Business PhD program because I wanted a new challenge and May of 2019 coincided with the time frame expected to complete the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Additionally, I have always wanted to teach at the collegiate level, on an adjunct basis, while continuing in my career as a banker, but the PhD application process writing requirement completely changed my perspective on the research process. Researching a meaningful topic of interest is highly invigorating, and I am really looking forward to the journey over the next three years!

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

JENNIFER HENDERSON

Hometown: Livingston, Louisiana

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I discovered my passion for teaching business at the collegiate level nearly a decade ago and have wanted to pursue a doctoral degree ever since. The program format of the MCOB PhD was a perfect fit for me and has allowed me to continue teaching while I take this next step in my career. I am looking forward to enhancing my research skills and contributing to the growing fields of Marketing and Supply Chain Management.

CONCENTRATION: MARKETING

ABBY HOLIFIELD

Hometown: Ellisville, Mississippi

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

My desire to attend The University of South Alabama PhD program was driven by my aspiration to become a competent professor at a university and because I desire to learn how to properly conduct research so I can contribute to various business areas. Additionally, having a PhD from an AACSB accredited program will enable me to stand out, gain confidence, meet new people and challenge myself. Also, one should always continue to learn and grow, which the program allows me to do.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

AMANDA LEDET

Hometown: Houma, Louisiana

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I was inspired to pursue my PhD in Business by my love for research and writing. The world of academia is intriguing and I aspire to make a significant contribution to the field of marketing. I am passionate about making a difference in the lives of students and hope to spread some of my excitement about my areas of research interest to others.

CONCENTRATION: MARKETING

KELLY MANIX

Hometown: Murphreesboro, Tennessee

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I have been fortunate to teach at the college level for the past five years and knew at some point I wanted to get my doctorate and continue my career in academia. I love teaching and I love the field of management. I find individual differences and the psychology of managing individuals fascinating. The hybrid nature of the program at South was super convenient for my family because we weren't in a place where we could move to pursue my PhD. I'm thrilled with my choice.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

DENA MITCHELL

Hometown: Enterprise, Alabama

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I am pursuing a PhD degree to improve my research skills and for upward mobility in the workplace.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

MATT OGLESBY

Hometown: Florence, Alabama

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I've always wanted to teach, and last year I was given an opportunity to make the transition into academia. A PhD in Business Administration will not only help me pursue my passion of teaching, but will allow me to contribute to furthering the body of knowledge in Human Resources Management. To go from an HR practitioner to a teacher and influencer in the HR field is exciting!

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

PhD Director, Dr. Joe Hair, lectures to Cohort 7. This executive-style program is designed for course work to be completed in the first two years.

NICOLE ARNETT SANDERS

Hometown: Crestview, Florida

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

I was inspired to pursue my PhD because I am passionate about the field of marketing and want to make a difference in the research.

CONCENTRATION: MARKETING

JUSTIN SCOTT

Hometown: Pensacola, Florida

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

The goal of training future business leaders through teaching at a university inspired me to pursue my PhD.

CONCENTRATION: MANAGEMENT

EMORY SERVISS

Hometown: Home is where you hang your hat!

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

Earning a PhD will enable me to produce research that will extend the body of knowledge in the marketing discipline.

CONCENTRATION: MARKETING

JENNIFER ZOGHBY

Hometown: Mobile, Alabama

What inspired you to pursue your PhD in Business?

As immigrants, my grandparents taught me the importance of higher education, and I have always wanted to pursue my PhD. This program is the perfect pathway to accomplish this goal.

CONCENTRATION: MARKETING





BACK HOME AGAIN

2020 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Three Mitchell College of Business alumni, Brian Cuccias, James “Jake” Gosa, and William “Happy” Fulford, were recently honored at the University’s 2020 Distinguished Alumni ceremony. Mr. Cuccias was the recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award, an award that recognizes outstanding achievement and/or leadership in their profession. Mr. Gosa was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award, an award designed to recognize alumni who have made exemplary contributions benefiting others. Mr. Fulford was the recipient of the Inspirational Achievement Award, an award that recognizes individuals who made a significant professional impact to the USA community.



Brian Cuccias

Brian Cuccias is the president of Ingalls Shipbuilding, one of the largest private employers on the Gulf Coast. Mr. Cuccias studied accounting at South graduating in 1979. He started his career in Pascagoula as a financial analyst on Navy shipbuilding programs. He subsequently became a manager and executive who has led the construction of Coast Guard vessels, amphibious assault ships and Kidd-class destroyers. Under his leadership, Ingalls has been awarded ship contracts worth more than \$16 billion. The company has invested more than \$3 million in facilities and equipment to train employees in Alabama and Mississippi.

The governor of Mississippi, Phil Bryant, praised Cuccias as “a people-first leader fiercely loyal to his fellow shipbuilders and tirelessly supporting the communities in which those employees live, work and play. In doing so, Brian brings great honor and recognition to the State of Alabama and to his alma mater, the University of South Alabama.” In 2018, Cuccias was honored as one of the “Top CEOs in Mississippi” by the Mississippi Business Journal. “The people of Ingalls are the reason for our success,” Cuccias told the Journal. “I’m really fortunate to lead the finest workforce in the world that builds the best warships the world has ever known.”

Mr. Cuccias lives in Mobile with this wife, Helen, who graduated from South in 1982. She is a leader in the AGLOW



ministry. He is a longtime supporter of the Salvation Army, Coastal Alabama and Camille’s Place, a shelter for young women.

James “Jake” Gosa

After graduating from the University of South Alabama in 1973 with a degree in marketing, James “Jake” Gosa built a business career that saw him rise to become CEO and chairman of the board of the American Woodmark Corporation. During his time at American Woodmark, the bath and kitchen cabinet manufacturer grew from \$220 million to \$838 million in annual revenue. The company was named to Forbes Magazine’s 200 Best Small Companies List and Business Week’s list of 100 Hot Growth Companies. Before joining American Woodmark, Gosa spent 18 years in sales and marketing positions with Owens Corning Fiberglas and the Thomas Somerville Company. An active alumnus, Mr. Gosa is a member of the initial class of Mitchell College Alumni Fellows and received the Mitchell College Impact Award. He has served as the Senior Seminar speaker, lectured in the “From the Boardroom” series, and served as the College’s Executive in Residence. He and his wife, Pat, live in Amelia Island, Florida, and have endowed scholarships in the Mitchell College of Business and College of Nursing.



William “Happy” Fulford

William “Happy” Fulford, the University of South Alabama’s longtime director of governmental relations, earned a bachelor’s degree in marketing from the Mitchell College of Business in 1972 and was awarded a master’s degree in educational leadership from the College of Education and Professional Studies in 1993. He has served the University as director of alumni affairs, then director of development and alumni affairs and as executive director of governmental relations. In 2019, the Alabama House and Senate passed a resolution recognizing Fulford as an exceptional administrator who served others and distinguished himself through his professional contributions.

Fulford served in the Army Reserve for many years where he received several unit awards. He served in the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm before retiring from the reserve in 2002 with the rank of colonel. In Mobile, Fulford has volunteered with the Junior Chamber of Commerce, Mobile Azalea Trail, the USS Alabama Battleship Commission and served as president of the USA National Alumni Association.

In 2019, Fulford spoke to more than 2,100 South graduates at the spring commencement ceremony. He challenged them to face challenges, embrace opportunities and protect their integrity. “Integrity,” he said, “is the gateway to all other virtues, such as compassion, empathy and hard work.”



Home Field Advantage

THE DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES:
HOW SOUTH'S COACHES ARE ADAPTING
TO THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC

GREG STEWART

In early March, the Jaguar athletic calendar was full. The basketball teams were pointing toward the conference tournaments, softball, tennis, golf, and track and field teams were in the midst of their schedules, and fall sport teams were preparing for the upcoming seasons. Of course, all of that changed. We visited with Jaguar coaches and asked them to compare a “normal” spring with the current one and also asked what innovative approaches they’ve used during the period.

The “Normal Spring”

Terry Fowler

Head Women’s Basketball Coach

In March of our last two seasons, we were fortunate enough to be invited to postseason tournaments after the Sun Belt Tournament. After the season ended, we hit the recruiting trail (March is the month that we are allowed to do home visits with recruits and their parents). Our visits are usually with high school juniors, high school seniors or junior college students. We also host official and unofficial visits on our campus. The first week of April is a recruiting dead period during the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association Convention and the Final Four. The third Wednesday of April is National Signing Day. Following the season, our student-athletes are participating in four hours of basketball workouts and four hours of strength and conditioning each week.

Nick Brochu

Head Men’s Tennis Coach

During the regular season, Monday is an off day since we have two matches over the weekend. Players have weight and full-body cross training on Tuesday and Thursday mornings starting at 6 am. The session is a mix of traditional weight training and full-body cross training including flipping tires, throwing medicine balls, and running sprints and ladders. Practice is Tuesday through Friday afternoons. Friday is also a travel day if away matches are scheduled. Being a student-athlete is very demanding; students take morning and evening classes to avoid conflicting with practice and matches.

Becky Clark

Head Softball Coach

A normal week for us would start on Monday with a day off from formal practice (we still have the field open for anyone wanting to get extra work). Monday is a big video day for the coaching staff as we prepare for that week’s opponents. Tuesday and/or Wednesday is usually our midweek game. We play on one of those days and then practice and lift weights on the other. Thursday is a travel day, if we are on the road, or practice and weight lifting if we are at home. Friday, Saturday and Sunday are game days. Monday we start the whole process over again.

Greg Stewart

Football Defensive Coordinator & Linebackers Coach

Football spring practice is spread over five weeks in March and April. We practice on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday; other days involve practice planning, recruiting and academic meetings with staff and players. We spend a lot of time watching film from practices to plan for future practices, improve on our current defensive strategies, and install new defense sets. Our recruiting includes player evaluations, discussions and meetings about individual recruits. A normal day is 7 am to 7 pm, practice days run from 7 am to 9 pm (or later). Six full days a week, and on Sundays, the coaches spend a half day in meetings and grading scrimmages.



Ben Hannan

Head Men's Golf Coach

In March, we are in the middle of the spring season and in the heat of our schedule. We hold matches at home and travel. Everything we are doing at this point is in preparation for the SBC Championship, which takes place in late April. The student-athletes are practicing or playing six days a week focusing on both individual and team play. The coaches are also determining the final line-up of the travel team that will represent us in postseason play.

Jaco Keyser

Head Women's Tennis Coach

March and April are the middle of the conference season. Monday through Thursday mornings are used for administrative responsibilities, recruiting and individual workouts with players. We practice those afternoons from 2 – 5 pm. Fridays are travel or lighter practice days. On Saturdays and Sundays, we play matches. We will then review the week's performance, building off of the good and trying to eliminate the bad. Our goal is to peak in late April at the time of the Conference tournament.

Pete Bennett

Football Wide Receivers Coach & Recruiting Coordinator

Under normal circumstances, a week in March and April would be filled with Spring practices three days a week. The days we don't practice consist of film study from the previous day's practice as a coaching staff and then again with our players. We also use those days to plan, organize and script the next practice. The number of hours our coaching staff puts in per week this time of year exceeds well over 50 hours a week with Sunday being the only day off. The days that we don't practice, our players have organized workouts with the strength and conditioning staff. March and April are also a very important time for recruiting. Every day this time of year we have prospects on campus for unofficial visits where we are able to spend time with them and show them around our facility and the rest of campus. Saturdays are big recruiting days for our staff; we would typically have 10-20 prospects visit campus and watch practice.

NICK BROCHU



Spring 2020

Terry Fowler

Head Women's Basketball Coach

We have conducted virtual campus and home visits. The added year of eligibility to spring sports doesn't have an effect on us, but it would have been interesting if they had granted an additional year for winter sports who had games remaining.

Nick Brochu

Head Men's Tennis Coach

Due to the pandemic, all players (including our international players) returned home. I communicate with all of my players every other day to check on them and their families. We are fortunate to have an excellent academic advisor, Kristin Maas, who is in constant communication with all of our student-athletes to go over their classes and make sure they stay on schedule. I hold weekly video meetings with all of my players to go over their academic responsibilities and make sure they understand that communicating with their professors is very important during these times of distancing. We have also emailed each player a workout program that they can do at home. It is very unfortunate that the season was canceled, but we need to make sure we all stay in shape for the upcoming season.

Becky Clark

Head Softball Coach

It is different to say the least. There are so many ever-changing variables and moving parts right now that it makes it incredibly hard from an organizational standpoint. It would be great during this down time to get organized for the fall, but since there is no set return date, that is impossible to do. We still recruit; that involves a lot of video, email, texts, phone calls,

etc. We are obviously prioritizing our student-athletes' transition from the classroom to all online and making sure that they all have what they need from that standpoint. We also have all of the administrative duties which now include strategies and ideas to deal with the changes we are facing due to the shutdown. I think the biggest adjustment is the lack of structure and having a set schedule every day. In athletics, everything is structured and detailed so you always know what to expect. With our current situation, all of that has been taken away, and we are all in a holding pattern until further notice.

Greg Stewart

Football Defensive Coordinator & Linebackers Coach

We start every week with academic Zoom meetings with the coaching staff and academic personnel, followed by a coaching staff meeting. The rest of the weekdays usually start with coaching staff Zoom meetings followed by writing personal letters to top recruits. I also FaceTime or call three to five recruits a day. I then create linebacker football assignments four days a week by creating video clips of defenses, formations, and plays that I upload to ThunderCloud, teaching plays through video that we would have actually practiced and studied. I require the players to turn in football assignments based on these videos. I usually hold Zoom meetings with linebackers once a week, but I FaceTime them every day. I start my day at 7:30 am and usually end around 6 pm but continue FaceTiming and calling linebackers about their classwork and football throughout the evening. I also check in with five or six offensive players every week. I try to exercise every day for an hour or so.

Ben Hannan

Head Men's Golf Coach

With everything canceled for the season, the entire team has gone home for the semester as classes have moved to online. Individual meetings have moved to Skype calls and players practice on their own by hitting golf balls into a net in their backyards. Workouts, Titleist Performance Institute (TPI) and mobility training are now shared via email and directional videos.

Jaco Keyser

Head Women's Tennis Coach

It looks and feels very weird because tennis coaches are creatures of habit. The down time has afforded us the opportunity to focus heavily on recruiting. We have also had time to plan for the future and reevaluate our team's vision and goals, identifying individual player improvements that need to be made when the players return.

Pete Bennett

Football Wide Receivers Coach & Recruiting Coordinator

March and April of 2020 have been completely different. Not only have all spring practices been canceled, but our players aren't even on campus. This year, our coaching staff uses every day of the week to monitor and encourage our players to stay on track academically and to continue to train their bodies for the upcoming season. Throughout the week, our coaches will have Zoom meetings with their position groups and go over academics and football-specific information. In terms of recruiting, we are continuing to evaluate and make contact with prospects as much as we can within NCAA rules.



TYLER FOWLER

Innovations

Terry Fowler

Head Women's Basketball Coach

The most unusual thing about the transition to online classes is not seeing our student-athletes on a daily basis. At the same time, the NCAA has suspended all traditional recruiting activities until May 31st; teams are not allowed to have on-or off-campus visits with prospective student-athletes or any athletic-related activities with our current student-athletes. In the absence of the above activities, our schedule is very different. On Monday, we hold a virtual staff meeting. Tuesday is reserved for our virtual team meeting. On Thursday, the athletic administrative staff holds a virtual meeting for Head Coaches. Assistant coaches monitor the student-athlete academic progress holding virtual meetings with the players throughout the week.

Nick Brochu

Head Men's Tennis Coach

The NCAA granted another year of eligibility to all of our players. This news was extremely special for our three seniors who will get another chance to compete for South Alabama. One of them will have the opportunity to start his graduate degree while completing his eligibility. We were all very appreciative of the NCAA's decision for our freshmen who didn't get to experience the fierce conference regular season and the Sun Belt Championship in April. Recruiting has been a little challenging since the NCAA doesn't allow in-person recruiting until May 31st, but we are still heavily recruiting by phone, email, and video chats. It is unfortunate that recruits cannot visit our beautiful campus, but we have to be understanding during this pandemic. With our seniors coming back and our incoming freshmen starting in August,

we will have a larger roster size than normal. I believe this will create a better team atmosphere and a stronger team chemistry. Over the years, players have created a strong brotherhood. They definitely miss each other during this crisis, but I'm glad to see how close they remain on each other's social media and group chats. It is very sad that many sports got their seasons cut short, but this pandemic is bigger than sports. I am glad that our student-athletes were able to fly back to their families in time and be safe with their loved ones. The Jags will be back.

Becky Clark

Head Softball Coach

This entire experience is unique. I never imagined when I told the team we were being shut down that it was for the entire year; we all thought it would be a week or two and then we would return to campus. Technology has played a

major role in helping everyone to stay connected. The unexpected decision by the NCAA to grant an extra year of eligibility to our athletes added another dimension for our coaching staff to consider. The ruling is not only going to affect rosters for several years but the additional scholarship costs will need to be offset by savings in other areas. I think one major change you will see is scheduling for all teams. The awesome thing about athletics, though, is that we all understand the idea of making adjustments and controlling the things we can control. After all, we preach those two things to our players constantly so now we get to put those principles into practice with our current situation.

Greg Stewart

Football Defensive Coordinator & Linebackers Coach

We held a virtual “Junior Day” using Zoom and FaceTime to meet with our players. I now use FaceTime and Zoom to contact recruits and current players. Tuesday is the day that Coach Campbell and I FaceTime top area prospects. I am also requiring the players to complete more assignments using film; players submit their work using email or via text. We also have a system that monitors the amount of film that they have watched. In reality, I am able to do more recruiting using social media.



BEN HANNAN

Ben Hannan

Head Men's Golf Coach

In the interim, many things are different and unique in their own way. I'm working out of my home the majority of the time as is the entire University. There is no travel as the NCAA has put a moratorium on face-to-face contact, so recruiting takes place through phone calls, mailings, emails, video chats and texts. Professional development is now communicated electronically as I join webinars and Zoom meetings to learn more about my profession. As far as the day-to-day, routines have changed, but there are positives that will come from this experience as we look forward to getting back to normal soon.

Jaco Keyser

Head Women's Tennis Coach

The change to a virtual recruiting space has given us an opportunity to spend more time early in the process, focusing on this important aspect of coaching. Also, the additional year of eligibility for all players has the coaching staff excited. We are very impressed with our talent level and believe that players will improve the longer they stay in our system.



JACO KEYSER

Pete Bennett

Football Wide Receivers Coach & Recruiting Coordinator

Because we are unable to have recruits on campus, our staff came up with a unique idea using social media outlets that would allow us to bring the campus to them. On March 28th we hosted a “Junior Day Live.” Junior Day Live was a live tour of the USA football facilities including our new Hancock Whitney Stadium. Prospects were able to watch on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and listen to Coach Campbell speak while viewing the facilities.



PETE BENNETT



STAYING HOME III:

THREE PEOPLE, ONE STORY

COPING WITH THE
NEW NORMAL

Given the current state of the world, we asked three people one question, "How has the pandemic affected your life and what positives have come from the changes?"

MELISSA MORRISSETTE

Co-Owner, LLB&B, Inc. Real Estate, Mobile

The Coronavirus Pandemic appeared and swept in with a tidal wave of uncertainty and completely changed most everything having to do with our personal and business lives. We are all stressed from living at home with the whole family all the time. Seeking normalcy and routine, our house has turned to cooking and baking. We all wonder how long it will last or is this the start of a new normal.

The timing could not have been worse. The real estate business spring "pop" was underway. We closed our physical office and started working remotely in mid-March. Real estate was deemed an "essential" business by the Governor (it's estimated that the economic impact of one home sale is nearly \$85,000) and we were glad to be able to work and add revenue to the slowing economy.

Our transition to a virtual office was seamless since most of our work is technology supported. We continue to hold weekly sales meetings (with Zoom). We have had babies, children and pets interrupt our meetings which

has added some great moments of comic relief. I think it has been important to support one another and to uphold our office's work culture. The ability to show property has been our biggest challenge. We confirm that our clients are comfortable with buyers entering their homes, wearing masks and gloves, and cleaning up after the showing with disinfecting wipes. The market has been surprisingly busy during this time. We do drive-through closings with clients sitting in their cars and signing documents in the parking lot.

As difficult as this pandemic has been, I think it has made us all reach out and check on one another. I can feel the genuine care and concern of everyone in our office. I cannot see how our business would have continued operating during this pandemic without the human connection. Relationships matter! We don't know what the future holds and when we will get back to our lives, but I am certain that we will be appreciative for that time and for each other.

JIM FOLEY

Managing Director, Fairhope Brewing Company, Fairhope

As beverage manufacturers, breweries are considered 'essential,' and our facility has a license to sell beer for off-premise consumption. Still, the initial shock and dire projections of what might happen to our sales left us reeling and seriously considering shuttering operations until this virus had run its course. Instead, our production and marketing teams rallied and planned a course of action that would allow us to keep making and selling beer when many people needed it most.

Fortunately, we had at least a half a dozen small-batch beers that were set to be released in the month that followed Alabama's Stay at Home Order. We turned those taproom-only releases into limited 16-ounce can offerings. We renamed some to suit the times (Hop in the Bay IPA became Joe Hopzotic), and we created a few new ones with

ingredients on hand (I Scream is a bushwacker brown ale made by adding vanilla, chocolate, and some other ingredients into a beer that was already in kegs). Through social media marketing, these limited releases – and some cleverly designed t-shirts – have kept people coming back to our taproom despite not being able to drink a beer on site.

The local and regional communities continue to eagerly support Fairhope Brewing Company and other local businesses during the crisis. Beer continues to leave our taproom and retail sales across Lower Alabama are strong. The employees of our company are proud to be a part of a community that comes together in this time of need.

TREENA GILLESPIE FINNEY

Professor, Mitchell College of Business

I know individuals who have lost friends or family members to COVID-19; its impact is sobering. Yet, I am impressed by the flexibility and adaptability I see around me. Neighbors socialize (six feet apart, of course), restaurants bring their food to our neighborhood via food trucks, and the libraries have increased their lending via electronic resources. Our dining room serves dual purpose as a primary school classroom for our third- and fourth-grade girls, our study is now a university classroom outfitted for Zoom and Panopto, our den also serves as the sanctuary for our church on Sundays, our street has turned into a bicycle race track for the kids, and sidewalks have become canvases for the kids' art. As difficult as it seems for us to keep up with all of our current roles, I end my long days by appreciating my friends and family members and celebrating the closeness we, as a community, are experiencing as a result of this tragedy. Apropos of nothing, I have determined through this experience that I should never take a job teaching third- or fourth-grade math.

INVEST IN THE COLLEGE



Financial support dramatically impacts the lives of the students in the Mitchell College of Business. Your support makes us who we are today and directly affects tomorrow's business leaders.



SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SPOTLIGHT

SHELBY GUIDRY, ACCOUNTING, CLASS OF 2020

"Looking back at my time at South, I will forever be thankful that I chose to make the Mitchell College of Business my home. The dedication to ensure that students succeed is their number one priority. From having the most scholarships available to students on campus to having numerous events with engagement from business professionals, MCOB has everything to offer. Personally, I can say that the numerous business scholarships that I received over the past four years helped me gain opportunities I never knew would be possible. It drove me to be a more hardworking student in school and prepared me for a job in the real world. Thank you MCOB for everything and more!"

THREE AREAS OF PRIORITY FOR THE COLLEGE INCLUDE:

STUDENTS

The enrollment, education and graduation of outstanding students is of paramount importance to the Mitchell College of Business. Employers and other external constituents benefit from inspired graduates entering the workforce. In order to attract these students, the Mitchell College must offer competitive scholarships. The Mitchell-Moulton Scholarship Initiative matches any endowed undergraduate scholarship gift dollar-for-dollar.

ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT

Advances in technology, changes in classroom design and active-learning teaching methods have drastically changed the educational environment. In order to maximize learning outcomes, the Mitchell College must incorporate these advances into the classroom. Join us as we embark on a campaign to update (classrooms and other) Mitchell College of Business learning environments.

THE INTERNATIONAL EMPHASIS PROJECT

Our students will enter an increasingly complex and competitive global economy. Research and experience show that students who participate in global immersion opportunities are better prepared for competition in the global economy. The goal of our international emphasis project is to ensure the affordability of stud-abroad opportunities for all interested students.

THE AMBASSADORS

