2019 Business Leadership Conference: We Build Leaders

Mar 18 · 8:30am - 5pm
Student Center, Main Campus
- Notes -
March 18, 2019

Dear Conference Participants,

Welcome! On behalf of the entire College of Business (COB), welcome to our fifth annual Business Leadership Conference. This event was curated to complement all that we do at the COB to build, motivate and celebrate tomorrow’s business leaders.

Presenters, our students will soon understand the value of your presence at today’s conference. All of us appreciate the time and talent you’re affording us. Your wisdom, expertise, and passion will prove to be valuable to all attendees. Yes, our faculty and staff also are here to learn from you.

Students, please think of this event as a culmination of everything you’ve learned so far from the COB. We trust what you hear at the conference will resonate with your COB experiences. We think today’s program will help prepare you for the rest of your COB days and when you start your professional career.

We hope that you are planning to join us for the Smithfield Reception at 4:45pm in Ballroom C. In the past, these receptions have proved valuable to all participants because it’s our goal to have life-long, professional relationships established out of these events.

Special thanks go to the Conference Committee and all those responsible for putting this event together.

Speakers, please know your presence at the Business Leadership Conference is strengthening the foundation on which the COB is supported. Students, all of us, including faculty and staff, also are adding to that foundation, brick by brick, to help future COB generations become future leaders. For that, we are grateful for everyone’s presence today.

I’ll see you around.

Sincerely,

Paul Schwager, Dean
2019 Business Leadership Conference: We Build Leaders

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8:45am, Keynote Address
Ballrooms A & B, Main Student Center
Mr. Brian Hamilton, Founder Inmates to Entrepreneurs

Session I  10 - 10:45 am

Glean - Reviving Produce & People for Purpose: One Fruit & Vegetable at a Time
Location: Ballroom A, Main Student Center
Track: Environment

Glean was created to address many rising issues throughout the rural US with a multi-faceted solution. We are helping farmers find a use for 100% of their crops through the creation of revolutionary, clean-labeled food products, with a commitment to giving back to those in need. This presentation will discuss real-world problems and how Glean was created to address them through entrepreneurship and a commitment to social responsibility for the environment and the people in our world.

Presenter: Laura Hearn, Co-Founder - Glean, LLC

Laura Hearn has spent her career in the agriculture and food industry with a focus on product development and marketing. Her experiences have involved creating sustainable and innovative value-added products and taking them through the entire product life cycle from ideation to retail and consumer adoption. Through her work with over 40 farming operations throughout North Carolina, Laura saw first-hand the rising issues farmers face to remain profitable as well as the rapid shift in consumer demands for honest and simple foods. In 2017, Laura was a co-founder of Glean, a company that is addressing these global issues by developing enhanced & sustainable clean-label products. Laura is a graduate of North Carolina State University and an eastern North Carolina native!

Staying Local, Working Globally
Location: Ballroom B, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

I am born and raised right here in Eastern NC. I grew up a Pirate and that was the only school I wanted to attend. I love Eastern NC and this is home. I wanted to find an impactful career right here in town. Little did I know, there are many global opportunities right here in our own backyard. Altice (a European company) is the parent company of Suddenlink. Here in our Greenville call center we are the dispatch center for the entire enterprise. I enjoy coming to work every day in my hometown while managing a global telecommunications company. Go to school locally, work locally.

Presenter: Spencer Walston, Regional Vice President, North Carolina - Suddenlink by Altice

Spencer began his career with Suddenlink as Director of Sales Trainer. He was then promoted to Regional Sales Manager. After a second promotion he served as Director of Ops. Currently, he is Regional Sales Manager for sales, P&L, dispatch, ops, and PR. Prior to his position with Suddenlink, Spencer's career includes sales, Aflac, Edward Jones Investing, as well as he owned a landscaping business. Spencer serves on the Board of Directors for the Greenville Chamber of Commerce. Additional accomplishments include Pitt County Leadership Institute Alumni and Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Alumni. Spencer was raised in Windsor, NC in Bertie County but has lived in Greenville since he graduated with a BSBA from ECU. He married his high school sweetheart and has one daughter and one on the way!
Real Leaders Eat Last: The Power of Servant Leadership
Location: Black Box Theater, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

Unethical success sows the seeds of its own failure, but a leader willing to bet their career to do the right things leaves a legacy worth having. In an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment, the need for leaders with key virtues such as courage, conviction, character and consistency stands out in organizations. This session discusses the challenges of ethical leadership and provides powerful examples of how a servant leadership approach provides a foundation for leading organizations with confidence and provides a method for analyzing ambiguous situations.

Presenter: Steve Smith, Director, Operational Excellence - Thermo Fisher Scientific

Steve Smith's professional career includes more than 30 years of professional leadership experience in multiple organizations, including the U.S. Army, Telecommunications and Pharmaceutical industries. He currently serves as the Director of Operational Excellence for Thermo Fisher Scientific. Prior to joining Thermo Fisher, Steve served as SVP of Corporate Development for Baylor Genetics, VPGM Catalent Pharma, VP of Finance for Pharmaceutical Product Development, and has had several leadership roles spanning operations management, strategic development and business development. Steve currently serves on the board of Operational Art Solutions, a leadership development and change management firm. Steve graduated from the United States Military Academy with a B.S. in Engineering. He holds an advanced degree in Operations Research, as well as an MBA from Syracuse University, receiving the Alumni Award to top academic honors. 

Leading Your Leadership Journey
Location: Room 249, Main Student Center
Track: Diversity

Leading your business with a sustained value proposition is key to an organizations growth, profitability and employee retention. All of this starts with YOU. Leading your Leadership Journey is recognizing your place as a critical engine to your personal career and your organizations sustained success. Whether you have goals to be an Entrepreneur with your own business or develop your career within a Fortune 500 company, it is important that you recognize the keys to you and your customer’s success. Diverse workforces, accountable teams and sustained value propositions are 3 core competencies you must embrace for success.

Presenter: Deborah Haywood, Vice President of Sales and Strategy - McKesson Medical Surgical

Deborah Haywood is the Vice President of Sales and Strategic Segments for Extended Care. Joining McKesson in July of 2008, Deborah has held the Vice President of Sales role for Sterling Medical, McKesson Homecare, McKesson Extended Care Government, Clinical and McKesson Long Term Care. Deborah has 29 years in Extended Care market with 20 years in sales leadership and management. Deborah has held primary positions in Sales, Operations and as a Respiratory Therapist within the Extended Care market. She was given McKesson prestigious Leadership award of McKesson Medical Surgical in 2018, Segment Leader of the Year for McKesson Medical-Surgical’s Extended Care business in 2015 and Business Unit of the year 2012 in Homecare. Deborah is a member of PWH (Professional Women in Healthcare) and serves as a Board Member for the HIDA (Health Industry Distributors of America) for Extended Care Markets. She is most proud of her family with her husband Chris with their marriage of 26 years and their daughter, Sarah who is 16 years old.
From Educator to Small Business Owner
Location: Room 307, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

This session will discuss the diverse skills needed to be a successful small business owner. A small business owner must be a jack of all trades balancing the roles of manager, worker, marketing agent, customer service and accountant. Businesses must have a large customer base which will be maintained only through providing a quality product or service, ethical business practices, and outstanding customer service. Small businesses in particular rely on satisfied customers to grow rather than a large advertising budget. To gain and maintain customers, businesses must have workers who are well-trained, dependable and most importantly respectful of customers and co-workers. An owner or manager’s attitude towards quality and service will be reflected by employees and recognized by customers.

Presenter: Don Rhodes, Co-Owner/Operator - Mosquito Authority and Farmville Rentals

Don is Co-Owner and Operator of the Mosquito Authority of Eastern NC LLC and Farmville Rentals LLC. He is a member of the Pitt County Animal Services Advisory Board, Pitt County Board of Adjustments, Pitt Community College Foundation Board, State Employees Credit Union Medical Park Advisory Board and the Fountain Fire Department Board of Directors. Don is a proud four time-graduate of East Carolina University. He is a retired educator having worked in Camden, Edgecombe and Pitt counties. Don’s wife Sara Beth is the elected Clerk of Superior Court of Pitt County; his daughter Lillie is a senior in the Honors College at ECU and SGA Vice President; and his daughter Ellie is an eighth grade student at Farmville Middle School where she plays softball. The Rhodes family is the 2018-2019 ECU Family of the Year.

Doing Business in Asia
Location: Ballroom A, Main Student Center
Track: Globalization

In the looming of trade war, understanding about Asian business cultures is crucial to achieve growth yet still remain safe. There were complaints from international fund's investors about legal troubles in China; however, Hong Kong developers could raise $3 billion investment in only 2 weeks. What makes a five star international hotel up to 10 years to grand-open in India? How a Chamber of Commerce and Industry abuses its authority in a developing country? Does contract matter in Asian business context? Insight of doing business in Asia could be found in sharing from a real-estate developer in Asia.

Presenter: Michael Dang, Chairman of BODs - Anpha Holdings

Michael Dang is Chairman and Founder of Anpha Holdings and M.I.K Corporation, two leading real-estate and hospitality developers in Vietnam. He is also known to be host of TV-series "Properties Talks" in Financial Network Channel of Vietnam. Having in-depth business development experience in Europe, Middle East, Asia, and Oceania, Michael benefits several Asian MNCs in position of Board Member and Senior Board Advisors. As Singapore's scholars, Michael earned his first-class honored Bachelor degree in Engineering from Nanyang Technological University, a graduate degree in Financial Management by Singapore Institute of Management University and a Master of Management in Hospitality in Cornell University. Michael is recipient of International Young Inventor Award, National Idol for Excellence and Gold medal of International Olympiad in Physic.
Factors of Environment in the Hospitality Industry
Location: Ballroom B, Main Student Center
Track: Environment

Environment relates to many aspects of a business-workplace environment, sustainability, and effects the business has on the environment. In this session, we will be discussing how The Umstead Hotel & Spa creates its culture and atmosphere that stimulates a diverse range of people. Other topics will include not only how the hotel promotes sustainability but as well the efforts the hotel enforces that work to decrease negative impact on the environment.

Presenter: Lauren Avery, Herons Restaurant Manager - The Umstead Hotel & Spa

Lauren Avery is the Herons Restaurant Manager at The Umstead Hotel & Spa in Cary, NC. Lauren earned her Bachelor degree in Hospitality Leadership at East Carolina University with a concentration in Food & Beverage and a minor in Business Management.

From "Diversity" to "Inclusion" and Why the Distinction is Vital to Capitalize on Emerging Business Opportunities
Location: Black Box Theater, Main Student Center
Track: Diversity

Diversity is potentially one of America’s greatest strengths, but its inability to value and leverage that strength may prove to be one of its greatest weaknesses. New and emerging business leaders must come to understand that diverse business teams offer the greatest insight into understanding and capitalizing on local as well as global opportunities. Teams that reflect the social, racial, and life experiences of their clients and prospects, best position their organizations to identify and adapt to the changing mores within an ever changing global economy.

The real question however is whether simply "looking" diverse or having diverse players is really enough. What about the culture of an organization? Does that culture welcome and embrace differences or is there an unspoken expectation that values assimilation? The expectation of some is that America should be a “melting pot”, but isn’t it actually more like a salad bowl? One terrific entree teaming with individual and diverse morsels that bring flavor and excitement to the dish. Join me as we explore this topic of growing importance in the world of today and tomorrow.

Presenter: Ron Wesson, County Commissioner - Bertie County, N.C.

Ronald “Ron” Wesson is a retired Senior Vice President and Global Leader of The Dun & Bradstreet Corporation where he served for more than 31 years. Ron has led business divisions through start-up, survival, turnaround and growth modes. His senior leadership responsibilities included directing more than 2,300 employees in divisions with revenues in excess of $2.2 billion. Ron began his career with D&B in Raleigh, N.C. as a Financial Analyst in 1975, and went on to hold progressively challenging positions within Field Operations and Sales Management. At retirement in 2006, Ron directed D&B’s Supply Management Solutions Division at the global level. Prior to that responsibility, he led D&B U.S. Sales Communications as well as senior leadership positions within Indirect Sales. As a result of his entrepreneurial acumen, Ron started two of the company’s most successful units; Minority & Women Owned Business Solutions and D&B High Risk Solutions (Commercial Fraud Detection). Perhaps equally impressive is that Ron served as the corporations “Change Agent” while leading U.S. Sales Communications. He led both “internal” and supplier diversity efforts within The Dun & Bradstreet Corporation. Ron has been a nationally recognized leader in this space, and has championed the concept of business “inclusion” as the next step beyond business “diversity". He
has presented nationally on this topic on numerous occasions. Ron completed his undergraduate work at The University of N.C. at Chapel Hill and his graduate studies at The Sloan School of Business, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.), where he also completed Senior Executive Studies in "Managing Change in Complex Organizations". Ron & his wife, Dr. Patricia W. Wesson, a local practicing Psychiatrist, reside in Windsor, N.C., where Ron serves on the Bertie County Board of Commissioners and on several civic and community boards.

Supply Chain Panel: Leadership Lessons Learned After Graduation
Location: Room 125, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics, Diversity, Globalization, Environment

Find out what working in Supply Chain is really like from ECU COB alumni. Learn about what you can expect in this career as well as what our panelists consider to be trends and pitfalls!

Panelist: Michael Andrews, Supply & Demand Manager - GlaxoSmithKline

Mike Andrews is the US Supply & Demand Manager for Immunology and HIV portfolios at GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). Mike is a 2012 graduate of the ECU College of Business. He earned his BSBA with a concentration in Operations & Supply Chain Management and was awarded the Most Outstanding Senior of the Marketing & Supply Chain Management Department. After graduation, he started on GSK's Procurement Future Leaders Program, and held roles in Indirect & Direct Procurement along with Manufacturing Site Planning until moving to his current role in RTP, NC. Mike lives in Raleigh, NC and is a member of SAFE Haven for Cats.

Panelist: Alexander Bosco, Director, Supply Chain Cost Mgmt & Data Systems - Triumph Group

Alex Bosco is the Director, Supply Chain Cost Mgmt & Data Systems at Triumph Group. Alex graduated from the East Carolina University. Alex earned his BS with a concentration in Operations & Supply Chain Management and later earned his MBA from Wake Forest University. He is also very active in his local fitness community participating in 10Ks, yoga and group weight training classes.

Panelist: Scott Faison, Supply Planning Analyst - Newell Brands

Scott Faison is a Supply Chain Analyst for Newell Brands in the Rubbermaid food storage division in their Huntersville, NC office. He graduated from East Carolina University in 2008 and earned his BSBA in Marketing with a concentration in Supply Chain Management. While attending East Carolina University, he was selected to represent the university at the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals Conference in Denver, Colorado. Scott also holds an Applied Associates degree in Information Systems from Pitt Community College. One of his passions away from work is his involvement in youth sports where he coaches several age groups in a variety of sports. Scott also serves on the board of directors for Mooresville Youth Athletics (a nonprofit organization) and is their current Communication Director.

Panelist: Clay Geiger, Supply Chain Planner - Mayne Pharma

Clay Geiger is a Supply Chain Planner at Mayne Pharma in Greenville, NC. He previously worked as a Financial Analyst at Spirit Aerosystems in Kinston, NC. Clay graduated from the College of Business at East Carolina University and earned his BSBA with a degree in Supply Chain Management.

Panelist: Adam Quinn, Purchasing Manager - Interroll Corporation

Adam is the Purchasing Manager of Interroll Corporation in Wilmington, NC. He graduated from the East Carolina University and earned his BSBA degree in Marketing and doing a dual concentration in Marketing and Supply Chain Management.
Creating and Tending to Your Professional "Garden"

Location: Room 249, Main Student Center
Track: Environment

Everyone wants the best out of their professional life, but just like a garden, it takes patience, preparation, and a lot of nurturing. This session will give insight to students on how to go from just going to class (and not "creating their garden") to becoming a more successful professional and more skilled "gardener". Key points to this presentation will be how I got to the position I have now, skills learned through successes and failures, and how to adjust to the environment of college to the "real working world".

Presenter: Brittany Coleman, Associate Technical Training Consultant - SAS Institute

Brittany Coleman is an Associate Technical Training Consultant at SAS Institute. Brittany graduated from East Carolina University (May 2016). Brittany earned her BSBA with a concentration in Management Information Systems. She was also a member of the ECU Honors College.

Lessons Learned

Location: Room 253, Main Student Center
Track: Environment, Globalization

Listen to a career that has spanned more than several decades! Find out how a single store selling water sports and boating equipment in one small location became a world-wide powerhouse!

Presenter: V. Parker Overton, Founder of Overton’s, Founding Member of Select Bank & Trust Company

Parker Overton was born April 17, 1944 and is Founder of Overton’s - the world’s largest Catalog of Watersports equipment and Boating supplies from 1975 to 2003. One of the Founding Members of Select Bank and Trust Company where he served as Chairman of the Board for 9 years until Select merged with New Century. He still serves on the Select Bank Board today. He is former President of the N.C. State Veterinary Foundation for three years and also served as Chairman of the Investment Committee for 7 years. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees on the Investment Committee for the Randall Terry Foundation at N.C. State University. He is past Chairman of Pitt County Memorial Hospital Foundation. He currently serves on the Greenville Utilities Commission. Parker is a Commercial Pilot and is type rated in three Jets. Married to Becky Harris Overton. He has a daughter, Kristi Overton Johnson of Keystone Heights, Florida and a son Michael of Greenville and five grandchildren.

Session III  2 - 2:45 pm

The Importance of Human Capital in a Global Economy

Location: Ballroom A, Main Student Center
Track: Globalization

The impacts from changing growth and trade patterns across the world are clearly visible in the US economy and are a key reason topics such as China, tariffs and trade agreements are part of the national discussion. This session will explore the impacts of economic growth and change on the need for human capital in the US economy. Specifically, changing trade patterns have increased the demand for more skilled labor in the US, yet we are having a difficult time meeting that demand to keep the economy growing up to potential.
Matt Martin is a regional executive at the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. He is based in the Charlotte office, where he leads the bank's outreach efforts across North Carolina and South Carolina. As part of the nation's central bank, the Richmond Fed supports the monetary policy process by engaging business, banking, and community leaders throughout the District to gain a real-time understanding of the state of the economy and the challenges facing our communities. As the regional executive, Matt has responsibility for these efforts across the two-state area through a range of activities, including a regional Board of Directors, industry roundtables, speaking engagements, and other undertakings. Matt joined the Richmond Fed as a regional economist in 2006 and was promoted into his current role in 2009. Prior to joining the Bank, he worked as a senior economist for Moody's Analytics and as an analyst at the Congressional Budget Office. He also spent time as a faculty member at Kent State University where he taught macroeconomics, money and banking, and economic history. Matt is active in the community having served as past chair of the board for Community Link, a housing non-profit where he continues to serve on the Strategic Planning Committee. He currently serves as a board member for Veteran’s Bridge Home, an organization that helps veteran’s transition to civilian life. He is also a board member for the North Carolina Council for Economic Education and the Belk School of Business Advisory Board at the University of North Carolina Charlotte. And he recently served as a member of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Opportunity Task Force. A Pennsylvania native, Matt has a Bachelor of Science degree in economics from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a doctorate in economics from the University of Delaware, which he earned after completing his military service.

The Restaurant Business
Location: Ballroom B, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

Founded in Greenville, NC in 2008 by Derek Oliverio, Sup Dogs Restaurant is a one-of-a-kind restaurant concept focused on bringing friends, students, and families of all ages together and offering them extraordinary dining experiences. Taking our cues from our imaginative Founder’ when you step into Sup Dogs, we aim to transform your day by serving the most creative specialty hot dogs, hand-smashed burgers, and the tastiest drinks in an energized restaurant environment. Derek unexpectedly passed away in a house fire in late 2011.

Shortly thereafter, Derek’s brother, Bret Oliverio, left his career as a radio executive in Washington, DC to take over Derek’s business in hopes of continuing the Sup Dogs dream. Bret jumped into the restaurant business with zero experience. He has been the Owner/Operator of Sup Dogs Restaurant since February 2012. In June 2014, Sup Dogs opened their second location in Chapel Hill, NC. Each April, Sup Dogs puts on their signature community event, "Doggie Jams“ a 3,000+ person concert featuring rock bands and celebrities.

Presenter: Bret Oliverio, Owner - Sup Dogs Restaurant

Before jumping into the restaurant business with zero experience Bret was in the sports radio business. He worked as an Executive Producer - The Sports Junkies at CBS Radio. Bret graduated from James Madison University with a degree in Business.
My 30 year Journey- Becoming a Global Executive
Location: Black Box Theater, Main Student Center
Track: Globalization

The engagement session shares lessons from 30 years of advising global companies across multiple industries. As a Pharma executive, Business School Dean, PwC Partner, and Strategy Advisor, this is the story of how navigating business abroad requires both self-awareness and curiosity. The presenter shares his journeys as a management educator and business advisor across SubSahara, Middle East, Europe, Russia, China, and South America.

Presenter: Jim Sheegog, President - Rowhill Consulting Group

Jim Sheegog, MSW, BCD is President and Founder, Rowhill Consulting Group, LLC
Prior to founding Rowhill Consulting Group, Jim served as PriceWaterhouseCoopers Leader of Executive and Organizational Development. Jim was the Americas Leader for Learning & Education, and R&D Head for Learning & Education. At Duke University, Jim was the Assistant Dean of Global Executive Education at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, where he worked with faculty teams to introduce the Global Executive MBA program in 1996, the world’s first internet-based global MBA degree program. In 28 years of consulting work, Jim has advised world-class corporations, including: Siemens A.G., IBM, GlaxoSmithKline, Ford Motor Company, Morgan Crucible plc, Pfizer, Philips Electronics, Deutsche Telekom, Royal Bank Canada Financial Group, FIAT, Maersk, Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation, Royal Dutch Shell ExxonMobil, Quintiles Transnational Corporation, Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation, Dow Chemical, Exelon Energy Corporation, and leading medical practices. Jim is a North Carolina native, residing in Chapel Hill, NC. He graduated from UNC with a graduate degree in Public Administration. He has served as adjunct faculty at Duke University, UNC-Chapel Hill, and George Mason University. He’s a board member at the Lung Cancer Initiative of NC and at the Masonboro Yacht Club and Marina. He holds a Post Graduate Board Certification in Clinical Counseling and a USCG Captains License. Mr. Sheegog merges his global executive education experience with a passion for sailing at the Leadership Academy, a partnership with The Blockade Runner Resort in Wrightsville Beach, NC.

Entrepreneur Panel: What is the Difference between Ordinary and Extraordinary?
Location: Room 125, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics, Diversity, Globalization, Environment

Join the discussion, ask questions, and learn how current undergraduate students have taken their respective business interests by storm! Learn how they started with an interest that ignited to a passion that is now making them money!

Panelist: Taylor Hicks, Owner - Simple & Sentimental
Owner of Simple & Sentimental, an online gift boutique. Winner of the Pirate Entrepreneurship Challenge 2018, and senior at the ECU COB studying small business management.

Panelist: Steven Lipscomb, Co-Founder - Vybe
Steven is co-founder of Vybe, an app that tracks how busy a bar or club is throughout any given night. The app also provides information such as specials, live music, etc that you can use to help plan an evening out with friends. Steven is a junior at ECU with a concentration in Marketing and Entrepreneurship. Steven along with business partner, Camden Bathras, won the 2nd annual Pirate Entrepreneur Challenge.
Panelist: Matthew McCall, Founder - Infinite Limits Solutions, LLC

Matthew is the Founder of Infinite Limits Solutions, LLC. He is a US Marine Corps Veteran and the Student Veteran Representative for the East Carolina Veterans Engagement Coalition, an organization created by the Department of Veterans Affairs to address the needs of the veteran community in eastern North Carolina. Matthew graduated from East Carolina University in 2018 and continues to assist student entrepreneurs as needed. Matthew earned his Bachelor of Science in Engineering with a concentration in Biomedical Engineering. He won second place in the Miller School of Entrepreneurship's Inaugural Pirate Entrepreneurship Challenge in 2018. He is also a recipient of ECU’s Excel Scholar Award and the Gold Leaf Scholarship.

"Paying Your Dues" in Today's Business Environment
Location: Room 249, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

New graduates are often faced with the antiquated management philosophy of "paying their dues" before they are allowed to contribute meaningful ideas or lead significant projects. This bureaucratic management style exhausts top performers who have great ideas but can't enact change. There is a focus on following procedures and seniority is rewarded rather than results.

After experiencing the stifling status quo at two of the biggest accounting firms in the world, The Real Estate CPA was founded. Our mission is to change the accounting industry by creating a unicorn firm that empowers all employees and eliminates corporate BS.

Operating as a completely remote firm, fifteen teammates collaborate from their homes to remove the red tape most accountants face in their roles. Through transparent, consistent team communication and an open floor to present and lead innovative ideas, TRECPA has grown to be a $1.5 million firm in two short years.

Join the fastest growing CPA firm in the nation to learn how you can "pay your dues" well before landing your first job and how we are shaking up an old and tired industry by leveraging the biggest asset we have: our people.

Specifically, we'll discuss:
1. How a firm with an average age of 27 years old attracts and retains huge real estate clients.
2. How we operate without bosses, levels, titles, and hierarchy.
3. Areas we have succeeded and failed.
4. How we crush the stereotype that remote teams are less collaborative and effective than in-office teams.

Presenter: Brandon Hall, CEO, Hall CPA PLLC

Brandon Hall is a Certified Public Accountant, national speaker, and is the Founder/CEO of The Real Estate CPA. Brandon works with real estate investors, syndicates, and private equity funds to optimize tax positions and streamline accounting and business functions. He believes that the accounting industry needs to adopt flexible working arrangements in order to continue to attract top talent. Brandon worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers and Ernst & Young prior to launching his own CPA firm, Hall CPA PLLC (The Real Estate CPA). Through the knowledge gained by working with real estate investors, Brandon invests in multi-family properties personally and through his capital group, Naked Capital.
**Relationships: How They Take You beyond Your Degree**

**Location:** Room 253, Main Student Center  
**Track:** Ethics

*Join this colorful discussion of how meaningful relationships contributed to professional and personal growth and development which leads to meaning positions. This promises to be a fun discussion regarding relationships, human nature and how investing energy into serving others will move you into larger leadership roles faster than a degree.*

**Presenter:** Bennett Wall, Director, Service Line Development - Vidant Health

Bennett Wall earn his Master of Business Administration from East Carolina University in 2016 and his Bachelor of Science in Forest Management from North Carolina State University in 2000. He is a Former State Certified General Appraiser in NC, SC, VA and GA; Former North Carolina Registered Forester Epic Certified in Reporting Workbench, Report Writing and Administration; Epic Certified in MyEpic Dashboard Administration Member. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the Ronald McDonald House of Eastern North Carolina.

**RMI Panel: Fostering Inclusion**

**Location:** Room 307, Main Student Center  
**Track:** Diversity

*People of color face challenges and obstacles in business that are sometimes simply unbelievable. The patience, skill, and fortitude it takes to overcome those challenges is something every business person should understand and appreciate. This panel discussion, moderated by Dr. Brenda Wells, will take a very candid look at the issues facing people of color in today's business environment, and, will also discuss creative solutions to those issues.*

**Panelist:** Jose Flores, Assistant Vice President, Casualty - Hallmark Financial Services, Inc

Jose holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Insurance from the University of North Texas. He also is a Certified Insurance Counselor and is perusing his CPCU. Jose started his career at Union Standard Insurance a Berkley Company in 2005 as an underwriting intern. He held the positions of Commercial Lines Marketing Representative and Production Underwriter with Union Standard. In 2013 Jose joined AIG and was a Foreign P&C Underwriting Specialist. Jose underwrote property, casualty, and specialty products for US domiciled business doing business outside of the US. He did this by working with alpha houses, independent retail agents, and wholesalers. In late 2018 Jose took on the role of AVP of Casualty for Hallmark Financial Services. He is currently helping the organization reorganize its primary non-admitted GL and HNO business. He will also be underwriting casualty business, and will be working exclusively with wholesale brokers. Jose currently serves on education committee for the Texas Surplus License Association of Texas, and the IIABA InVest committee for the Emerging Leaders of Dallas. Jose is also past President of the Young Agents of Dallas, and a recipient of the prestigious Independent Insurance Agents of Dallas "Young Agent of the Year" award.

**Panelist:** Tiara Morris, Senior Underwriter - Chubb Insurance

Tiara Morris is a Senior Underwriter at Chubb Insurance in the Global Casualty Unit. Prior to joining Chubb, she held various roles at Liberty Mutual and Travelers Insurance. She is the Corresponding Secretary and Scholarship Chair for the Dallas Fort Worth Chapter of the National African American Insurance Association. She previously served as the Vice President and Education Chair for NAAIA DFW. Tiara is a Big Sister in the Big Brother Big Sister mentoring program and enjoys mentoring students and young professionals.
Panelist: Steven Smith, Agent - State Farm

Steven Smith was born and raised in Temple, Texas and attended The University of North Texas where he graduated with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Emergency Administration and Disaster Planning. With Steven's collegiate career coming to an end, he was introduced to the Risk Management Department and Dr. Brenda Wells at the University of North Texas. This introduction would change the course of Steven's life and his true passion for helping others was shaped through the leadership and direction of Dr. Brenda Wells. Steven Smith has more than 20 years' experience in the insurance business. He began his career as an Agent with State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company on February 1, 2000. State Farm is a mutual insurance company that makes its primary focus its policy holders. State Farm and its affiliates are the largest providers of auto, home and individual life insurance in the United States. Steven Smith is a "Presidents Club" Agent whose selected members are recognized as being in (the top 50 agents in the country out of 19,000 agents) across the country. Currently, Steven runs his own successful insurance agency in Katy, Texas, and serves over 2000 clients in the Greater Houston Gulf Coast Area.

Session IV 3 - 3:45 pm

Those Brave Enough, Please Step Forward
Location: Ballroom A, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

A look at essential leadership qualities / leadership opportunities, with a deeper dive into the essential core value of ethics, and pitfalls to avoid. Then who will step forward to lead and advance our communities, our state, our country, and our world, with a 100% determination to preserve our heritage, and our future.

Presenter: G. William Taylor III, Area Executive SVP - First Bank

William, a Washington, NC native, is a 1979 ECU Graduate with a BSBA concentration in management. He possesses 33 years with Wachovia Bank / Wells Fargo as a Personal Banker, Retail Banking Manager, VP and City Executive Washington NC, Area Executive and SVP for First Bank in Washington, and including Greenville, Belhaven, and Kill Devil Hills banking operations. First Bank largest community bank headquartered in North Carolina at $5.9 Billion in Total Assets, and headquartered in Southern Pines. Named #1 Community Bank in NC in 2018. Recipient of Jaycees Boss of the Year award in 1986, past United Way Campaign Chairman Volunteer 2005, active member, past president 2008, and Rotarian of the Year Washington Noon Rotary 2004-2005, past Salvation Army Beaufort County Board Member, past board member of Washington Yacht & Country Club 2015-2017, past Lay Leader of First United Methodist Church Washington, Executive Board Member and President Elect of Washington Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce, Active Board Member of Beaufort County Committee of 100 and past White Hat recipient, and recently elected to a 3 year term Beaufort-Hyde Community Foundation.

The Open Door of Hospitality
Location: Ballroom B, Main Student Center
Track: Globalization

The hospitality industry encompasses many aspects of business that are translatable across numerous fields. As students near the end of their college career, finding a job can be daunting. Sometimes, a foot in the door can lead to a gateway of opportunity.
Presenter: Tyler McDowell, General Manager - Prime Investments

Tyler has worked with multiple hotel brands including Hilton, IHG, and Choice before becoming General Manager of Prime Investments. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management with a focus in Lodging from East Carolina University.

Grappling with the Social, Economic, and Environmental Challenges of Our Time
Location: Black Box Theater, Main Student Center
Track: Environment

Responsible investing is a rapidly evolving field that balances investment returns with a desire for positive societal outcomes. AB has a long history of managing responsible portfolios, beginning in the 1980s. In 2011 we became a signatory of the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, which address the global need for economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion. We invest exclusively in themes derived from these principles, such as renewable energy, underserved community development, healthcare, and education. AB believes that to be a leading global firm and to remain true to our mission, we must effectively grapple with the social, economic, and environmental challenges of our time.

Presenter: Mary Ann Best, Senior Managing Director - Bernstein Private Wealth Management

Mary Ann Best is a Senior Managing Director at Bernstein Private Wealth Management. Best has served on the faculty for training efforts for multiple constituencies within the firm, as an integral part of the Bernstein culture centers on learning and improving. She is highly committed to the training of financial advisors, helping them become the best versions of themselves. She is also on Bernstein’s Women’s Development Council and is a member of the Honorary Board of Halcyon; a non-profit organization designed to seek and celebrate creativity in all forms and promote social good. Best earned a BS from East Carolina University and holds an MBA from Mercer University.

The Importance of Understanding Diversity in Large Corporations
Location: Room 125, Main Student Center
Track: Diversity

Diversity has a multitude of meanings beyond the culture and background of individuals within an organization. This session will outline the many definitions and examples of what diversity means in a professional setting, and how my upbringing and education have helped me thrive in this environment. The session will also highlight the challenges faced and shortcomings that a lack of true understanding of diversity can cause, and how one can overcome these challenges. There will be a strong tie to the education received at East Carolina and what it teaches future professionals about diversity.

Presenter: Sean Fleming, Regional Cluster Manager - BSH Home Appliances Corp.

Sean Fleming is the Regional Cluster Manager for BSH Home Appliances Corporation for Indirect Categories Procurement in North America. Sean has been working for BSH for close to 9 years. Sean also serves as the President of the New Bern Youth Lacrosse Club and Assistant Coach of the NBHS Lacrosse team. Sean graduated from East Carolina in 2010 with Bachelor’s degrees in International Business and German and will serve as a charter member of the ECU COB Management Advisory Council. Sean successfully completed the Junior Excellence Program for BSH recognizing high potential young talent in the organization and was selected as Employee of the Quarter in 2017.
Growing a Family Business in a Changing Market
Location: Room 249, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

*Dixon Foods Group is approaching our 50th anniversary. We continue to evolve based on the changing needs of our customers and employees. We employ over 1800 people and serve over 14 million guests a year. We continue to remain a family run business but are continuing to use process and people development to meet expectations of our stakeholders.*

Presenter: Wade Dixon, President, Dixon Foods Group, Inc.

Wade Dixon is the President of Dixon Foods Group and a second generation McDonald’s Franchisee. We own 28 restaurants in Eastern North Carolina including all the locations in Greenville. Following in his father’s footsteps, Wade was approved to be a McDonald’s Owner/Operator at the age of 24. The youngest to be approved in the Raleigh Region. Wade is married to Dana and they have three daughters. An avid supporter of the Ronald McDonald House, Wade serves on the Local and State Board of Directors for the charity.

Trust: The Crucial Foundation for Ethical Leadership
Location: Room 253, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

*This interactive session provides participants with concrete, actionable ways to build trust and demonstrate trustworthiness, identifies core elements necessary for trust, and illustrates how trust enables leaders to lead ethically. Participants will leave with a clear understanding of how they can be intentional about building trust and credibility as they develop as leaders at any level.*

Presenter: Kendra Harris, Training and Development Specialist - The City of Greenville, NC

Dr. Harris earned her Doctorate of Education from the ECU College of Education focused on organizational leadership, particularly in higher education. She is passionate about developing leaders in any setting, and is particularly interested in service for the greater good. Dr. Harris grew up in Greenville, received a BA from UNC Chapel Hill and a MA from Towson University. A self-proclaimed "Leadership Nerd," she proudly serves the City of Greenville as their Training and Development Specialist.

Destroy Your Career 101: Situational Ethics
Location: Room 307, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

*This session will look at real-life examples of highly successful business people who allowed their situations to influence their ethics and the price they paid as a result. Will cover the absolute nature of ethical decisions and demonstrate how careers and firms are wrecked when Situational Ethics are followed. The use of mentors to help navigate tricky ethical situations will be discussed.*

Presenter: David Leonard, Chairman & CEO, RSUI Group, Inc.

Dave Leonard began his career in the P&C Insurance industry in 1979. He joined RSUI Group, Inc. in 1999 and was elected Chairman and CEO in April, 2012. Prior roles in the industry include Casualty Underwriting management and Treaty Reinsurance underwriting. From 2016 to 2017 Dave served
as President of NAPSLO (now known as WSIA), the major trade association for the Specialty Insurance Industry. He also served on their Board of Directors, and as Co-Chair of the Legislative and Education Committees. He has been a panelist for the NAPSLO E&S and Advanced Schools, for the NAPSLO Annual and Mid-Year conventions, and an instructor for the NAPSLO E&S School. Dave graduated with a BSBA from East Carolina University, holds CPCU, ARe, AIAF and ARM designations and has completed the AICPCU/Wharton School Insurance Executive Development Program. He lives in Alpharetta, Georgia with his wife, Pamela.

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**Session V  4 - 4:45 pm**

**The Thermo Fisher Scientific Greenville Finance Team**

Location:    Ballroom B, Main Student Center  
Track:      Diversity

*A look at the culture that we have created in our team and our team members experience at all levels. The presentation will include: what a typical workday is like for our Financial Analyst Sebastian Kressley, an ECU graduate in 2017; the skills that are required to perform an Operations Finance role; why multiple team members like working for Thermo Fisher Finance; and Career Advice from a Financial Analyst, Controller, Finance Business Partner, and an Intern.*

Presenter: Derek Niese, Finance Business Partner - Thermo Fisher Scientific

Derek Niese, CPA, MBA, FP&A possesses over 13 years of Pharmaceutical Industry Finance and Accounting experience with Thermo Fisher Scientific, Pfizer and Merck.

He earned a Masters of Business Administration from North Carolina State University and a Bachelors in Accounting from The Ohio State University.

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**Ethics and Cybersecurity: Compliance vs. Assurance**

Location:    Black Box Theater, Main Student Center  
Track:      Ethics

*Ethics is usually defined as the principles that govern a person's behavior or decision making. This is true in Cybersecurity as it is in other areas of business, where decisions are made every day that affect not only yourself, but many others whom you may or may not know. Cybersecurity has the ability to touch all areas of an organization. With this ability, an understanding of all areas of an organization is paramount to assuring the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the organizational information.*

This session will identify the difference between compliance and assurance, including how this difference affects the overall business needs of an organization. The ability to communicate assurance from a non-technical standpoint will be defined in such a way that the concept can be properly understood throughout the organization. In doing so, the dilemma of how to ethically approach a decision can be made in order to address the organizational risk.

Presenter: Thomas Graham, CISO - CynergisTek

Thomas Graham is a three-time graduate of ECU having received his BSBA-MIS in ’07, MBA in ’10, and MS-TS in ’12. Currently, he is pursuing his PhD in Information Assurance and Security from Capella University with an expected graduation date in 2019. Along with his academic degrees, Thomas holds multiple industry recognized certifications including CISSP, HCISPP, and Six Sigma.
Thomas currently is Vice President and CISO for CynergisTek, a top-rated healthcare security consulting firm. Prior to this, he worked with various components of the DoD where he served as a Tech Writer, Analyst, Engineer, Information Assurance Officer, and most recently as Lead for the DHA Mitigation and Remediation Support (MARS) Team. During his time with MARS, his team obtained multiple awards and recognition including official Naval Commendation and a 2018 FedHealth IT Innovation Award. Prior to his time working with the DoD, he worked in operations for multiple restaurant groups where he was positioned at locations that were under-performing. At these locations, Thomas addressed training, operations, local marketing, and other tasks as needed to address the locations' performance.

**Introvert/Extrovert Perspectives on Leadership**

Location: Room 125, Main Student Center  
Track: Ethics, Diversity, Globalization, Environment

*Stop by to listen and ask questions about introvert/extrovert perspectives on leadership! Find out what works for our panelists!*  

Panelist: Corsica Nambiar, Finance - Student Leadership Board President
Corsica Nambiar is the President of SLB. She is also a member of Epsilon Sigma Alpha and Investment Club. Corsica studies Finance at East Carolina University and works with ECU’s Production Services. Last year she served as a Jarvis Mentor. Through Jarvis and Epsilon Sigma Alpha she has completed over 80 volunteer hours since fall 2017. She is a recipient of ECU Leads Stage One program, BB&T Emerging Leaders Certification Spring 2019 and currently expecting to graduate May 2019.

Panelist: Julie Vincent, Marketing - Student Leadership Board Vice President
Julie Vincent is the Vice President of SLB. She is also a member of the Jarvis LLC. Julie studies Marketing and Leadership at East Carolina University. She is currently a sophomore expecting to graduate May 2021. She is the recipient of ECU Leads’ Stage One planning to complete the entire program, mentor in the Jarvis program, and a recipient of the Dean’s list.

Panelist: Tyler Whisnant, Finance - Student Leadership Board Budget Committee
Tyler Whisnant is the Budget Committee head of SLB. He has been involved in the Student Leadership Board since spring of 2017. Tyler is also the Vice President of Finance for Investment Club. He is a senior graduating in May 2019 studying Finance. Tyler received Exec. of the Year serving as Vice President of his fraternity. This is Tyler’s second time on a student leadership conference panel.

Panelist: Leah Stout, Marketing & Merchandising, Student Leadership Board - Marketing Director
Leah Stout is the Marketing Director of SLB. She is also a member of National Retail Federation Club and is fitness instructor at Pure Barre. Leah studies Marketing and Merchandising at East Carolina University. She is currently a junior expecting to graduate May 2020. She is the recipient of Dean’s list 5 semesters standing, and won best window display from Dowdy Student Store Fall 2018.

Panelist: Mason Kepley, Marketing - Student Leadership Board New Membership Director
Mason Kepley is Director of Organizational Development and New Membership in SLB. She is a Student-Athlete Competing in Division I American Athletic Conference for Cross Country and Track and Field. Mason is studying Marketing and pursuing the Professional Selling Certificate at East Carolina University. She will graduate this May and has accepted a job offer in Louisville, KY.
Why Relationships, Diversity & Culture Matter Even at the Starting Line
Location: Room 253, Main Student Center
Track: Diversity

*Besides being competent in your work the most important thing you can do for your career is build relationships - both direct and indirect. Learn how these relationships can benefit your future careers through learning my experiences!*

Presenter: Matt Slate, Managing Director - Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Matt Slate has worked for Bank of America since 1997. Currently he is the Managing Director for Bank of America Merrill Lynch. Matt is also a Senior Trader in Global Credit and Special situation. Other roles Matt has had since 1997 include Trader, Trading Desk Analyst, Trading Risk Manager/Analyst, Operations Analyst and Credit Underwriter. Matt serves in ECU’s Foundation BOD and THCAS Advancement Council. He lives in Chatham, NJ and commutes daily to NYC. In his spare time he enjoys married life and his daughter. He is an avid Pirate football fan! Matt earned a BS in Biology from ECU in 1996 and a MBA in 2002 from UNC Charlotte.

Finding the Career for You- Interviewing, Internships, Branding, and Stranger Things
Location: Room 307, Main Student Center
Track: Ethics

*Learn:*
- how to narrow the funnel of career choices
- how to get past fear of interviewing
- why internships matter
- what do companies look for in candidates
- what should candidates look for in a company and a career

Presenter: Tony Chimera, SVP Human Resources - Sompo International

Tony has over 25 years of HR experience in the insurance, publishing, and technology industries. He is passionate about helping students grow and develop their careers and is a huge Buffalo Bills fan. He earned his BS in Management from Auburn University and MBA from the University of Georgia.

*We look forward to seeing you at next year’s Business Leadership Conference!*
All conference participants are invited to attend the Conference Reception sponsored by Smithfield

[Smithfield][Good food. Responsibly.]

4:45 – 5:45pm
Ballroom C