Recognizing Our Best
Dean H. James Williams’ recent departure to become President of Fisk University is a real loss for Seidman. His inspirational leadership brought out the best in everyone and helped all of us move the Seidman College forward. We wish him well as he shoulders the Presidency of Fisk University, and we are confident that he will succeed.

While planning for leadership change, our attention was also devoted to the preparation and move in May to the magnificent new L. William Seidman Center, a state-of-the-art business school building located on the west bank of the Grand River in downtown Grand Rapids. We will devote a significant portion of our fall issue of the Update celebrating both the new building and paying tribute to L. William Seidman for his pioneering efforts to establish Grand Valley State University and its Seidman College of Business.

This issue of the Seidman Update is dedicated to recognizing our best! As you read the articles, you will learn about recent accomplishments of some of our outstanding students, graduates, and faculty members. In addition to all the great news, Seidman recently learned that our accounting graduates’ first-time pass rate on the 2012 CPA exam, among 255 large programs, collectively ranked them eighteenth nationally, one slot higher than in 2011. These are heady times for the Seidman College of Business and its alumni and stakeholders. There is much to be proud of at Seidman. Enjoy!

John W. Reifel
Interim Dean, Seidman College of Business
Seidman Update is a semiannual publication of Grand Valley State University’s Seidman College of Business, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Seidman College offers the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), Bachelor of Science (BS) or Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Economics, Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science in Accounting (MSA), and Master of Science in Taxation (MST) degrees. The college is fully accredited by AACSB International.

Project Coordinator: Vonnie Herrera
Editors: Vonnie Herrera, Claudia Bajema
Staff Contributing Writer: Hilary Powsner
Special Contributor: Valerie Karelse
Update Faculty Advisor: Paul Lane, Ph.D.
Graphic Design & Production: Ruth Oldenburg, Rainstick Studio
© 2013 Grand Valley State University, Seidman College of Business

Table of Contents
4–5  Dean Farewell
6–9  Student Achievement
10–13  Honors and Recognitions
14–18  Student Innovations
19  Faculty Achievement

To view current and previous issues of the Seidman Update online, visit www.gvsu.edu/business/seidman-update
We bid farewell to Dean H. James Williams who led the Seidman College of Business for the last eight and one-half years. It seems like only yesterday that we interviewed dean candidate H. James Williams who arrived full of ambition, ideas, and curiosities, while wearing that winsome smile. It's no surprise that his Personal Vision Statement was “To provide ‘World-Class’ leadership, with energy and enthusiasm!” Indeed he did just that!

Dean Williams assumed the position of president of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, in January. “I’m honored to be chosen to lead Fisk University,” said Williams. “I’ve had wonderful experiences at Grand Valley with talented colleagues, whom I will miss, but I know my time here has prepared me to be president of Fisk. I feel confident that the leadership in the Seidman College of Business will continue to move forward with the strong initiatives we’ve started, and they’ll do it in a magnificent new facility.”

He leaves behind an impressive list of accomplishments that will carry on his legacy.

- Introduced SLED – Students...Leadership...Executives...Development—for high achieving incoming freshmen who are automatically admitted into Seidman, pairing them with business executives, ultimately leading to an internship
- Implemented a new Full-time integrated, cohort-based, MBA Program—FIMBA.
- Facilitated revised tenure and promotion criteria
- Established a journal rankings mechanism to evaluate faculty publications
- Led successful reaffirmation of AACSB accreditation for the College
- Served on and chaired numerous AACSB accreditation review teams
- Advanced Assurance of Learning measures
- Championed a Student Code of Honor for all Seidman business students
- Created the Dean’s Undergraduate and Graduate Student Advisory Boards and encouraged the members to envision and implement new initiatives
- Raised funds and helped lead the campaign for the new L. William Seidman Center, which now houses the Seidman College
- Led collaborative efforts with the West Michigan Colleges & Universities Group (WMCUG)
- Served on many boards

“To provide ‘World-Class’ leadership, with energy and enthusiasm!”
—H. James Williams
We celebrate President Williams’ opportunity to lead Fisk, as we recognize the impact he had on our institution and our region.

“He’s been a wonderful dean for our Seidman College of Business” said Provost Gayle R. Davis, “and he leaves a strong legacy of excellence and innovation.”

Long-standing Seidman Dean’s Advisory Board member, J. C. Huizenga, shares, “As a member of the Seidman Dean’s Advisory Board, I recognized and appreciated the true leadership James demonstrated. His ability to work inside a demanding academic environment, while interacting effectively with business leaders truly set him apart. We will indeed miss him.”

As we consider future leaders who can assume the dean’s position, it will be difficult to replace Dean Williams’ special drive and energy, his ability to work diligently through projects, and his exceptional, intuitive investigation of every matter that he encountered. Further, his servant leadership was unmatched, as he often brushed aside any notion that his accomplishments were extraordinary. He approached each challenge expecting to do more or contribute more than anyone else without taking credit for doing so. Students were a top priority, and he led them by example, instilling in them a sense of pride and encouraging them to give ethical consideration in all that they did.

The business community echoes our sentiments, also grateful for his many contributions and ideas, as well as for his service on many boards and organizations.

THANK YOU,

“President” Williams!

John W. Reifel – Interim Dean

Provost Gayle R. Davis appointed longtime economics professor John W. Reifel as interim dean of the Seidman College of Business.

Reifel earned a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Notre Dame and a master’s degree and doctorate from Michigan State University. He came to Grand Valley in 1971. His Seidman colleagues conferred the Outstanding Teacher Award on him in 1996. He is a member of the American Economic Association and the Ferrysburg Planning Commission. Reifel also served as interim dean for the Seidman College in 2003 before H. James Williams was hired.

“Professor Reifel has the academic background, the knowledge of Grand Valley and the right experience to serve as interim dean of Seidman College,” Davis said. “We opened a magnificent new facility for the business college in May, and John is the right person to lead us during this exciting transition. Grand Valley’s Seidman College of Business is nationally recognized, and we know we are poised to serve out students even better in this new building and with our dynamic faculty.”

Davis said a national search will be conducted for a permanent replacement for Williams over the course of the next year. The new L. William Seidman Center opened May 6.
Collegiate DECA is a business organization that prepares emerging leaders in marketing, finance, hospitality management, and entrepreneurship. Part of this preparation involves attending conferences and competitions, such as the Michigan Career Development Conference. While at this event, Tomcsik and two of her fellow DECA members, Abbey Atanasoff and Aris Zervos, qualified to compete at the International Conference in April in Anaheim, California.

Competition for the students was intense. “To compete, we took a test that consisted of questions in our area of interest and general marketing questions. We then had a case study and 30 minutes to read and prepare to role play the scenario for a judge,” Tomcsik said. “Abbey took first place in fashion merchandising, Argos was a finalist in fashion merchandising, and I was a finalist in retail management,” Tomcsik said.

The International Career Development Conference allowed Tomcsik and her two teammates to compete in the same events in which they previously competed in Michigan, although the tests and case studies were different. Abbey Atanasoff medaled in her fashion merchandising test. While at the conference, the group attended a chapter leadership workshop and had the opportunity to listen to the CEO of Men’s Warehouse at a “Dress for Success” workshop.

Tomcsik’s relationship with DECA isn’t limited to competitions. In February 2013, she was elected Collegiate DECA Michigan Association State President for 2013–2014. Her duties will expand to include planning the state conference for next February and acting as a liaison between the State and all of the chapters. “I will go to different colleges and see if they need help developing their chapters,” Tomcsik said. She is not daunted by the new responsibilities, stating, “Since [the Grand Valley chapter] is just starting off, I had already been doing what I could with various contacts to grow our organization to be the best it can be.”

DECA currently has 15 members and welcomes others. “Though we market mainly to Seidman students, any student who wants to participate is more than welcome to join,” Tomcsik emphasized.
Scheidman College of Business wishes to congratulate Amanda Jakubowski and Brian Greenleaf, vice presidents of programming and advertising respectively for Grand Valley’s chapter of the American Marketing Association (AMA), on their successful trip to the 2013 International Collegiate Conference. Held in late March, the conference provides student chapters of AMA from across the country opportunities to network, attend various presentations, and compete in various categories.

Grand Valley’s students returned from New Orleans with two awards: Chapter Excellence in Professional Development and Chapter Excellence in Communications. The awards are given based on reported accomplishments by individual chapters throughout the year. Once the chapter reports are submitted, national judges consider each report based on their point system and announce the winners at the national conference.

Aside from their awards for excellence, both Jakubowski and Greenleaf felt that the conference provided excellent networking opportunities. “I really enjoyed meeting different executive boards from chapters across the nation and learning how we can grow our Grand Valley Chapter for next year,” Jakubowski said. Greenleaf found the same growth potential in his networking with the conference’s speakers. “My favorite part of the conference was listening to the speakers who came from all over the country, as well the opportunity to network with them,” Greenleaf said. “I learned so much to help improve our chapter as well as my own personal life.”

Opportunities and Awards in New Orleans

Congratulations American Marketing Association!
Family Owned Case Competition

A team of Grand Valley students tied for the highest score among United States universities at the inaugural Global Family Enterprise Case Competition in Connecticut. Ten different countries were represented: Argentina, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the USA. Sixteen teams totaling 60 students participated in this inaugural event. The team from Grand Valley State University composed of FIMBA students Tim Sporte and Scot Dodd, with undergraduate students, Josh Wood and James Anderson, tied with Stetson University of Florida as the highest scoring team from the United States. GVSU’s score was one point behind the overall winning university, ESADE of Spain.

The Project

Seidman’s Project Management Team recently won first place in the Project Management Competition. Seidman’s team, championed by Dr. Jaideep Motwani, consisted of undergraduate students Khanh Dang, David Musselman, and Amanda Russo, and FIMBA students, Ryan Maloney, Kathleen McKee, and Tim Sporte. This is the second consecutive year that Seidman placed first. Ten teams from universities across Michigan participated in this competition.

This year, students developed project plans for a company, initiating a project focused on employee retention and attracting new employees. Their budget was $90k, and their implementation deadline was January 2014. The competition included delivering a project scope statement and charter, completing a timeline, roles and responsibility matrix, communication management plan, and a full project book. The project plan and business strategy created by the GVSU team, “sMART,” addressed the talent retention issue faced in Michigan. (“sMART” stands for Successfully changing our Market demand, and Attracting and Retaining skilled employees to utilize our investment in Technology.) Their plan aligns with Governor Snyder’s #4 Initiative “Keeping Our Youth–Our Future–Here,” which was the goal of the competition. The project plan will be presented to Governor Snyder, and the team hopes that he will incorporate some of their recommendations.
Seidman MBA Team Wins Mergers & Acquisitions Intercollegiate Competition

Seidman College of Business’ MBA student team of Katie Rose, Mark Tanis, and Kevin Wilson took first place and a $5,000 prize in the regional intercollegiate Mergers & Acquisitions case competition sponsored by the Association for Corporate Growth West Michigan. Association for Corporate Growth is a national organization, and West Michigan is one region of many across the country where MBA student teams tackle the same M & A case and present their analysis and recommendations to a panel of industry judges. The Seidman MBA team defeated two other West Michigan teams: Western Michigan University and Davenport University. In addition to the $5,000 prize, the winning team displays a traveling Silver Cup trophy for the year.

The road to the Silver Cup is a long one, and the commitment spans far beyond the competition. “During the fall semester participants from each team met every other Saturday morning to learn about the M&A, valuation, financial analysis, and other considerations that would be part of the case study,” Mark Tanis (member of the winning team) said. “We were provided the case study two weeks prior to our presentation, and to prep, we met as a team every night we were free to discuss the case.”

This level of preparation paid off, as the team claimed victory at Regionals and went on to the state level. The top two West Michigan teams competed for another $5,000 on March 23 in East Lansing against the top two teams from the east side of the state, Walsh College and the University of Michigan. While the Seidman team did not claim top prize, Tanis was proud of what he and his teammates accomplished. “I feel our team put its best foot forward,” Tanis said. The state-level competition presented different challenges. “We were given a new fact 10 minutes before we presented our case and had to weave that into our presentation,” Tanis said, and “the judges from the State round asked very different questions than we had previously run into.” The University of Michigan team won this round.

It is noteworthy that this winning team qualified for the intercollegiate competition by narrowly defeating a second Seidman team in January. The team of Dan Salvati and Sharon Ward deserves recognition as a very strong competitor team. Congratulations to both teams and their faculty coaches, Paul Mudde and George Chang.

L–R: Rabih Jamal of Hartick Capital, Katie Rose, Kevin Wilson, Mark Tanis, and Rick Adamy of Adamy Valuation
Trevor Pawl
2013 Outstanding Alumni
“Up and Coming” Award Recipient

Bachelor of Business Economics and Marketing 2005
Master of Business Administration 2011, University of Detroit Mercy

Trevor Paul is the Director of Pure Michigan Business Connect, a Michigan Economic Development Corporation initiative commissioned by Governor Rick Snyder to connect Michigan companies with growth and expansion opportunities. Before taking this position, Pawl served as Program Director of Connection Point—an organization that strives to connect Detroit area business with new customers—with the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce. Under his leadership, Connection Point uncovered over $200 million in sourcing and R&D opportunities for Detroit Area suppliers. Pawl was named to Crain’s Detroit Business “40 under 40” List for 2012, Development Counselors International’s 2013 list of “40 Under 40 Rising Stars of Economic Development,” and WWJ-CBS Detroit’s List of Technology and Innovation Leaders for 2013.

He credits his time at Grand Valley with helping him develop the skills he uses today. He was president of Collegiate Entrepreneur’s Organization (CEO) during the 2004–2005 school year and was instrumental in bringing the “Monopoly: Grand Rapids Edition” to market. That project raised over $100,000 in revenue and was used to create an endowment to fund future ideas from Grand Valley entrepreneurs. Pawl also acknowledges the Economics Department for instilling in him an understanding of the theories and models behind urban economics and industrial diversification.
Tiffany Williams
Delta Sigma Pi Key

Bachelor of Business Administration 2012

Tiffany Williams graduated in December summa cum laude with a 4.0 overall GPA. She is a member of Beta Alpha Psi, Beta Gamma Sigma, and Best Buddies. Williams’ numerous community outreach and volunteer efforts include Feeding America, Habitat for Humanity, Grand Rapids Metro Health Marathon, Spread the Word to End the Word, the Community Benefit Dinner and Auction, and she assists in a 5th grade elementary classroom. Up next for Tiffany is an auditing internship with Deloitte. She intends to return to Seidman to pursue a Master of Science in Accounting and to earn her CPA.

Cody Zuiderveen
Outstanding Student Supply Chain Management

Bachelor of Business Administration in Supply Chain Management and International Business with a minor in Spanish

Cody is enrolled at the Frederik Meijer Honors College at GVSU pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration and International Business with a minor in Spanish. His expected graduation date is April 2013. His passion is making the world a better place, and this has been the driving force behind his numerous volunteer trips. He has worked on relief projects in Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Guinea, and the Dominican Republic. In another effort to improve conditions for people around the world without the most basic of needs, Zuiderveen recently developed a water purification system with his twin brother for the GVSU Business Plan Competition. After graduation Zuiderveen looks to combine his skills in Supply Chain Management and International Business to work in the global non-profit sector.
Behind the Scenes...Our Grad Assistants

Seidman salutes a very special group of people in the College—the Graduate Assistants! The Graduate Assistants (GAs) are full-time graduate students who also hold part-time positions assisting faculty, staff, students, and our centers in various capacities. Seidman GAs also work in the Writing Center, the Undergraduate Advising Office, the Dean’s Office, and support graduate faculty research.

All of the Graduate Assistants are appreciated for what they do, and below we focus on a few of their contributions.

**Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC)**

Our Graduate Assistants are vital to our work of helping Michigan companies start, grow, and create economic impact. By providing industry trends, customer demographics, competitor intelligence, and financial metrics, companies are able to identify new markets, determine their competitive advantage, and improve financial performance and marketing efforts.

With assistance from our team of Graduate Assistants, we developed a customized SEO Online Marketing report which offers an in-depth analysis of a client’s website, providing tips for improving a site’s organic search ranking. Our team also developed a one-of-a-kind international website analysis which helps companies discover actions they can take to improve their international web presence. We would not be able to support the demand for these services without the talent and time of our Graduate Assistants.

—Joanne Fowler, Information Research Manager, Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center

**Undergraduate Advising Office**

Our Graduate Assistants are lifesavers during our busy registration times. They go above and beyond and even initiate new programs to help us in our daily duties. GA Troy Bouman developed an intricate GPA calculator tool with his extensive skills in Excel. It incorporates repeat courses and allows us to determine, without needing to calculate by hand, the grades a student needs to meet GPA requirements. We require a 2.75 overall GPA to be admitted to the Seidman College of Business. From there students must maintain an overall 2.5 GPA and have a 2.5 GPA in their Seidman courses to graduate with their BBA degree. We are monitoring GPAs closely in our advising sessions, and, therefore, we have many opportunities to put this new tool to use. In homage to its creator, I’ve dubbed the spreadsheet “Troy.0.”

—Tami Kraker, Academic Advisor
Seidman Dean’s Office
With the College’s move to the new L. William Seidman Center, the dean’s office Graduate Assistant acquired a new set of responsibilities. Not only does our GA, Hilary Powsner, support special projects and research and writing for the Seidman Update, she also sits on two committees: the University’s Graduate Committee and the L. William Seidman Center Timeline Committee. For the latter, she is charged with appropriately honoring Bill Seidman in a defined space in our new building. Hilary’s insights, enthusiasm, and creativity in all of these projects are invaluable. We also draw from her unique student perspective as we merge into our productions the generations of thinking that incorporate design, style, and methods of communication."

—Vonnie Herrera, Director, External Relations & Communications

Management Department
Nate (Bair) has a great personality and is very eager to help me with projects. He’s updated financial and performance ratio information on dozens of companies and industries, which I use for casework in my classes. He’s fast, diligent, meets deadlines, and has a wonderful sense of humor. I really enjoy working with Nate.

—Dr. Carol Sánchez, Professor of Management/Director, International Business Programs

A Huge THANK YOU to all the Graduate Assistants who help Seidman run smoothly!

Center For Entrepreneurship & Innovation
Austin Dean

Economics
Paul Jabaay

Finance
Michele Boems
Alexander Laurn
Matthew Pear

Graduate Faculty Research
May Shabaka

Management
Nathan Bair

Marketing
Dustin Cole
Richard Daniel
Joe Walker

MI-SBTDC
Jazmin San Juan Garcia
Yvette Iyiguhaye
Vincent Lambert
Joe Walker

School of Accounting
Patricia DeLuca
Lindsey Howe
Tom Kirkpatrick
Mathew Pear
Nicholas Risko
Ruben Robelin
Alessandro Sgambati

Seidman Dean’s Office
Hilary Powsner

Special Projects
Richard Daniel

Undergraduate Services
Troy Bouman
Laura Gentry
Edwin Huicochea
Megan Koeman

Writing Center
Gregory Curtis

www.gvsu.edu/business
There are few things that irk women more than bad hair days. For African American women, bad hair days are not only irksome but carry costly implications as well. The average African American woman with an income of $41,000 spends about $4,000 per year on hair care products and services. If these products are not effective, that is 10% of her annual income gone to waste. Ulandra Reynolds, Grand Valley Alumna of April 2013, developed All Things Weaved to address hair care solutions for herself and her African American peers. A comprehensive one-stop information shop for all things concerning African American hair, All Things Weaved took first place and the $5,000 grand prize at this year’s Annual Grand Valley State University Business Plan Competition.

All Things Weaved is a free website where members, affectionately called Divas, log in and document their favorite hair care products and share ideas with other consumers. “We are offering our Divas a simple way to become more informed hair product consumers, to interact with women who have similar hair needs, and to purchase from reputable companies,” Reynolds said.

The website landing pages are currently in operation, and Reynolds anticipates a Beta version of the website with a product database of 50 products to launch in September 2014. Reynolds recently took second place at the 2013 Regional Business Plan Competition, and with the additional funding garnered from that victory, she plans to hire hair experts to assist with the content of the website.
Imagine this: you are given 54 hours to create a successful, revenue-generating company or product. But you aren't in the comfort of your home or office; rather you are in a shared workspace with several other teams striving to achieve the same goal. Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Grand Rapids' annual StartUp Weekend.

Tim Sporte, a member of the Seidman College of Business Fully Integrated MBA program (FIMBA) was a member of StartUp Weekend 2013's winning team and co-developer of a product called the U-Turn.

The U-Turn is a storage unit designed for use in areas with limited space. “It gives you that extra bit of space you’ve always wanted around your house or apartment,” Sporte said. “The U-Turn gives you options for clearing the clutter while bringing out the personal style in your home.”

Fellow U-Turn team members from Kendall School of Art and Design recognized that the team’s diversity worked to their advantage. “The rest of the team was made up of industrial designers, so I was involved mainly in the business side,” Sporte said. “I worked with the team to perform a market analysis, build a business model canvas, and develop a three-stage execution plan to take the U-Turn to market.”

Sporte also said that he felt prepared for the weekend, thanks largely to the education he has received during his FIMBA experience. “The integrated nature of FIMBA helped wrap all of the parts: marketing, finance, management, accounting, and economics, into one,” Sporte remarked. “The holistic view recreated by FIMBA in the classroom for understanding a product and its market and addressing all the moving parts that come with being a start-up were important in executing our business development plan.”

The U-shaped device has since received first stage funding from Start Garden, and the team is currently busy completing the engineering phase, building prototypes, and testing the market. The team started a Kickstarter campaign to test the market demand. If all goes well, they would begin Beta store testing for “Back to School 2013,” and then work with retailers for a full launch for “Back to School 2014.”
classroom learning is a fundamental part of education. But when it comes to concepts that are more practical and less theoretical, sometimes the real world is the best place for students to learn. Seidman College of Business student, Miles Smith, ’13 is proof of the success that a fully rounded education allows.

Smith first emerged as an innovation leader among his peers with the creation of his break away coupling for fishing lures back in 2010. Smith entered the Grand Valley State University idea pitch competition in 2010, presenting this break away coupling, and he came in 3rd place. Undeterred, Smith entered the Grand Valley State University Business Plan Competition, completing four months of research and submitting a 30-page plan. Once again, he was not victorious, but he did receive some key advice from Fred Keller of Cascade Engineering: redesign the product. Smith did just that. In a serendipitous turn of events, he was selected to receive $50,000 in pre-seed funding from A2 Spark (based in Ann Arbor, MI) and with these funds Smith began working with professional designers from Tiger Studio (based in Zeeland, MI) to revamp his lure.

In 2012 Smith returned with a redesigned product and submitted it in the 2012 GVSU Business Plan Competition and won first place. Smith then went on to the Regional Business Plan, competing against local universities such as Cornerstone, Hope, and Calvin, and once again took first. Later in 2012, Smith submitted his breakaway coupling to StartGarden, and garnered enough public votes and interest to receive $25,000 in next step funding.

Fast forward to present day and not only is Smith still working on refining and publicizing the coupling, but he has another product he is heavily involved with: Bundeze. Still in its startup phase, Bundeze, is a product designed to securely bundle cords, shoelaces, or anything one could think of effectively into place. Bundeze is a concept by Immersi Solutions, the company that engineered the break-away coupling, so Smith’s involvement seems natural.

With Bundeze, however, Smith finds himself in more of a business development role than entrepreneurial role, and he is enjoying the challenge. “There is a bit of a learning curve,” Smith said. “I learned the theoretical side in class but doing the actual research and design with the fishing lure and also the sales side with Bundeze gives the full picture of running a business. It really takes a hands-on situation to learn
what little pieces don’t make it to the classroom.” Bundele was featured at the Ultimate Sports Show, held March 21–24 at DeVos Place. By Sunday afternoon, the product was completely sold out.

When he is not working, Smith shares his experience gained in the field to enrich the education of his entrepreneurial minded peers. As president of the Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization (CEO) at Grand Valley State University, Smith pushes the group to focus on helping launch student business. “We have a lot of group collaborations and active goal setting,” Smith said. “We want students to look back and see their progress, and see how CEO helped monetize their idea.”

Smith is very grateful for the support and opportunities he has received during his time at Grand Valley, especially while working at the Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation (CEI). “Working at the CEI provides an awesome setting to work on my designs,” Smith said. “Kevin McCurren and the other advisors are very supportive.” As Smith prepares to graduate in the fall of 2013, his reflection on his time at Grand Valley is positive. “I feel fortunate that I got to try this entrepreneurial stuff when I am young, and in the context of a college student,” Smith said. “And I can continue to learn and improve as I get older.”

Miles Smith, ’13

Miles Smith’s breakaway coupling for fishing lures
A team of three Seidman MBA students, Yvette Iyiguhaye, Eric Grossnickle, and Doug Huesdash, took second place at the 2013 NextBillion Case Writing Competition sponsored by the University of Michigan’s William Davidson Institute. Collaborating with Associate Professor of Management Paul Mudde, the team submitted a case addressing the worldwide water crisis and the potential options for distributing the Hydraid® water filtration system, focusing specifically on conditions in Ghana. The team received a monetary prize of $2,500, and their case will be published by GlobaLens for use in the classroom.

The NextBillion Case writing competition was established to find, publish, and recognize the writers of the most instructive real-world business cases of social entrepreneurship and market-based methods across a multitude of sectors. All case entries must describe a dilemma or challenge faced by a company or organization related to business ventures alleviating poverty in the developing world. The contest is sponsored by the Citi Foundation.

The Seidman team was pleased to link with Cascade Engineering’s Triple Quest to develop this case study. Cascade is a nationally-recognized proponent of sustainable business practices. The Hydraid® BioSand water filter is capable of providing a family of 10 with safe drinking water for 10 years.
Seidman College of Business extends congratulations to Professor of Management, Ashok Kumar, for his Distinguished Fulbright-Nehru Scholar Fellowship. Dr. Kumar spent the fall semester working at Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi focusing on teaching advanced supply chain management, sustainable development-related courses, and co-editing a special issue of Operations Management Education Review Journal.

The Fulbright Award is a competitive process in which candidates submit a proposal and undergo a rigorous evaluation process by experts in the respective field. The merit-based award is dedicated not only to exchange scholarly ideas but also to enrich social, cultural, political, and economic lives of the host country.

Professor Kumar credits the Indian universities for which he worked for connecting him with like-minded academics. “I developed a great network of people who know what's going on in India. There was good exchange of lots of ideas,” Kumar said. “Solutions [to sustainability issues] can happen anywhere including India or in the U.S. We plan to take operations further in both countries.”

Dr. Kumar’s activities were coordinated by Dr. Ravi Shankar, a globally renowned scholar in supply chain and sustainable operations management. “[We] worked on the intersection of operations management and sustainability and closely developed several ideas for research and teaching cases,” Kumar said.

In Delhi, Dr. Kumar served as a distinguished lecturer and co-chair at major conferences including the International Conference for the Society of Operations Management, the largest international conference in India with over 200 delegates. He also received the Lifetime Achievement in Operations Management Award from IIT Delhi.

As a result of his experience in India, Dr. Kumar returned to Grand Valley with new ideas and global inspiration. Dr. Kumar intends to apply many of the ideas developed during his time in India to his courses at Seidman. “I have already introduced two cases here with great success,” Kumar said. “Sustainability is one of the mission values of Grand Valley State University. The goal of Fulbright is to exchange educational ideas and cultures, and I think both organizations, Indian Institute of Technology and Grand Valley, benefit greatly from this multi-pronged interaction. Seidman is really making a name worldwide.”

“Solutions [to sustainability issues] can happen anywhere including India or in the U.S. We plan to take operations further in both countries.”
—Ashok Kumar
Seidman’s student Team Soletics, coached by Dr. Tim Syfert, was one of twenty semifinalists in the prestigious international Business Model Competition. The Seidman team competed at Harvard University on May 3–4 for over $75,000 in prizes. The Business Model Competition is part of a ground breaking, international approach to entrepreneurship that focuses on the process of improving the inputs into entrepreneurship rather than the outputs.

Seidman’s team consisted of management and marketing student Vanessa Gore, business management student Michael Kurley, and business management and economics student Lindsay Noonan. Their product is a jacket designed for skiers and snowboarders. Described as smart athletic outerwear to conquer the elements, the jacket is solar powered and works to heat the wearer’s body and hands.