



**SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY**

*College of Business*



# NEBRASKA LEDGER

UNIVERSITY of NEBRASKA-LINCOLN • 2021

# UNPRECEDENTED. CHALLENGING. UNUSUAL.

Over the past year, we filled a bingo card on how to describe our shared experience going through this pandemic. If there's a silver lining to be found, it's how at the School of Accountancy (SOA), we turned a year to remember for so many negative reasons into a landmark year.

Our faculty were named among the world's best in the latest BYU Accounting Research Productivity Ranking. Ranked No. 5 worldwide for archival tax and No. 6 worldwide for archival audit research, Nebraska earned that recognition based on the total research output of the school's faculty in the top 12 peer-reviewed accounting journals.

In February, the College of Business and SOA participated in a virtual Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) Continuous Improvement Review (CIR). AACSB standards are used to evaluate a business school's mission, operations, faculty qualifications and contributions, programs and other critical areas. Selected as part of a pilot group of 20 business schools, we adopted the new AACSB standards and met with the review team. AACSB recently notified us that the school and the college earned reaccreditation for the next five years.

Our most recent graduates increased our CPA exam pass rate (see page 23) as well. This is another way our students lead the future of business as we grow them into top talent for employers.

Based on employer feedback, we launched a new required class that merges the worlds of business and theater to prepare accounting students to communicate effectively in the workplace, even during the most unpredictable situations (see pages 4-6). After its first two semesters, we're seeing positive results in further developing this important soft skill in our students.

Furthermore, accounting is a service business, and we have to understand that we need to help our clients regardless of what we may have or not have in common. At Nebraska, we believe in the power of every person, so I was happy to work with a group of students to form a UNL chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants (see pages 8-9 & back cover). This organization helps build a sense of belonging and provides a place where students can help each other succeed.

It is because of people like you and your continued support and engagement that we are able to do big things. After seven years serving as the school's director, I will take on a new role at the college as associate dean for graduate programs and executive education in July. It has been an honor working to advance your alma mater as a leader in accounting education. I look forward to seeing you in the future in my new role.

Go Big Red!



Aaron Crabtree  
Director of the School of Accountancy  
🐦 @UNLACCT



Dr. Aaron Crabtree

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UNIVERSITY of NEBRASKA-LINCOLN



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# Accounting Improv Course Bolsters Students' Communication Skills

*A new course combines improvisational practices with accounting knowledge to enhance communication skills. Julie Uribe, lecturer at the Johnny Carson School of Theater and Film, leads students through improvisational exercises.*

## **The New Language of Business**

Research and Communication in Accounting (ACCT 455), a new course, merges the worlds of business and theater with the goal of preparing future accountants to adapt to an ever-changing industry. Ultimately, it prepares students to communicate effectively in the workplace during even the most unpredictable situations.

“Responding in real time during unexpected or unstructured situations is very important for our students in their careers because much of their work will require evolving, fast-moving conversations with clients and colleagues,” said Dr. Amanda Gonzales, associate professor of practice in accountancy, who partnered with Julie Uribe, lecturer at the Johnny Carson School of Theater and Film, to develop and teach the new course.

The idea for the interdisciplinary course originated during a discussion with industry professionals about better communication and greater ability to adapt and handle the modern-day business atmosphere. More than 20 industry leaders serve on two advisory boards for the School of Accountancy.

“Firms like Deloitte need their professionals to be able to communicate effectively during any kind of situation that may arise. It will provide more diverse and even

stronger accounting graduates who can lead the future of our industry,” said Lori Druse, audit managing director at Deloitte in Omaha, Nebraska.

Offered for the first time in the fall of 2020, the new course uses improvisational principles and techniques to enhance the communication skills of accounting students. Students start with one professor and then switch partway through the semester, culminating in a final presentation to accounting professionals.

“We each planned our own curriculum with shared course objectives in mind. In the end, our mutual goal is to help the students get hired, promoted and flourish in a diverse and fast-paced world,” said Uribe.

## **Improvising for Success**

Using her background at the U.S. Financial Accounting Standards Board and International Accounting Standards Board, Gonzales’ five-week session focuses on growing students’ ability to research and communicate effectively through written form.

“I train students to leverage their prior accounting and business knowledge and brainstorming techniques to identify important accounting questions and analyze and justify solutions,” she explained. “I then help students

tailor their messages to the audience, fostering goodwill while communicating clearly, concisely and professionally.”

While Gonzales concentrates on the written form, Uribe uses her improv background to heighten the students’ verbal form of communication.

From her improv training at the Groundlings School in Los Angeles with notable alumni like Will Ferrell and Melissa McCarthy and more than 25 years of experience in the television industry, she revels in the challenge of breaking the mold for accounting students through improvisational methods.

“Accountants are stereotyped with having no charisma or communication skills. While I wholeheartedly disagree on that one, communication or ‘soft skills,’ are sorely overlooked in most fields

today,” said Uribe, whose work in the television industry earned her an Emmy. “Using applied improv techniques such as ‘Yes, and’ and avoiding denials, I focus on verbal and nonverbal communication, listening to learn, and the confidence to adapt and engage in the moment.”

Students in Uribe’s sessions are doing things similar to what a theater student may do, such as different improv techniques involving freeform movements or short scenes created on the spot. Uribe quells the fears and uncertainty students may have through a principle of improv, “support your partner,” which creates a welcoming environment to grow confidence and foster trust and teamwork.

“At the beginning of each of my sessions, the students are nervous, quiet and generally confused why

an accounting major has to take an ‘improv’ class. They don’t know what to expect and are fearful of looking silly in front of their classmates,” she said. “For virtually all of the students so far, those hesitations and fears disappear pretty quickly.”

Tyler Anderson, ’20, attested to the enjoyment he got from the course and its unique learning environment.

“My experience in this class was truly unlike anything I’ve ever experienced in my academic career up to this point. From an academic sense, there is nothing better than learning and having fun at the same time,” said Anderson, a graduate student now pursuing his MPA at Nebraska.

### **Creating Impact in the Workplace**

Gonzales believes the skills learned in the course help set Nebraska’s School of Accountancy students apart from peers, providing benefits in both the immediate and long term.

“As our students transition into the workforce, they understand the importance of communication in their first jobs and how it will lead to career advancement. They are equipped to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts. Employers value these skills and view them extremely favorably,” said Gonzales.

Beyond the professional development, Uribe witnessed personal growth from students, something she considers will help the next generation of business leaders.

“I see these students emotionally connecting and supporting each other, which inspires empathy. Without that, I don’t think it’s possible to be a successful and inclusive leader,” she said.

Gonzales shared how the students finish the course more self-assured and ready to lead out in the real world.



*Students are encouraged to get out of their comfort zones when they practice different improv techniques in class.*



*Students work on improv in the new Research and Communication in Accounting course.*

“It’s exciting to teach a class that you know will benefit students no matter where their future leads. The skills we practice aren’t specific to a single type of job or even to the accounting field. These skills will set students up for success. I love giving students confidence to go out and thrive in ways they didn’t think were possible,” she said.

The course, which is now required for senior-level accounting majors prior to graduation, also provides new meaning to a famous phrase from Warren Buffett, ’51, “Accounting is the language of business.”

“I thought I would dread this class every day until it was over, but now I want to take another improv class at some point. I feel it has helped me significantly, and am now more confident and ready to tackle the world,” said Jennifer Adams, ’20, a financial services professional at TD Ameritrade in Omaha.



*In response to industry need, Dr. Amanda Gonzales, associate professor of practice in accountancy, spearheaded the creation of a new Research and Communication course (ACCT 455) to prepare students for unexpected or unpredictable situations. Designed to strengthen their communication skills, she focuses on the written form by teaching techniques to identify important accounting questions and analyze and justify solutions. Her students learn to tailor their written communication to a specific audience in a clear and concise way. To teach the verbal communication half of the class, Gonzales partnered with Julie Uribe, lecturer at the Johnny Carson School of Theater and Film.*

# 50 Years of Giving Back

## *Curtiss Shows Enduring Commitment to School of Accountancy*



Jeffrey Curtiss

Jeffrey Curtiss, '70 & '71, began his journey in business learning the nuances of accounting while as an undergraduate student at the College of Business. He recognized the part his education played in his career success and started giving back to his alma mater after receiving his juris doctorate from Nebraska College of Law the following year.

“It seemed natural to me to give back to the institution that helped me achieve the success I had,” said Curtiss, who believes the combination of a business and law degree differentiated him from other graduates and presented him opportunities he otherwise would not have received. “My first gift to the university was in 1972 after I joined the Lincoln law firm of Nelson, Harding, Marchette, Leonard and Tate.”

A family lineage of Nebraska graduates and Husker pride also played a part in his decision to support his alma mater nearly 50 years ago. More than 100 years ago his grandfather, Herbert, received a juris doctorate from Nebraska in 1915. Over the years, his father, sister, son, uncles, cousins and nephew all graduated from Nebraska.

The family’s story in Nebraska began in the 1880s when Curtiss’ great-grandfather left Ohio and moved to Bassett, Nebraska. Curtiss grew up in Plainview, Nebraska, located in the northeast part of the state, and eventually made his way to Nebraska Business. He had a passion to play football at Nebraska but ultimately saw his aptitude for accounting played more to his strengths.

Curtiss received mentoring during his undergraduate studies from Dr. Robert Raymond, the first director of the School of Accountancy, who guided the program between 1968-76. Raymond helped Curtiss find his niche in the world of accounting.

“You get satisfaction from doing what you do well,” Curtiss said. “Find what that is and become the best you can be at it. It wasn’t football for me, but rather accounting, tax and legal. I passed the CPA exam in 1969 after completing my business coursework. I graduated fourth in my class when I got my business administration degree at Nebraska.”

Significant career moves presented Curtiss with opportunities to make a difference in business. During 1973-79, he served in tax and international treasury

positions for Monsanto Company. During the '80s, he moved to G.D. Searle & Co., where he worked in positions as assistant treasurer–international, vice president of corporate development and vice president of finance. Prior to retirement in 2006, he served as senior corporate vice president and CFO of The Coleman Company, Heritage Media Corporation, Browning-Ferris Industries and Service Corporation International for 18 years.

Early in his career while working at Monsanto in St. Louis, Curtiss met his wife, Margaret, who grew up across the Mississippi River in the town of Granite City, Illinois. They eventually established the Jeffrey and Margaret Curtiss School of Accountancy Fund for Excellence.

“My agreement with the Nebraska Foundation is dated January 19, 2000. I initially funded it with a \$108,375 contribution,” said Curtiss, who had received a significant payment in stock as the result of a business sale. “I wanted the director of the School of Accountancy at the College of Business to have some funds they could use in a discretionary manner.”

Around the same time, Curtiss was setting up the excellence fund, he also made what he considers his most significant accomplishment in business.

“I played a key financial role in helping Service Corporation International survive its financial crisis in 2000 when I became CFO. It was overextended, and its stock price went as low as \$1.50 per share. Today, it is the largest death care provider in North America, and its stock price is over \$30 per share. Tom Ryan, the current CEO, once worked in finance areas that reported to me,” he said.

Curtiss also worked to broaden his skill set and push himself to new areas of excellence even late in his career.

“One challenge I took on was becoming a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) at the age of 58 in 2006. The certification requires passing three difficult tests and having four years of financial experience. I was an officer

*continued on page 22*

# Building a Sense National Association

## Donald Neal: Creating Pathways for Minorities

Donald Neal Jr., '03, arrived at the College of Business from Rochester, New York, ready to focus on accounting and shine on the Husker track team. Twenty years later, he combines his competitive spirit and accounting knowledge to lead the way, creating pathways for others to follow his footsteps.

“Getting Black students and more minorities into the accounting profession is extremely important moving forward,” said Neal, who helps lead diversity and inclusion efforts at KPMG in Omaha, Nebraska, where he works as a senior tax manager in development and exempt organizations. “When students get a chance to see individuals like me serving in leadership positions, it helps change the narrative for young people. They see it’s achievable.”

Neal, who also pursued football his freshman year, credits staff such as Keith Zimmer, senior associate athletic director of life skills in the Nebraska Department of Athletics, with helping develop his career-building tools and set his priorities.

“Keith helped teach me how to balance my schedule between athletics and academics. Tutoring and scheduled study time kept me on the straight and narrow to support my grades. After a couple years, he also helped me realize I needed to stop playing football to balance my time because the intermediate accounting classes got a lot tougher,” he said.

Zimmer saw Neal’s positive contributions as a Husker and, in his professional years thereafter, as a leader in Nebraska business.

“Don has an infectious smile combined with determination and drive,” said Zimmer. “He serves as a role-model for student-athletes when they see him

Donald Neal



The Nebraska Chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants



# of Belonging Through tion of Black Accountants

recruiting at our career fairs. He was a talented multi-sport athlete and remains a proud ambassador of Husker Athletics.”

Neal also helped the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) fulfill their mission of facilitating minority hiring in the industry and achieving academic and professional excellence.

## Andee Capell: Advocating for Inclusion

As a first-generation college student, Andee Capell, '20, sought ways to better herself and help others believe in the power of every person at Nebraska.



Andee Capell

“The culture in the College of Business pushes you, but everyone is still friendly and wants to get to know you. You’re able to navigate it with a support network you might not get at a bigger school,” said Capell, who credits Neal as an important influence in her collegiate career.

“From the moment I began recruiting with KPMG, Donald was a great resource,” Capell said. “He attended our Multicultural Business Student Association networking event and came to our DREAMBIG Academy for high school students in the summer.”

Capell became one of the first Embark Scholars at KPMG, a program for underrepresented students studying accounting or related fields. Neal advised her on ways to benefit most in the program, and she shared suggestions on how to enhance it.

As Capell mentored others in the DREAMBIG Academy and the First Husker program, Dr. Aaron Crabtree, director of the SOA, noticed her ability to create a feeling of

inclusion. He encouraged her to attend the NABA regional conference and supported establishing a NABA chapter at the college.

“With an official NABA chapter at the College of Business, we can build a sense of belonging for our underrepresented groups,” said Crabtree. “When students leave Nebraska, they will encounter many diverse people and in accounting we need to help our clients, regardless of what we may have or not have in common.”

## Ahmed Ahmed: Discovering a Community

When Ahmed Ahmed started in the School of Accountancy, he found a major that not only played to his strengths, but also a community rooted in inclusivity and support.



Ahmed Ahmed

Then he met Maluba Mudundulu, '19 & '20, an MPA student who shared how she and Capell started the NABA chapter. She encouraged Ahmed to come to a meeting and attend the national conference.

“I had never been to something specific to my degree with people of color,” he said. “Now I want to make sure students get that same experience I had, where they see people who look like them going into the same profession.”

As he helped build the NABA chapter, he was named November Student of the Month at the College of Business. Graduating with his undergraduate degree this May, he plans to pursue his MPA at Nebraska.

“Having students take charge and help lead the student chapter is huge. It lets us know the footprint we started is paying dividends,” said Neal.

# Black Examines First Impression Influences on Baseball Promotions

First impressions may be important, but do they overshadow poor performance? Dr. Dirk Black, assistant professor of accountancy, researched how positive first impressions of professional baseball players might allow them to progress in the minor leagues despite performing poorly on the field. His paper, “Do First Impressions Last? The Impact of Initial Assessments and Subsequent Performance on Promotion Decisions,” published in *Management Science* in October.

“We examine how employers weight their first impression versus on-field performance in promoting players. The objective is to see whether promotion decisions by management are consistent with player performance,” Black said, who used samples derived from minor league baseball and looked specifically at pitchers. “Pitching is a standard job across baseball and the tasks are well defined.”

Black emphasized how everything players do is observable on the field and recorded into digestible data sets. First impressions derive from when players were drafted. The higher the draft pick, the better first impression.

Using two models, he examined how well the first impression versus on-field performance predicts future performance as a benchmark. With the second model, he looked at promotion likelihood on the same variables of the first impression and on-field performance.

“What we find is the weight on first impression is positive and significant for several years after the player starts playing. That holds true even though the weight on initial assessments and predicting future performance is not significantly different from zero. In other words, managers hold on to first impressions of players much longer than they should and use it to promote people five or six years after they start. There is either slow updating of beliefs or a bias in decision making. It’s in every level of minor league baseball up to six years after the player’s rookie season.”

Black focuses on management accounting issues that look at holding people accountable for their actions. He and his co-author Dr. Marshall Vance, assistant professor at Virginia Tech University, also enjoy baseball.

“We shouldn’t observe any kind of bias or slow updating of beliefs about players in baseball because we can see everything that they’re doing on the field to evaluate their performance, and yet we still see it. I would expect our results to generalize to lots of other industries and jobs where performance is less observable and people are probably more likely to hold on to their first impressions,” he said.



Dr. Dirk Black



Dr. Jimmy Downes

# Downes' Research Clarifies Cash Flow Hedge Derivatives on Balance Sheet

## *Paper Shows Debt Investors More Likely to Make Correct Adjustments*

Although cash flow hedge derivative transactions have become common practice for corporations wanting to mitigate risk, adjusting financial statements to account for them often confuses investors. Dr. Jimmy Downes, assistant professor of accountancy, published an article in *Contemporary Accounting Research* to help provide a full picture of adjustments needed when considering hedge derivatives.

"Companies use cash flow hedges to protect themselves from changes in commodity prices, foreign exchange rates and interest rates. What we look at is how debt investors understand the accounting for cash flow hedges," said Downes. "The accounting for those transactions is difficult to understand. Prior literature, including one of my own papers, documents that investors and equity analysts don't understand the accounting for these transactions."

Downes' paper, "Do Debt Investors Adjust Financial Statement Ratios when Financial Statements Fail to Reflect Economic Substance? Evidence from Cash Flow Hedges," examines how investors can adjust financial statement ratios to better reflect economic transactions firms enter.

"We show debt investors make the necessary adjustments to the financial statements and price those adjustments into debt offerings. Prior to this paper, we didn't have a full understanding of what adjustments need to be made to interpret these transactions. We show debt investors do make these adjustments for the hedge derivative transactions, whereas equity investors do not make the necessary adjustments," he said.

Downes' and his co-authors, who include Dr. John Campbell, University of Georgia; Dr. Jenna D'Adduzio, University of British Columbia; and Dr. Steven Utke, University of Connecticut, didn't know whether debt investors would make these adjustments when they started their research.

"We had some inkling they might because prior literature has shown debt investors are usually more sophisticated compared to equity investors, but the fact we find there's this subset of investors who understands this is the interesting part we've highlighted," Downes said.

Downes and his co-authors analyzed the market rate of interest on the first debt issuance in the year following the disclosure of unrealized cash flow hedge gains/losses and the credit rating assigned to the same debt issuance. The paper suggests if investors appear to adjust for effects of cash flow hedge gains/losses on the balance sheet, a positive relation between gains/losses and the cost of debt should be expected.

# FACULTY UPDATES



**Dr. Herita Akamah, '07**  
Assistant Professor

I taught Intermediate Accounting II (ACCT 314) in fall 2020 with about two-thirds of the students opting to attend class online. Teaching both online and in-class students was challenging.

My current research projects seek to provide insights into the costs and benefits of several accounting regulatory initiatives. I published "Financial Constraints and Future Tax Outcome Volatility," in the *Journal of Business Finance & Accounting* and "The PCAOB Part II Inspection Report Disclosure of Income Tax Deficiencies and Auditor Provided Tax Services," in the *Journal of Accounting and Public Policy*. I was invited to speak on a panel session and served as a breakout session leader at the 2021 American Accounting Association FARS Mid-Year Meeting. I continue to serve on the board of Lincoln Literacy Center, using my accounting knowledge to help with financial literacy.



**Dr. Arthur Allen**  
Raymond C. Dein Professor of Accountancy and Associate Professor

I taught Intermediate Accounting I (ACCT 313) and Advanced Accounting (ACCT 804) as a stand-alone course

rather than in conjunction with ACCT 404 for the first time in fall 2020. Students were not required to attend class in person. In response, I adapted and greatly enhanced my delivery of online content. Classes included multiple cases covering emerging unsettled issues. One Intermediate Accounting I case covered the accounting treatment of cryptocurrency. My research into nonprofit accounting continues and my most recent publication in the *Journal of Government and Nonprofit Accounting* investigated how private foundations use accounting information in making grants for capital campaigns. Currently, I am investigating how the presence of nonprofit affiliates affects the quality of accounting information.



**Dr. Dirk Black**  
Assistant Professor

I enjoyed teaching students in Seminar in Financial Accounting (ACCT 803) and Business Valuation and Financial Statement Analysis (ACCT 808) in the MPA program in person in fall

2020. Our students performed admirably while masked and socially distanced. My research papers were accepted for publication in *Contemporary Accounting Research*, *Management Science*, and the *Journal of Accounting, Auditing and Finance*. My ongoing research examines issues in financial reporting, including income smoothing, analysts' book value forecasts and other comprehensive income, and associations between regulatory attention and earnings management. I currently serve on the editorial boards of *The Accounting Review* and *Advances in Accounting*. I was recognized as an outstanding reviewer by the American Accounting Association's Financial Accounting and Reporting and Management Accounting Sections at the 2020 Annual Meeting.



**Deb Cosgrove, '88 & '89**  
Associate Professor of Practice

In spring 2020, I taught Accounting Information Systems (ACCT 309) and had no desire to teach online. The class is discussion-based, more like a seminar, rather than using PowerPoint

and lecture. Transitioning was difficult. Mutual kindness and flexibility was key. In fall 2020, teaching some students physically in class and most students participating through Zoom was more difficult because I never felt like either group received the level of focus and interaction that I pride myself on providing. Spring of 2021 showed improvement! I teach two completely in-person sections and one completely Zoom section. I'm still don't enjoy teaching online, but I know I can handle it if necessary. I also made some changes I will keep. Snow days are now a thing of the past for students. I heard this last semester, "I'll be so glad to go back to a classroom. I will never skip class again."



**Dr. Aaron Crabtree**  
Director of the School of Accountancy, Associate Professor

This year the SOA offered a new, cutting-edge course, Research and Communication in Accounting (ACCT

455) for the first time. I am excited to report that our students enjoyed the course, especially the improvisation part (see pages 4-6). I was recently selected to be the associate dean for graduate programs and executive education, and am currently transitioning to that position. I look forward to serving the college in this new capacity.



**Dr. Stuart Dearden**  
Assistant Professor

I have been teaching senior and master’s level audit courses since 2018. This year I pre-recorded many of my classroom lectures, allowing more class time for developing and reinforcing theoretical and practical auditing skills. Before academia, I enjoyed many busy seasons as an auditor for KPMG, auditing clients in a variety of industries, sizes and regulatory environments. My research focuses on audit quality, auditor bias and audit-office issues. My recent research examined how audit-office exposure to distressed clients can affect going concern opinions and how institutional investors demand higher quality audits even when other monitoring mechanisms are available. In addition, I have been a reviewer for the audit sectional, regional and annual accounting meetings.



**Dr. Jimmy Downes**  
Assistant Professor

I received the college’s Distinguished Teaching Award this year for my instruction in Intermediate Accounting II (ACCT 314) and Advanced Accounting (ACCT 804). My current research examines debt investors’ use of accounting information and how firm investment changed due to the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017. In the past year, my research was published in *Contemporary Accounting Research* and *Review of Accounting Studies* (see page 11).



**Dr. Amanda Gonzales, '03**  
Associate Professor of Practice

This year, I developed and launched Research and Communication in Accounting (ACCT 455), a new capstone course for our undergraduate students (see pages 4-6). Students apply skills in improvisation, professional writing, critical thinking and professional presentations. I am especially thankful for the valuable input from our advisory boards and employer partners. It is exciting to help prepare students to thrive in their future careers. I also presented posters at the University Teaching and Learning Symposiums on leveraging natural talents in team projects and creating inclusive assignments. I continue working with colleagues to examine the influence of work experience in jurisdictions with high corruption norms on company insiders’ corporate misconduct.



**Dr. Ling Harris**  
Assistant Professor

In fall 2020, I taught Financial Accounting (ACCT 809) for our MBA@Nebraska program for the second time. Though the pandemic created some challenges, it also provided opportunities for creativity in restructuring the course. I utilized various technologies to facilitate instructor-student and student-student interactions. Two of my papers were accepted for publication - “Does Information about Gender Pay Matter to Investors? An Experimental Investigation,” is online at *Accounting Organizations and Society* and “Recruiting Dark Personalities for Earnings Management” is forthcoming at the *Journal of Business Ethics*. I currently serve on the SOA Workshop Committee, the Undergraduate Grade Appeals Committee and the CoB Inclusive Excellence Advisory Board. I also was a discussant at the American Accounting Association’s ABO sectional meeting.



**Dr. Steve Hegemann, '97 & '99**  
Assistant Professor of Practice

I have been teaching Introductory Accounting I (ACCT 201) for the last few years. This is the first experience most students have with accounting. I leverage my experience – growing up in small town Nebraska, entering UNL as a non-traditional student after serving in the Army, completing my BSBA and MPA at UNL, and working as an auditor and forensic accounting consultant in New York City for over 15 years – to challenge students’ perceptions about what an accountant is and does. This year, I was nominated for the college’s Excellence in Teaching Award.



**Dr. Tony Kang**  
Deloitte Haskins & Sells Chair and Associate Professor

I currently teach Financial Accounting (GRBA 809) and Capital Market Research Seminar (ACCT 991) to MBA and Ph.D. students. My main research interests are international capital markets and corporate governance. I am serving on several committees at the school, college and university. Externally, I am on the editorial board of the *Contemporary Accounting Research* and the *Journal of International Financial Management and Accounting*.



**Dr. Tom Kubick, '05, '08 & '11**  
Ellsworth L. Fulk Chair of  
Accountancy and Associate  
Professor

I taught undergraduate tax principles, a graduate course in corporate taxation, and a Ph.D.

seminar in empirical tax research. I continue to research topics in the areas of financial accounting, incentives, governance, and taxation. My papers have appeared or have been accepted for publication in *The Accounting Review*, *Review of Accounting Studies*, *National Tax Journal*, *Financial Management*, *Journal of Management Accounting Research*, *Journal of the American Taxation Association* and *Contemporary Accounting Research*. I also started co-authoring an undergraduate tax textbook titled, "Principles of Taxation for Business and Investment Planning," and I'm serving on the editorial boards of *Accounting Horizons*, *Journal of Business Finance and Accounting*, and *Journal of International Accounting Research*.



**Kay Maresh, J.D., '85**  
Assistant Professor of Practice,  
Executive in Residence

This year, I have been busy incorporating the tax provisions in the CARES Act and related legislation in my tax courses. Students had an

opportunity to research and present on these recent changes and discuss policy implications. In January, I presented on the new tax changes for the UNL Office of Admissions and in March, I was interviewed for a Channel 10/11 TV News tax segment. I serve as faculty advisor for the UNL tax competition team and they won first place at the regional Deloitte FanTAXtic case competition and placed second at the national competition. This was the inaugural year of the UNL chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA), and I am faculty advisor. It has been exciting to work with the students as they started and grew the membership. Externally, I serve on the board of the Great Plains Tax Institute and the Nebraska Society of CPAs Continuing Education Committee.



**Dr. Sam Melessa**  
Assistant Professor

This year I am teaching Intermediate Accounting I (ACCT 313) to junior-level accounting and finance students. This is my first experience teaching primarily accounting majors and it has been very

enjoyable, despite the hurdles due to the pandemic. This year my research efforts include a new project with Dirk

Black, assistant professor, and Mike Yuan, Ph.D. student, on how the adoption of the new revenue recognition standard affected earnings management decisions and a project solicited by the *Journal of Financial Reporting* on the use of two-step research designs in accounting.



**Jina Morris**  
MPA Coordinator and  
Assistant Professor of Practice

My days are filled with Zoom meetings. Besides answering questions about homework or topics in Introductory Accounting II (ACCT 202), many

students reached out about the accounting major. We have many great accounting students enrolled and many switching over! I also keep busy meeting with MPA students with various types of admission, and summer and fall enrollment questions. We are also working on providing the majority of our MPA students with graduate assistantships in college. It is great to see them helping out and benefiting from an assistantship.



**Dr. Tom Omer**  
Professor, Delmar Lienemann  
Sr. Chair of Accounting, Ph.D.  
Coordinator and Professor

I taught Accounting and Data Analytics (ACCT 850), its lab, Corporate Taxation (ACCT 813), and the Audit Research

Seminar for Ph.D. students in accountancy. I received the CoB Distinguished Research Award for tenured faculty. For SOA, I also served as personnel chair, Ph.D. program director and graduate director. Additionally, I serve on the CoB committees for promotion and tenure as chair, research and professorship review, and Ph.D. programs. My research focuses on corporate taxation, capital and organizational structure choices, factors influencing audit and non-audit fees, and earnings quality. I serve as an editor for four journals – *Contemporary Accounting Research*, *Journal of Accounting Auditing and Finance*, *The International Journal of Accounting and Journal of International Accounting Research*. I recently published or had accepted articles in *The Journal of the American Taxation Association*, *Journal of Accounting and Economics*, *Journal of Business Finance and Accounting*, and the *Journal of Accounting Auditing and Finance*.

**DR. TOM OMER RANKED #1 (tied)**  
**RESEARCH PRODUCER IN THE WORLD**  
by *BYU Accounting Research*  
*Productivity Ranking (May 4, 2021)*



**Dr. Kelli Saunders**  
Assistant Professor

Rolling with the punches this fall resulted in some fun discoveries that I am excited to carry forward to future semesters. In undergraduate Auditing (ACCT 410), students submitted their group projects, a comprehensive case in video format rather than the traditional written project. Not only did this provide an opportunity to develop presentation skills, but I observed that many of our students excel in combining professionalism and creativity. Students enrolled in Seminar in Auditing (ACCT 831) chose topics and I assisted them in planning related curriculum. They led classroom discussions and activities, which proved to be both informative and engaging. Those students graduate fully prepared to instruct 1.5 hours CPE on their chosen topics. The new year started off positively for my co-authors and me when our research paper “Re-examining the Outcome Effect: Are Auditors Penalized for Exercising Professional Skepticism?” was named Best Behavioral Paper at the American Accounting Association Auditing Section Midyear Meeting.



**Dr. Marjorie Shelley**  
BKD, LLP Professor of  
Accountancy

My recent courses include Accounting and Data Analytics (ACCT 850), Seminar in Managerial Accounting (ACCT 858), and Contemporary Research Methods (ACCT 916), a first-year Ph.D. seminar. Recent publications are in *Management Science* and *Auditing: A Journal of Practice and Theory*. My research work in progress relates to the effect on financial reporting quality of appointing a lead independent director to the board of directors. Recent service includes the University Faculty Senate and the School of Accountancy’s Personnel and Ph.D. Committees. A significant amount of my time this past year was spent redesigning the data analytics course and developing new materials to increase students’ uptake of visualization skills.



**Dr. Todd Thornock**  
Assistant Professor

I teach Introductory Accounting I (ACCT 201H) to the Honors Academy and Managerial Accounting (ACCT 308) and still love it! My research was published in the *Journal of Management*

*Accounting Research* with various additional projects (10) being considered for publication at top journals. I served as a reviewer for six journals this past year, including two of our top journals – *Contemporary Accounting Research* and *The Accounting Review*. I continue to work with our excellent Ph.D. students, learning much from them and hopefully teaching much to them.




**Jill Trucke**  
Assistant Professor of Practice

This past year had many changes for all of us but the courses I taught stayed the same and include Accounting for Business Decisions (ACCT 200) for business minors, Using Accounting Information (ACCT 301) for non-accounting majors and an accounting course for the Raikes School of Computer Science and Management. However, the format was different for each course: 100% online, 100% in person, or a blend of online and in-person. The learning objectives remained the same but there were new skills gained in technology, flexibility and empathy by students and me. We hosted two virtual Professional Development Days for accounting majors in the fall. Students had the opportunity to meet in small groups with professionals on different topics. Students also heard how to have a successful interview and internship from a panel of recruiters. I am currently planning our fourth annual Discover Accounting Pre-College Program for June 2-4, 2021.



**Dr. Biyu Wu**  
Assistant Professor

I teach Managerial Accounting (ACCT 308) and Intermediate Accounting I (ACCT 313). My main research interests include initial public offerings (IPOs), financial reporting quality, securities regulation and auditing. My current research focuses on the consequences of poor financial reporting quality to IPO firms and their intermediaries, the effect of significant IPO firms on industry incumbents and the effect of market competition on firms’ financial reporting quality. In the last year, my research was published in *Management Science*. In 2020, I presented my research at the American Accounting Association (AAA) Annual Meeting and attended the Contemporary Accounting Research Conference and the PCAOB Conference on Auditing and Capital Markets. I also volunteered as a referee for journals and serve as a discussant at the AAA meetings.



Roger and Jeri Smith celebrate their 50th anniversary with their family. Front row from left: Dylan (grandson), Mara (daughter-in-law), Mason (grandson), Jeri, Ryan (granddaughter). Second row from left: Brent (son), Adam (son) and Roger.

# Roger and Jeri Smith Invest in Students

## *Scholarships Pave Path for the Future*

As a first-generation college student, grocer's son and Army veteran, Roger Smith, '64, learned the value of education from his parents early in life, who taught him the path to a better future is paved with education. They instilled in him the values of gratitude and giving that he and his wife, Jeri, embody today through the Roger E. and Jeri K. Smith Accountancy Scholarship and Fellowship Fund and Roger E. and Jeri K. Smith Omaha Central High School Scholarship Fund, which provide scholarships for graduate and undergraduate students.



Growing up in Omaha, Roger heard adults discuss accounting as a lucrative and interesting profession. He enjoyed working with numbers and excelled in a bookkeeping course at Omaha Central High School. Looking to his future, scholarships enabled him to attend the College of Business, where he learned the values of flexibility and working with others with varied backgrounds and strengths.

“Every person contributes more effectively when they feel valued in the larger organization,” he said.

Mentors and the overall culture at the College of Business continued to guide Roger. His cost accounting professor, Dr. Laverne Cox, employed humor and encouraged students to enjoy themselves in and out of class. “A good lesson for life,” Roger recalled.

“After I began my first job, I realized what a great education I received from the College of Business,” he said. “The environment and Nebraska culture helped form my personality, which enabled me to succeed not just on education and skill but also a Midwestern sense of values and ability to distinguish right from wrong.”

After graduation, Roger entered the Army in April 1965 at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis. A second lieutenant, he was assigned to the Office of the Director of Instruction in The Army Finance School at a time when U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War increased dramatically. For his two-year tour, he helped create courses taught by the faculty. For his performance, the Army awarded him an Army Commendation Medal, given to soldiers who distinguish themselves by meritorious achievement or meritorious service.

While serving at the school, he met Jeri, a student teacher. Roger and Jeri continued dating even after she returned to school in Bloomington, Indiana, and later married in 1967.

Roger went to work for Touche Ross (now Deloitte) in Chicago until 1973, then served as financial vice president of an organization managing a real estate investment trust in Canada. He soon became chief financial officer of its parent company Heitman Financial Services (now Heitman LLC), a position he stayed in for 41 years and later added chief compliance officer until he retired in 2013. During his career, he encountered global financial and economic crises requiring difficult business choices. Through these, he learned the importance of honesty and compassion as well as the need to communicate the value of accounting and financial roles to the broader organization.



*Jeri and Roger Smith attended a military dance together at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indiana.*

“During my career, I saw managers who felt threatened by capable and talented subordinates, and, as a result, restricted their growth and responsibilities. I welcomed such employees as assets to the organization,” he said. “A more pervasive challenge was managing financial professionals in an organization where transactional and capital-raising personnel received greater recognition and compensation. I learned how to explain to fellow senior leaders how the financial and accounting staff contribute to the success of the company. I wasn’t always successful,

but I am proud of the legacy of financial and accounting competence that remained when I left.”

In 2017, Roger and Jeri celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary, surrounded by their children and grandchildren at their home in Northbrook, Illinois. As part of their generous legacy together, the couple established the Roger E. and Jeri K. Smith Omaha Central High School Scholarship to help students from Omaha attend Nebraska and receive a quality education, just as others supported Roger in his college endeavors.

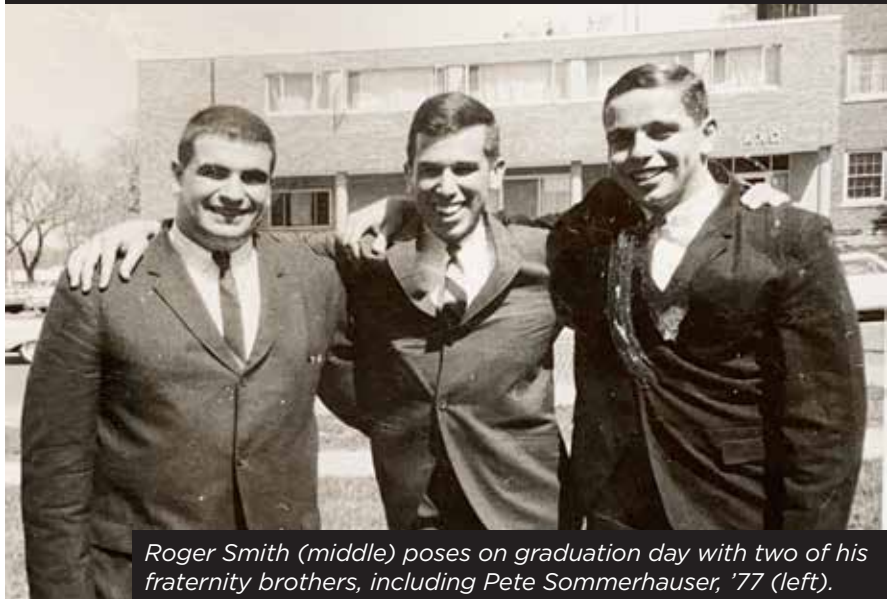
“I realized in my career how fortunate I was attending and graduating from Nebraska. Others helped me complete my education. I wanted to give the opportunity to other students who might face the same financial limitations I did to achieve their goals, especially students at my high school in Omaha,” he said.

This past year, Roger and Jeri’s Omaha Central High School scholarship benefited two Nebraska College of Business students. One of them, Hailey Hutfless, a sophomore finance major with a Clifton Builders management minor, said she feels the impact of the Smiths’ legacy of philanthropy.

“This scholarship means I felt cared for and acknowledged for my hard work and dedication by those who attended Central High School before me. By relieving financial stress through this scholarship, I could decrease my work hours and focus on my studies,” Hutfless said. “I would like to sincerely thank Roger and Jeri for providing the opportunity to excel and further my college education. I hold a special place in my heart for the community that is Central High School and aim to one day offer scholarships like the one I received.”



*Roger Smith received an Army Commendation Medal for meritorious service after completing his two-year tour at the Army Finance School. His mother told her friends he received the Army Condemnation Medal.*



*Roger Smith (middle) poses on graduation day with two of his fraternity brothers, including Pete Sommerhauser, '77 (left).*



*Jeri and Roger Smith (far left) visit the College of Business with their son, Brent (far right) and grandsons, Mason (left) and Dylan (right).*



Katie Reisdorff

# Reisdorff Pops as New Business Owner

Katie Reisdorff, '17, began working at Sweet Harvest Popcorn Shoppe in her hometown of Columbus, Nebraska, at age 14. In the process, she discovered a love for business and people, so she set a goal to one day own the store.

“I started to work more days at the shop when I was 16, and at that point, I was getting to know my customers well, remembering what they’d normally get. Those relationships with customers made me want to do that forever,” she said.

Reisdorff continued to work at Sweet Harvest, even as she attended Nebraska. As a full-time student studying accounting, she split time between Lincoln and Columbus to attend classes and work at the shop.

“As a Husker fan, I always had my eye on Nebraska, and I heard they had a great College of Business. Knowing I wanted to someday buy Sweet Harvest, I knew the business classes would be useful to me,” said Reisdorff.

Realizing her dream, Reisdorff bought Sweet Harvest in early 2020, just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. As in-store sales slowed, she shifted to an online focus.

“The pandemic only slowed us down for about a week. By March 1, we had our website up and running, and were getting a lot of sales. I even offered free delivery within Columbus, which helped as well,” she said.

She turned to the knowledge gained in her business courses to help her lead as a new owner. While her accounting degree made working with an accounting firm for the business easier, the courses in her other business disciplines proved invaluable as well.

“My marketing courses helped me with my online presence and getting things out about events. Management courses helped with overseeing my employees,” explained Reisdorff.

*continued on page 22*

# Scholarships and Fellowships

## Fellowships Awarded to Students in the Ph.D. Program

### CHANCELLOR FELLOWSHIP

Ming Yuan

### OTHMER FELLOWSHIP

Bret Sheeley, Travis Steadman, Nicholas Wilson

### OGLE FELLOWSHIP

Yuzhou Chen, Bo Gao, Bret Sheeley, Xiao Song, Travis Steadman, Nicholas Wilson, Ming Yuan

## Fellowships Awarded to Students in the Master of Professional Accountancy Program

### DANIEL H. MORIN FELLOWSHIP

Daniel Cappo, Madison Clements

### EY ACCOUNTING EXCELLENCE FUND

Mayte Dingman, Kara Kugler

### GEORGE & EVELYN BREWSTER SCHOLARSHIP IN ACCOUNTANCY

Hanna McKinney, Ziyang Zhang

### GLENN W. MOOBERRY FELLOWSHIP

Ella Janochoski, Amanda Jordan, Thomas Lassek, Mitchell McWilliams, Kyra Mourey, Maluba Mudundulu, Emily Olson, Enea Pashaj, Mark Quinn, Tyler Rump, Tanner Stalsberg, Allie Stropf

### JOHN & NOREEN GOEBEL ENDOWED ACCOUNTANCY SCHOLARSHIP/FELLOWSHIP

Philip Murphy, Holden Randecker

### JOHN T. & JANICE K. CONNOR FUND FELLOWSHIP

John Strasheim

### KURTIS & JILL KRENTZ ACCOUNTING EXCELLENCE FUND

Christian Neu

### MORRIS I. BERVIN FELLOWSHIP

Andee Capell

### PHILIP G. JOHNSON GREAT PLAINS FEDERAL TAX INSTITUTE INC. MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Nathan Maher, Allie Stropf

### ROGER E. & JERI K. SMITH ACCOUNTANCY SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

Jialing Xie

### SCHLEIGER FELLOWSHIP

Erdem Akalin, Andrew Arend, Regina Brokke, Gavin Brown, Daniel Cappo, Tracy Chvala, Madison Clements, William Conway, Trenton Cooper, Kalie Dodd, Kelsey Folkers, Ling He, Tessa Hedlund, Ella Janochoski, Keaton Johnson, Maluba Mudundulu

### TONN OSTERGARD ACCOUNTING FELLOWSHIP

Andee Capell

## Scholarships Awarded to Undergraduate Students Majoring in Accounting

### ALAN M. ROSEN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Ryan Doble

### ALLAN AND BARBARA SOSHNIK MEMORIAL FUND SCHOLARSHIP

Joseph Burton, Michaela Paskach, Joseph Slechta, Jamison Theye

### AUDLEY NOEL SULLIVAN, SR. SCHOLARSHIP

Daulten Sadd

### AUDREY WENT SCHOLARSHIP

Katherine Ciesielski, Austin Essman, Christopher Munoz

### BENJAMIN F. MARSHALL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Jacob Clinchard, Grace Corrigan, Kayle Greenberg, Zachary Hosek, Xi Huang, Jackson Ostergaard, Jacob Placke, , Bella Rodriguez, Sierra Smith, Ansel Uerling, Mohan Zhang

### CHARLES & ALAIRE BARKES SHIELDS SCHOLARSHIP

Michael Anderson, Steffanie Hitz, Brett Holtzen, David Shurtliff, John Slagle, Ashley Tyler

### CHARLES M. & GERTRUDE C. SKADE SCHOLARSHIP

Justin Tietjen

### CHUCK & MARILYN HOSKINS CoB SCHOLARSHIP

Cassandra Dobbs, Jason Keane

### CLARENCE H. ROSS SCHOLARSHIP

Kody Swartz

### CLARK G. CARPENTER FUND SCHOLARSHIP

Trinh Bui, Sheldon Disher, Jett Petit

### COMMANDER HUGH E. & MRS. LILLIAN A. LANG SCHOLARSHIP

William Guara

**CONRAD SCHLEICH SCHOLARSHIP**

Tam Nguyen

**DAVID S. MCINTIRE SCHOLARSHIP**

Sarah Baker, Todd Dross, Elise Fricke, Jace Henderson, Yoobin Kim, Lauren Kubat, Lauren Leapley, Thu Le Anh Nguyen, Eric Schiermeyer, Zachary Walker

**DELOITTE & TOUCHE FUND FOR EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP**

Lauren Brockmeier, Jacob Clinchard, Jacob Jesske, Michael Pallesen

**DENNIS & MARGARET JOHNSON SUPPORT FUND**

Justin Moore

**DICK & HELEN KELLEY FUND FOR CoB**

Ryan Zelasko

**DR. EDWARD B. SCHMIDT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Ryan Duffy

**EDGAR REYNOLDS FOUNDATION FUND**

Maria Boman, Mason Ellis, Tyler Royal, Kendrick Umphreys

**EDWARD C. GASS SCHOLARSHIP**

Christian Sanchez-Jimenez

**EUGENE C. REED & KATHRYN SLAUGHTER REED MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

John Herges, Tyler Jurack

**FREDA ANN BRITTENHAM EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP**

Payton Hanson

**GENEVIEVE SACK PHILLIPS CoB SCHOLARSHIP**

Nicholas Callahan, Patrick Harmon

**GILBERT & MARY ELLEN KUFAHL SCHOLARSHIP**

Mackenzie Foxworthy, Marcus Kennedy, Rose Pilakowski

**GORDON & GENEVA WORLEY HONOR SCHOLARSHIP**

Cameron Collins, Logan Connealy, Samuel Gertner, Lane Knott

**HAROLD R. SALISBURY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Zachary Hosek

**HERBERT & EVELYN CASEY SCHOLARSHIP**

Kaylee Arndt, Daniel Kruger, Grant Loudenback, Charles Powell

**HOWARD P. & ARVELLA F. DOERR HONORS SCHOLARSHIP**

Joseph Peraino, Morgan Reinecke

**HUPKA FAMILY STUDENT SUPPORT FUND**

Diana Kravchuk

**IVAN H. & MARLENE MULLER PRIGGE FUND**

Cara DeMers

**JACK B. & MARCIA COHEN SCHOLARSHIP**

Hana Lee, Jenica Ross

**JACOB H. IMIG SCHOLARSHIP IN PUBLIC ACCOUNTING**

Kendrick Umphreys

**JAMES L. TASSLER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Jennifer Adams, Tyler Anderson, Kade Moural

**JUDSON O. BURNETT SCHOLARSHIP**

Kathleen Kirshenbaum, Erin Schmidt

**KARL ARNDT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Daniel Kruger

**KARL H. NELSON & WEALTHA H. NELSON SCHOLARSHIP**

Hailey Hula

**KENNETH G. & YVONNE M. HIATT FUND**

Harley Edic, Kimberly Frey, Justin Tietjen

**LAVERNE A. COX MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Nicholas Caprio

**LEWIS STEWART & BETTY CLARK JOHNSON CoB SCHOLARSHIP**

Britney Toepfer

**MARVIN GILMAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Audrey Kreun

**MAX EBELING MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Landon Kennedy

**MERLE D. BAUER & MIRIAM CALDWELL BAUER UNL CoB SCHOLARSHIP/FELLOWSHIP FUND**

Neleigh Slusarski

**MICHAEL T. & CAROL S. CAST SCHOLARSHIP**

Colin Campin

**MR. & MRS. RAYMOND WATSON SCHOLARSHIP**

Mackenzie Brabec, Morgan Filter

**N FUND - BUSINESS SCHOLARSHIP**

Ryan Doble, Matthew Haver, Nicole Holthaus, Jason Keane, Ty Regier, Erin Schmidt

**NED B. EASTLACK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Grace Bakken, Ruiqi Ma, Hannah Rethmeier

**NOLAN L. & EILEEN M. BODE SCHOLARSHIP**

Mason Roth

**PAUL & MARY KOEHLER SCHOLARSHIP**

Naomie Muamba

**PAUL & PATRICIA MENDLIK SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Bella Rodriguez

**PETER & ELIZABETH SOMMERHAUSER CoB SCHOLARSHIP**

Dillon DeRozairo, Maxwell Dikker, Elizabeth Do, Jack Fink, Elizabeth Foral, Anthony Heiman, Natalia Koval, Francisco Martinez, Andy Nguyen

**R. PARKER & MARCIA S. EASTWOOD SS/FS - CoB SCHOLARSHIP**

Carly Crow, Emma Egger, Morgan Filter, Dylan Goracke, Abigail Grimm, Grace Kanel, Nicolas Maxfield, Drew Minard, Jacob Olson, Matthew Relihan, Ben Samway

**RICHARD D. HANZEL SCHOLARSHIP FOR BUSINESS**

Maria Kohel, Cole Varicak

**RICHARD L. HOFMANN SCHOLARSHIP**

Makayla Brenden, Joseph Dawson, Hadley Hiatt, Jonathan Logan

**ROBBINS FAMILY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION  
SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY SCHOLARSHIP AND  
FELLOWSHIP FUND**

Jackson Bunde, Molli Curry, Jackson Elbracht, Maria Kohel,  
Anthony Levtsenyuk

**ROBERT & LORANE PHILLIPS SCHOLARSHIP**

Logan Massey, Hunter Reestman, Bailee Steinle

**ROBERT & JOSEPHINE KOUDELE SCHOLARSHIP**

Nicholas Caprio, Tristan Cheeseman, Cara DeMers,  
Payton Hanson

**ROY & NITA FIALA FAMILY FUND**

Kody Swartz

**SCHUETH FAMILY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Cade Pilkington

**SCOT & YURI VAN STEENBURG SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Michael Buehre Stackpole

**STEVEN C. HAUFF CoB FUND SCHOLARSHIP**

Tristan Cheeseman

**THAYER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

Alyssa Cyboron, Jay Silgen

**WALLACE ROBERTSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Harrison Lloyd

**WILLARD LEON & MARY DEE STAUFFER SCHOLARSHIP**

Basher Ahmad Atayi

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**Scholarships Awarded by the Foundation  
of The Nebraska Society of Certified Public  
Accountants**

Ahmed Ahmed, Terry Arvie, Maria Boman, Makayla  
Brenden, Nicholas Callahan, Sheldon Disher, Harley Edic,  
Johnson Keaton, Nicolas Maxfield, Mitchell McWilliams,  
Drew Minard, Jett Petit, Tanner Stalsberg, Bailey Steinle,  
Allie Stromp, Nathan Wheeler

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**Reisdorff Pops**

*continued from page 19*

Even though she knew where she wanted to work, Reisdorff appreciated how the School of Accountancy offered professional development days to focus on career paths, networking and preparing for the job search. She also attests to the college's efforts to help with life after graduation.

"The college always had opportunities to learn more about different careers, which is a huge help for students preparing for the real world," she said. "The College of Business is a great college to go to because they want you to do well and push you to be a success."

After more than a year of ownership, Reisdorff received orders from nearly every state. She plans to expand her brand and sales.

"As of now, we have about 15 different locations who sell our popcorn, but we are working on more. Someday I'd like to get my popcorn into Husker events because I hold the university and Lincoln so close to my heart," she said.



*Katie Reisdorff owns Sweet Harvest  
Popcorn Shoppe in Columbus, Nebraska.*

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**50 Years of Giving Back**

*continued from page 7*

or board member of CFA Houston for more than 10 years, serving twice as president of CFA Houston. It has more than 1,000 members today. Essentially, I did a career change – from a CFO to an investor, which is what I do now," said Curtiss, who continues to reside in Houston.

Curtiss also served as member of the KBR board of directors between 2006-18. The company generates \$5 billion of revenue and is a NYSE listed global provider of differentiated professional services. He served as chairman of the company Nominating and Corporate Governance Committee for one year and chaired its Audit Committee for 10 years. One of his key roles included evaluating the KBR IPO and split-off from Haliburton, and committees undertaking three internal investigations including a 2013 financial restatement. He also served on KBR's Compensation and Social Responsibility Committees at various times during his tenure.

Dr. Aaron Crabtree, director of the SOA, praised Curtiss' work and his commitment to giving back throughout his career. He emphasized how Curtiss continues to transform educational experiences of Nebraska students.

"Jeff has been a great supporter of the school," said Crabtree. "His contributions have touched all parts of the academic enterprise, including funding data, scholarships, student trips and our graduation events. We are lucky to have donors who care about and are committed to the school."

## Spring Internships for Past 5 Years

Year	Participate in Split Program	Course Internship Credit		
		399	990	Total
2021	30	43	14	57
2020	37	45	12	57
2019	36	48	16	64
2018	35	52	17	69
2017	20	28	22	50

*\*The School of Accountancy offers a split internship program to enable students to experience both the immensity and diversity of what to expect when audit and tax seasons are in full swing. Students spend half of the semester at their internship full-time and take accelerated courses for the other half. The program allows students to gain practical experience without delaying graduation plans by a semester.*

## CPA Exam Pass Rate for 2019

Institution	First Time Candidates Without Advanced Degrees			First Time Candidates With Advanced Degrees		
	Undergrad # of Candidates	Undergrad All Events	Undergrad Avg Score	Grad # Of Candidates	Grad All Events	Grad Avg Score
University of Alabama	256	66%	76	30	69%	78
University of Arizona	171	68%	77	22	68%	78
Arizona State University	222	65%	75	26	80%	80
University of Arkansas	79	50%	72	39	76%	81
University of Florida	79	69%	77	132	93%	85
University of Georgia	201	79%	81	35	79%	80
Indiana University Bloomington	261	81%	81	42	89%	83
University of Iowa	116	79%	81	10	90%	85
University of Kansas	105	76%	79	28	76%	81
University of Minnesota	119	69%	78	19	76%	81
University of Missouri - Columbia	20	63%	74	37	86%	84
<b>University of Nebraska</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>82</b>
Rutgers - The State University of New Jersey - Newark	138	31%	62	41	39%	67
University of Oklahoma	100	75%	80	22	88%	81
Pennsylvania State University	247	56%	72	47	72%	78
University of South Carolina	127	64%	76	51	71%	79
University of Tennessee at Knoxville	220	71%	78	7	58%	72
Texas A&M University	65	65%	78	34	80%	80
University of Houston	259	59%	75	92	75%	78
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	194	64%	76	16	70%	79
University of Wisconsin - Madison	124	82%	82	18	76%	81
Median	127	68%	77	31	76%	80

# Why I Give Back

*By Morgan (Densberger) Klipp, '11 & '12*

I grew up in Malcolm, just 12 miles away from the Nebraska campus. My family had a long and proud history of graduating from Nebraska, and I wanted to continue that tradition. As one of the top universities in the country, I knew the university offered fantastic academic programs and experiences that would help prepare me for a successful career in accounting.

During my time at Nebraska, I met many of my closest friends. We spent a lot of time together, in and out of class, and I still keep in touch with several of my classmates.

Following graduation, I started at BKD, LLP where I am currently a senior manager with a focus in the financial institutions and manufacturing and distribution industries. I married my high school sweetheart, Jonathan, customer engagement manager at Cornhusker Bank, and we have two kids – Hayden (5) and Bryn (2).

It's important to me that I stay involved with the college that helped set me up for success. One way I've done that is by serving on the School of Accountancy Junior Advisory Board. Being part of the new opportunities and positive changes happening in the SOA is rewarding. I have truly enjoyed collaborating with other professionals to provide practical insights to help current students have a smooth transition after graduation. I've also served as a guest speaker in several classes, which allows me to share my story and insights with students – something I know that I valued when I was in their shoes.

In terms of monetary donations, I urge graduates to give back when they are able. Many of the great things happening in the College of Business are made possible through alums giving back. From sending students to conferences and competitions to providing assistance for graduate teaching assistants who help professors with research, case studies and other classroom efforts, the money we provide enriches the student experience and helps prepare them to lead the future of accounting after graduation.

There truly is no better place than Nebraska. Go Big Red!



*Morgan Klipp*



*The Klipp Family*



# School of Accountancy Advisory Board



**Debra Bacon**  
CFO  
Aetna - Medicaid



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Retired (CFO and  
VP Finance)



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Partner  
Lutz & Company, PC



**Eric Cruise**  
Tax Managing Director  
KPMG



**Ellen Dasher**  
VP Global Taxation  
Valmont Industries, Inc.



**Matt Epp**  
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Services  
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**Michael Johnson**  
Engagement Director  
Tata Consultancy  
Services



**Jim Kruger**  
CFO  
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**Barry Masek**  
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**Tricia Montague**  
Managing Director  
Deloitte



**Anthony Pasternak**  
Partner  
BKD



**Travis Pritchett**  
Partner  
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**Brian Ruisinger**  
CFO/COO/ISO  
Republic Bank of  
Arizona



**Jackie Stanczyk Tardy**  
Brand Controller, Coca  
Cola North America  
Coca-Cola Company



**Andrew Young**  
Senior Manager  
RSM US LLP

# Junior School of Accountancy Advisory Board



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Retail Accounting  
Manager  
Amazon



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Associate  
PwC



**Andrew Lehman**  
Associate II  
Seim Johnson, LLP



**Sarah Lynn**  
Manager CFO Services  
Alvarez & Marsal



**Kyja Omdahl**  
Audit Senior  
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**Oscar Orellana**  
Supervisor, Tax and  
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BlueCross BlueShield



**Nick Otteman**  
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Landscapes Unlimited,  
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**Jeff Sheets**  
Manager  
Labenz & Associates



**Conner Tiefenthaler**  
Natural Gas Scheduler  
Koch Industries



Paul and Mary Ann Koehler

## Passing It On *by Paul H. Koehler, CPA, '76*

My wife, Mary Ann (Czeschin), '77, and I are proud graduates of the College of Business and are very grateful for the education and experiences we had in college. We believe in supporting higher education and are happy to share our time and financial blessings with accounting students as a way of passing on the opportunity we had to them.

Today I own a CPA firm in Lincoln, specializing in government and nonprofit auditing, training and consulting. Mary Ann worked 12 years in the banking industry and 30 years in accounting and business at the university before retiring in 2019. We met at a Halloween party in 1983 and married three years later. We've had chances to move and turned them down.

Born in Lincoln, Mary Ann always knew she would be a Husker. I moved to Seward, Nebraska, from St. Louis in 1965 so my father could teach at what was then called Concordia Teachers College. He passed away two years later due to a heart attack at age 46. I inherited his love of education.

After graduating top of my class and sharing the Commencement stage with the featured speaker, then U.S. President Gerald R. Ford, I passed the CPA exam.

Then one of my memorable professors, Dr. Robert Raymond, invited me to speak to his students and share what I had learned in the professional world. I was grateful for those opportunities.

My first employer, now known as KPMG, asked if I would teach courses in our firm, and since then, I have taught all over the country for CPA firms, State Societies of CPAs and State Auditor's Offices. I also serve as a volunteer guest lecturer at three universities, including at SOA. I enjoy helping others learn and think my dad would have approved.

Mary Ann and I want to share our good fortune by passing it on to others. In a way, a donor is like the quarterback of a football team. The quarterback (donor) decides when to throw a pass (share) to an eligible receiver who is open. Of course, it takes a team effort to help put the quarterback in a position to make that pass play, and the benefits of a completion can last a lifetime.

Do you want to get in the game? Please consider generously passing on some of your resources to the School of Accountancy. When you do, everybody wins.

# THANK YOU

We apologize for any mistakes. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Aaron Crabtree, director of the School of Accountancy.

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# School of Accountancy Alumni Class Notes

**Editors' Note:** *The Class Notes celebrate the milestones of our alumni during the past year. These updates were submitted to the school directly by the alumni themselves or compiled from news articles and corporate media releases. While we welcome alumni news, The Nebraska Ledger is not responsible for the information contained in these submissions.*



**Michael Arens,** '10 & '11, Lincoln, Nebraska, was promoted to partner at HBE LLP, a Nebraska advisory and accounting firm. He joined the

firm in 2014. As a CPA, he provides specialized tax and business advisory services for clients throughout the state as well as leads the firm's Agribusiness Industry Specialty Team.

**Noah Bieber,** '12 MPA, Omaha, Nebraska, was recently promoted to director of tax at Applied Underwriters, Inc.

**Kolton Butcher,** '20, Omaha, Nebraska, began his role as a staff accountant at Melotz & Wilson LLC in Omaha.

**Sadid Carrillo,** '13, Omaha, Nebraska, works as a bank examiner at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. He recently spoke with College of Business student leaders in a conversation hosted by the student organization Beta Alpha Psi.



**Mike Cassling,** '86, Omaha, Nebraska, received the Annual Founders Award at the 2020 virtual Broadway Dreams Foundation

Gala. In Nebraska, he leads CQuence Health Group as CEO, as well as Cassling Medical Equipment Sales and Service Company and Ensocare Software Company alongside his father and company founder, Bob Cassling. Nationally, he serves on the Broadway Dreams Executive Committee and chairs The Salvation Army's National Advisory Board executive committee. His roles in Omaha include serving as an Ak-Sar-Ben Governor, on The Salvation Army Board of Directors, and with the Nebraska Health Information Initiative, Omaha Community Foundation and Omaha Performing Arts.



**Mark Chronister,** '73, Bloomington, Minnesota, was elected to the Canterbury Park Board of Directors in Shakopee, Minnesota. He

serves as an audit committee financial expert as defined by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

**Jesse Kleven,** '12, Burleson, Texas, works as the southwest region controller for four Texas Health hospitals.

**Allen J. Klingsick,** '00 & '01, New York, was promoted to Peloton Interactive Inc. principal accounting officer in 2020.

**Caleb Krohn,** '20, Lincoln, Nebraska, attained the Chancellor's Scholar honor from Nebraska. He now works as a tax associate at BKD CPAs and Advisors.

**Derek Mikus,** '20, Des Moines, Iowa, earned the Chancellor's Scholar honor from Nebraska. He now works as a commercial real estate investment analyst at Principal Global Investors.

**Spencer Nussrallah,** '20, Omaha, Nebraska, works as an investment banking analyst covering technology and financial sponsors at BMO Capital Markets in San Francisco.



**Tyrell Ross,** '10 & '18 MBA, Lincoln, Nebraska, serves on the Nebraska College of Business Inclusive Excellence

Advisory Board and works as the college's director of finance and budget.

**Brian Ruisinger,** '87, Phoenix, is president and CEO of Republic Bank of Arizona.



**Lyzz Smith,** '20, MPA and J.D., Lincoln, Nebraska, joined Rembolt Ludtke LLP as an attorney in the business services practice group.

**Anh (Jason) Vu,** '20, Hanoi, Vietnam, started working as IT risk assurance associate at PwC Vietnam.

## 2020 BYU Accounting Research Productivity Ranking

**#2**  
IN BIG TEN

**#6**  
ARCHIVAL AUDIT  
WORLDWIDE

**#5**  
ARCHIVAL TAX  
WORLDWIDE

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## POST-GRADUATE CAREER OUTCOMES

**94%**  
secured employment  
or continued education within  
six months of earning  
undergraduate degree

**\$50,082**  
average full-time  
starting salary  
based on 47 reported salaries



**96%**  
CPA Placement Rate  
2018-2019



**\$4,000**  
average signing bonus  
based on 13 reported signing bonuses

**66%**  
remained in Nebraska  
building the state's work force

**98%**  
secured employment  
or continued education within six  
months of earning MPA

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## **Building a Sense of Belonging Through National Association of Black Accountants**

*Story on pages 8-9*