Knowledge is our Business
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From the Dean

After four years of leading SSB to the next level (see the following page), Dean David E. Mielke decided to step down as Dean this past June. Under Dean Mielke’s leadership SSB’s enterprise expanded, both internally in terms of program and teaching initiatives, and externally in outreach to the community. Dave was thanked for his visionary service to SSB at a reception in August.

A Dean Search Committee has been formed and is in the process of recruiting our next Dean. Assuming that the search process proceeds as planned, a new Dean will assume duties here next July 1. Until that time, I have been appointed as Interim Dean. When I was being introduced as the Interim Dean at a gathering late in the summer, someone asked where I came from. I replied that I came from the “fourth floor.” I have been an economics professor at GVSU for over thirty years. My teaching interests are in microeconomics, urban economics, and public finance. My research has concentrated on an array of housing issues ranging from housing demand to discrimination in housing markets.

This year the business school will continue to modify and develop its strategic plan for AACSB International (Association for Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business) reaccreditation. AACSB adopted a revised set of criteria for business school accreditation last spring. In contrast to the old content standards that simply required that certain subject matter be presented to business majors, the new standards require assurance of learning. Accredited business schools must develop not only general education and management specific learning goals, but also assessment measures that can be used to measure the amount of learning that has occurred. Feedback from these measurements must then be used to revise curriculum and improve learning outcomes.

The theme of this issue of Seidman Update is “knowledge is our business.” This is truly a timely theme in light of the revised AACSB standards that now stress assurance of learning. Our faculty is the key here. Faculty members are involved in the creation of new knowledge, presenting relevant knowledge to students and making sure that students understand, and sharing their knowledge in ways that will benefit the West Michigan community.

— John W. Reifel,  
*Interim Dean, Seidman School of Business*
Dave E. Mielke served as Dean of the Seidman School of Business for a period of four years. This series of photos attempts to chronicle his many accomplishments as he led the School to new levels. The students, faculty, alumni, business community, and friends of Seidman and GVSU have benefited in numerous ways through his service.
In this issue …

5  Seidman School Benefactor Honored in Washington, D.C.
GVSU founding father and Seidman School supporter L. William Seidman was honored in Washington, D.C. for his role in creating The Washington Campus Program 25 years ago.

6  The Many Facets of New Faculty
Meet SSB’s newest faculty. Seidman welcomes nine members with diverse backgrounds and interests.

10  Managing Scholarly Work: A View from the Trenches
SSB Professor Stephen Margulis discusses the intersection of scholarship and project management with respect to editing a scholarly journal.

20  Secchia Shares Project for the Millennium with SSB Alumni
Alumni visit new 1500-acre Millennium Park, which is hailed by Park Commission leader Peter Secchia as a tribute to the Millennium from a community that thinks about its future.

Contents:

Faculty:
6–7  The Many Facets of New Faculty
8  Seidman Stars — Faculty and Staff Recognized for Excellence
9  Class Acts
10–11  Managing Scholarly Work: A View from the Trenches
12–13  Knowledge is our Business

International:
14  Building Knowledge through International Experiences
15  Supporting International Activities

Seidman in the Community:
16  Growing Technology Businesses through Shared Knowledge
17  Celebrating Entrepreneurship
17  Seidman Faculty Collaborate with The Economic Club
18–19  Faculty … Key Resource in Carrying out our FOBI Mission!

Alumni:
20  Secchia Shares Project for the Millennium with SSB Alumni
21  Spectrum Health CEO Defines Healthcare Value for SSB Alumni
21  Seidman Alumni Board
22  Alumni Notes
22  Alumni Golf Outing

Other:
3  David Mielke … came … envisioned … took us to the next level.
5  Seidman School Benefactor Honored in Washington, D.C
23  Great Lakes Entrepreneur’s Quest
23  Seidman Business Services

Seidman School of Business Mission Statement
The Seidman School of Business creates a rigorous learning environment with a student focus, regional commitment, and a global perspective. The School strives to excel at innovation, the application of concepts, and the integration of knowledge.
William Seidman, a founding father of Grand Valley State University, was honored in Washington, D.C. in June at the 25th anniversary celebration of The Washington Campus Program. GVSU representatives joined several hundred others from around the country to recognize Seidman who in 1978, with other visionary business leaders, created the program to provide public policy training for graduate business students and corporate executives.

Grand Valley, one of eight of the original consortium business schools, sends about sixteen graduate students to Washington, D.C. each summer to gain a better understanding of how government works. Today, seventeen schools form the consortium, including Arizona State University, University of California-Berkeley, University of California-Los Angeles, Cornell, Indiana University, The University of Michigan, The University of North Carolina, Purdue University, and others.

Seidman, CNBC’s Chief Commentator, also served as Chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation from 1985–1991, was Dean of the business school at Arizona State from 1982 to 1985, and provided service to three U.S. presidents — Ford, Reagan, and G. H. W. Bush. He continues to serve as a financial consultant in many countries.

As a founder of GVSU, Seidman played a key role in raising over $1 million in initial funds and obtaining the charter that created the University in 1960. The Seidman School of Business was founded through a generous gift provided by the Seidman Family Foundation in 1973 and was named after L. William Seidman’s father, the late Frank Edward Seidman, a founding partner of the accounting firm now known as BDO Seidman and advisor to President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

L. William Seidman continues to be involved with GVSU and the Seidman School of Business.
The Many Facets

The Seidman School of Business is pleased to introduce nine new faculty members this year.

Asli Akbulut, Assistant Professor of Management
MBA, Ankara University, Turkey; MS and Ph.D., Louisiana State, Information Systems and Decision Sciences
Research: electronic information sharing between organizations and innovative uses of information technologies in an educational setting

Alex Balan, Visiting Instructor of Economics
BS, University Politehnica, Bucharest, Romania; MA and Ph.D., Western Michigan University, Applied Economics
Research: the effect of insurance type on the cost and use of emergency and outpatient medical services

Denise de la Rosa, Associate Professor of Accounting
BA, Wayne State University; Master of Accountancy, Ferris State University; Master of Arts, University of Southern California; Ph.D., University of North Texas, Accounting
Research: privatization of state-owned enterprises

Vijay Gondhalekar, Assistant Professor of Finance
BS, University of Bombay, India; MBA, University of Akron; Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, Finance
Research: mergers and acquisitions, behavioral finance, and exploring issues about how the behavior of market participants affects security prices
of New Faculty

Vipin Gupta, Assistant Professor of Management
B.Com. (Hons), University of Delhi; MBA, Indiana Institute of Management – Ahmedabad; MA and Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, Managerial Science

Research: management, leadership, and entrepreneurship in different cultures of the world; modeling the influence of cultural forces on technological growth

Parag Kosalge, Assistant Professor of Management
Bachelor of Engineering, College of Engineering, India; Ph.D., Indian Institute of Management, MIS

Research: object oriented organizational modeling, business processes, process redesign and automation, and SAP implementation

Aaron Lowen, Assistant Professor of Economics
BA, University of Northern Iowa; MA and Ph.D., University of Iowa, Economics

Research: to determine how real people incorporate new information to make meaningful decisions

Jennifer Pope, Assistant Professor of Marketing
BA, College of Wooster; MBA and Ph.D., University of Texas-Pan American, Marketing

Research: international business relationships, country of origin, and international advertising

Dennis Stovall, Affiliate Instructor of Accounting
BS, Central Michigan University; MBA, Grand Valley State University

Research: British and Irish economies

Can You Match the Faculty Member to the Activity?
(Answers found below)

1. One new faculty member likes snow skiing and cycling and, in fact, was his/her University’s state cycling gold medalist on the road and on the track.

2. One new faculty member is a choir director, plays the piano, organ, and trumpet AND sings every Christmas in a group called the Original Dickens Carolers.

3. This new faculty member enjoys making friends in different cultures of the world and once sat with unknown scholars from 50 countries. They have continued to interact over the past six years, and this person serves as the Principal Co-Investigator of the worldwide GLOBE project.
Seidman Stars—
Faculty and Staff Recognized for Excellence

America’s Small Business Development Center Network recognized Nancy Boese, Regional Director for the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC), as Michigan’s 2003 “State Star.” SB(T)DC employees from each state were recognized at the San Diego Conference on October 4, 2003. State Stars were recognized for exhibiting exemplary performance. Nancy was identified by her peers, statewide, for making a significant contribution to the state’s SBTDC program, as well as for showing a strong commitment to small business. Nancy Boese represents the best of the MI-SBTDC Network. Region 7 of the MI-SBTDC is housed in the Seidman School of Business.

Paul Lane was appointed as the Esther Seidman Chair for his innovative leadership in business. The Esther Seidman Endowment was made possible by a generous gift from the Seidman Family Foundation in 1989 to recruit and maintain excellent educational leadership.

Professor Lane joined the Seidman School of Business in 1998 and served as chair of the Marketing Department 2000 – 2002. He has chaired the MBA Curriculum Committee, launched an E-Commerce Certificate Program for the School, and helped develop the international program initiative. In addition, he heads the team for the production of the Seidman Update and has led the School in developing new products. His service in the community as a youth leader and for many social causes, in addition to providing consulting and service to boards, brings a unique set of experiences to Seidman.

Professor Lane earned his B.A. from Earlham College, his M.B.A. from Stetson University, and his Ph.D. from Michigan State University.

Gregg Dimkoff, Professor of Finance, was named Grand Valley’s 2003 Outstanding Educator. Graduates selected Dimkoff for the award and credit him as an astute communicator and intelligent observer of world capital. Dimkoff earned his Ph.D. from Michigan State University and joined Grand Valley’s faculty in 1975. He was honored at the Grand Valley Commencement ceremonies in April.

Nancy Levenburg, Assistant Professor of Marketing, was honored as the 2003 U.S. Small Business Administration’s Michigan Advocate of the Year for 2003. A special presentation was made to her at a luncheon hosted by the Economic Club in Jackson, Michigan.
Students in Professor Gerry Simons’ Emerging Markets class had the opportunity to find out exactly how the Federal Government enforces trade agreements with developing countries. Guest speaker William H. Lash III, (left) Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance at the U.S. Department of Commerce’s International Trade Administration, shared the Bush administration’s stance on pursuing trading agreements with a number of emerging markets, and his own duties in ensuring that countries follow the rules of those trade arrangements.

Learning for Real

Students in Professor Vipin Gupta’s capstone class (above) were required to interview a furniture manufacturing firm in Grand Rapids to identify the factors that have enabled the firm to survive in this economically challenging market, including the transformational strategies being undertaken and needed for survival in the future.

“Interviewing Brian Higgins, head of Steelcase International Operations, helped us learn how a global company runs and what it values,” explained Katie Foltice, Kelsey Schauman, and Melanie Thompson. Brenda Cusack shared that her group very much enjoyed interviewing the executive of John Widdicombe. “He was extremely responsive and helpful, and we think the face-to-face interview at the company created a unique learning experience for us.” Many students were surprised at how friendly and receptive the executives were to sharing information, and they realized that individuals sitting in important positions are “real people” working diligently to solve their companies’ challenges. Collectively, the students will make recommendations back to the class on the policies and strategies needed to help revive the furniture manufacturing sector, which has been experiencing substantial upheaval over the last couple of years.
Managing Scholarly Work: A View from the Trenches

by Stephen T. Margulis [1]

Most scholars associate scholarship with preparing individual articles (chapters, books) based on the scholarly demands of conducting research, developing theories, evaluating and reviewing topical areas, and the like. Allow me to offer a complementary perspective: the management of scholarly work (i.e., the intersection of scholarship and project management). I will base my discussion on three years editing a recent (June 2003), 210-page, single issue of a scholarly journal. The topic was privacy [2].

How did this opportunity arise? I was using my sabbatical [3] to identify and read new material on privacy. But, as I got deeper into privacy as a social and political issue, I considered a volume on privacy that could familiarize psychologists (my doctoral discipline) with current issues.

After the initiating idea, then what? I contacted a colleague, also interested in privacy, to ask about co-editing an issue on privacy for the Journal of Social Issues (JSI). I chose the JSI because it is one of the few major journals in psychology that allocates entire issues of the journal to specific social issues. When it became clear my colleague and I could not meld our ideas, he graciously allowed me to propose my ideas to the JSI. The JSI agreed that an issue on privacy was viable. It took six months to find authors, then to prepare a proposal. In
the 100-page proposal, the authors described their 12 articles, and I provided the justification for both the proposed articles and the entire journal issue.

How did you find 12 contributors? I needed to find scholars in specific areas who were available, willing to work on mutually-agreed upon topics, and experienced at publishing scholarly work. To accomplish this, I had to know a good deal about privacy and who was contributing to the field. Because some areas were relatively new, I also relied, in part, on networking skills I had honed in the 1970s at a federal research laboratory. I had found that, by carefully selecting the first person to call, I could usually locate a needed expert in five or fewer phone calls. My calls and emails took me throughout the U.S. and to five cities in Canada, Europe, and East Asia. The networking worked. In one case it worked in an unusual way: Those I called convinced me there was not enough good research on my topic for an article. So I dropped the topic.

When I found potential contributors, I described the proposed volume, and we shared our visions of their proposed articles. We would then negotiate their articles’ coverage. I preferred a tight fit between our visions. A loose fit was a gamble I was willing to take if a contributor proposed an exciting alternative.

Unfortunately, when creating an edited work, losing contributors is a common experience. I lost three authors who quit for very different reasons. I tried to make those lemons into lemonade. I replaced one author to ensure at least 10 articles. In the other cases, I reallocated recaptured pages to contributors. Like most scholars, mine (and I include myself) gladly accepted additional pages for their articles.

With everyone on board, what did it take to complete the journal issue? Getting published meant overcoming a sequence of obstacles, starting with having my proposal approved, having articles accepted by me and then by external reviewers, and then having the resulting articles accepted by me and, ultimately, by the journal’s own editor, who oversees the editors of single issues.

During the article acceptance phase, I had two roles: as the issue editor and as a contributor, each with its own scholarly demands. As the issue editor, I must know enough about each author’s topic to evaluate an article’s completeness, coherence, sources, and persuasiveness, the quality and organization of arguments, and even the mechanics of formatting. When I edit, I review articles from the author’s perspective and aim for a published product that makes the author look good. Editing requires negotiation, tact, diplomacy, and helping my authors in any way I can. For (most) authors, getting published means accepting requests to revise their manuscripts. However, there are limits to an author’s willingness to comply. I lost two authors because their tolerances were exceeded. Consider the following: my authors were being asked to make revisions by me, external reviewers appointed by the journal, and finally by the journal’s editor, often more than once. Tolerances can be exceeded. As a contributor, I faced the same demands as my other authors. There is much time and effort invested in identifying, obtaining, and closely reading articles and books, and in writing and rewriting and the constant hard thinking and “sweating the details.”

Why did it take three years? I initially expected the process to take two years. However, when I replaced an author halfway through the process, I started a new clock that extended my end date. Fortunately, this author completed his initial manuscript relatively quickly, a plus. In addition, one author, a very senior scholar, was to provide a capstone article that would present the “big picture” on privacy and, in it, incorporate the contributions of the other contributors. The JSI encouraged this option. The wrinkle was that the author decided he could not begin his article until he received all the articles in final or near-final form. That really extended my end date. Ironically, as he prepared his drafts, his article transformed from a capstone into a stand-alone article. Fortunately, the journal’s editor approved a shift in role (and what proved to be a fabulous article).

Final thoughts. I am relieved the process is over. Editing and authoring were more perspiration than inspiration. I am pleased that the journal issue is published. If and when it will have an impact is for the future to say. I gave it my best shot, but I am also the guy who said about a peer’s torrent of scholarly twaddle, “How many trees died for his sins?”

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[1] The author is in the Management Department, Seidman School of Business.
[3] It is time off for full-time scholarly activity, granted after seven years of full-time teaching, hence called a sabbatical.
Seidman faculty are

… Teaching 263 classes in Grand Rapids, Allendale, Holland, and Muskegon fall of 2003

… Responsible for the delivery of 26,919 credit hours fall of 2003

… Mentoring and serving as role models for 2,656 business students fall of 2003

… Directing or mentoring students for study in 9 countries

… Serving on 63 SSB and University committees

… Publishing at a rate of 119 articles, books, and proceedings per year

… Making presentations at a rate of 54 conferences per year both nationally and internationally

… Participating in more than 52 professional organizations and societies

… Writing business columns and regularly interviewing with local media

… Performing community service for more than 30 organizations or causes

Seidman faculty are

… Creating a rigorous learning environment with a student focus, regional commitment, and a global perspective

… Striving to excel at innovation, the application of concepts, and the integration of knowledge

Seidman faculty are

Committed
How do faculty facilitate learning in an international environment? In the summer of 2003, GVSU sponsored a number of programs around the world. Four Seidman faculty members led two of those programs. Gerry Simons facilitated an MBA course in France; while Joe Godwin, Paul Lane, and Jaideep Motwani traveled to England with a group of undergraduate students.

What does it take to impart knowledge and to facilitate a successful learning experience in another country? Faculty members give a great deal of thought to modifying the syllabus to take advantage of the unique environment. Consideration is also given to a location for the classes. Is the most ideal site a classroom or a company, or perhaps a museum, a bank, a business association, or a local school?

Different cultures offer opportunities as well as challenges. What is it like to have a lecture from a French professor? How are students prepared for understanding the country’s culture? Joe Godwin found a wonderful video series on the history of the British Isles and the United Kingdom that primed students for their visits to the palaces, castles, Roman ruins in Bath, and Stonehenge.

Given the brevity of the programs, what experiences optimize learning about culture and international business? Last year students studying in London were able to meet with representatives of Herman Miller in Bath, Wolverine Worldwide, Deutsche Bank, International Accounting Standards Board, and many others.

What historical monuments or resources are available? Museums have turned out to be favorites. This year the London group visited the historical London theater district early, and the students took over from there, organizing many nights of theater events for themselves and faculty. The financial district was toured, including business monuments like the Bank of England and Lloyds of London. The Globe Theater featured an evening of Shakespeare, and the open air theater at the famous Regent's Park was included for a light musical, “High Society.” Some visited St. Pauls to see high church, Anglican style, and some traveled into the country for the small villages and Perry Green, the home of the famous sculptor, George Moore.

Program leaders are challenged to motivate students to explore more and more. Not only did students fan out all over the UK, visiting the Lake Country and seashore, but they also covered many other European countries including Spain, Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany, and Holland. Some students traveled to explore, while others followed sports to Wimbledon, the Scottish Open, and the Tour de France. All shared in the richness of knowledge acquired in a different environment.
International Trade Education and Assistance in West Michigan

Seidman International's International Business Program and the Van Andel Global Trade Center recently received a federal grant of $161,000 for two years to support a new project called I-TEAM2. I-TEAM2, International Trade Education and Assistance in West Michigan 2, is the second phase of a similar initiative that ended in June 2003. I-TEAM2 is a new effort that will enrich international business education at SSB and provide international trade assistance to the business community of West Michigan. I-TEAM2's goal is to strengthen our competencies, develop innovations, and apply our expertise in international business education to activities targeted to students, faculty, and the business community of West Michigan.

Carol Sánchez, SSB associate professor of management and director of international business programs, and Jeff Meyer, executive director of the Van Andel Global Trade Center (VAGTC) are co-directors of I-TEAM2. “On the academic side, our biggest goal is to help more SSB students study abroad and develop their capabilities to do business internationally,” Sánchez notes. “We will do that by developing our study abroad programs, providing scholarships, and encouraging our faculty to get more international teaching and research experience as well.”

I-TEAM2's success is its collaborative approach that brings together several GVSU units, West Michigan companies, and community organizations. Key GVSU units involved, in addition to SSB and VAGTC, are the Modern Languages Department and the Padnos International Center. West Michigan organizations involved include client companies of the VAGTC, the West Michigan World Trade Association, the World Affairs Council, the Michigan Small Business Development Center, the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce, and the U.S. Department of Commerce. This creates a sizeable support network to accomplish three common objectives:

1. To create and expand international business activity among small and medium-sized firms in West Michigan. Activities include training in trade management and individual trade counseling with local small and medium-sized companies.

2. To strengthen the quality and quantity of international business education at SSB. Activities include an “Early Interest” program in international business for freshmen and sophomores, and new undergraduate and MBA courses in international business.

3. To improve the competencies of GVSU faculty to teach international business and languages. Activities include programs for faculty to improve teaching international business and language for business, research support, and new study abroad programs.

Cracow, Poland

The Accounting and Finance Department of the Cracow University of Economics (CUE) and the Accounting & Taxation Department of Grand Valley State University co-hosted an international conference on General Accounting Theory April 23–25, 2003, at CUE in Cracow, Poland. Three GVSU faculty from the Accounting & Taxation Department presented papers that were also published in the conference proceedings. Joe Godwin and Steve Goldberg presented “Understanding German Financial Statements: Surviving Culture Clash.” Sue Martin presented “Accountability in Financial Reporting and Independence in Auditing for Governmental Units in the USA.” The conference attracted scholars from throughout Poland, Europe, the USA, and Australia.

www.gvsu.edu/ssb/
Today’s small technology businesses are challenged with issues such as preparing for alternative financing and developing a comprehensive business plan. What may seem basic to some is imperative for a company’s success. It has been demonstrated that the entrepreneur who plans is the entrepreneur who succeeds. For this reason alone, the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC) and Varnum Consulting provided a unique platform for both high-growth and flat lining small technology businesses to gain hands-on knowledge from local venture capitalists and business executives through a four day “boot camp” — NxLeveL™ Growth.

NxLeveL Growth participants completed a business plan to act as a roadmap for future growth, while implementing their ideas in a dynamic, interactive environment. They received coaching from successful area business owners on topics such as learning the intricacies of structuring equity and debt, marketing, and dealing with the soft economy. The four-week course also provided business owners with the unique opportunity to interact with angel investors and venture capitalists. By presenting their business to a team of venture capitalists and business executives, business owners received feedback on how to improve their presentations, as well as determine the essential factors that investors evaluate and how to improve in those areas.

NxLeveL Growth participants were provided with market research via the Seidman School of Business - Information Services. Such research allowed business owners to analyze market trends, customer demographics, and competition in an effort to improve their businesses and/or identify business opportunities. In addition, course participants were provided with one-on-one, confidential counseling through the MI-SBTDC.

Through counseling and working through the course materials, several businesses found that they had lost their focus following the downturn in the economy. However, like many creative service businesses, they had a wide range of talent that was not being utilized to its greatest potential.

To date, NxLeveL has assisted over 26,000 entrepreneurs nationwide. The NxLeveL Training Network™ is a group of organizations engaged in entrepreneurial training, including Small Business Development Centers, Chambers of Commerce, business incubators, etc. It is a clearinghouse for many diverse groups involved in various aspects of assisting businesses and promoting community and economic development.

— Jill Wallace, Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center

For more information, please call 616.331.7370 or visit www.misbtdc.org/region7 http://www.misbtdc.org/region7
The Second Annual West Michigan Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards paid tribute to all area entrepreneurs and recognized eight winners at a special black tie event held at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel. The Seidman School of Business was pleased to partner with Ernst & Young; The Grand Rapids Business Journal; Miller, Johnson, Snell & Cummisky, P.L.C.; Marsh Inc.; National City Bank; and WOOD Radio to promote and celebrate entrepreneurship.

Awards were presented to entrepreneurs who have demonstrated excellence and extraordinary success in areas such as innovation, financial performance, and personal commitment to their businesses and communities. Winners are eligible to compete for one of several national awards presented at a gala hosted by Jay Leno in Palm Springs, California in late fall.

Seidman in the Community

The Economic Club of Grand Rapids and the Seidman School of Business have a long-standing relationship dating back to the founding of the Economic Club in 1976. Seidman's active involvement with the Economic Club includes the chairmanship in 1984 of Dr. Marvin DeVries, then Dean of the Seidman School of Business. DeVries was also instrumental in the development of an essay contest, first held in 1978, that has grown to be the largest essay contest in West Michigan. The Seidman Enrichment Fund also supports the Economic Club Spring Essay Contest.

Each year a current economic topic is determined, and contest information is distributed to all public and private high schools in Kent County. Cash prizes are awarded first place, second place, and up to 12 third place winners selected by a judging committee. Matching cash awards of more than $8,000 are given to the winners' schools to support the teaching of economics. The winners are announced at one of the Club's bi-weekly luncheon meetings attended by three to five hundred local business professionals, where the keynote speaker addresses the contest topic. Dr. Jim Sanford, Professor of Business Law, has been an active member of the Essay Committee and a judge for the past seven years.

The Economic Club also offers four college scholarships to area students pursuing a major in economics or another business field, as well as two study abroad scholarships. All applicants must submit an essay and meet established criteria for financial need, grade point average, and extracurricular activity. Often the scholarship winners ultimately attend GVSU and earn degrees through the Seidman School of Business.

Lorna Schultz, Executive Director of the Economic Club, stated, “The Seidman School of Business has been an invaluable resource to the Economic Club of Grand Rapids, and everyone appreciates Seidman’s involvement and support of our economic mission in the West Michigan area.”
Family businesses make up 89% of all businesses in the U.S. and three-quarters of the firms worldwide. They represent 64% of the GDP, employ 62% of the U.S. workforce, and they represent one third of the firms within the S&P 500. Yet, statistics show that the survival rate from one generation of leadership to the next is only 30%.

Popular opinion among many business people, consultants, and educators is that when family and business are interrelated, a less efficient business enterprise generally results. Many ask: “Is family management contrary to the fundamental American creed advocating free competition, equality of opportunity, and the best person for the job? Does family influence contradict all precepts of professional management?”

The creation of the Family Owned Business Institute (FOBI) at Grand Valley State University was borne out of the collective belief that family businesses — large and small — are the cornerstone of a community’s prosperity and a vital ingredient in its quality of life. By providing support through research, curriculum, and knowledge management, the Institute serves to develop, retain, and expand the understanding of family businesses within our communities.

Faculty research is the key to uncovering the truth underlying these discussions. Recent and growing academic research concludes that the family business enterprise is an efficient form of management and ownership structure that most often outperforms the non-family organization. To further facilitate this line of rigorous inquiry, the FOBI created its Research Scholars Program. This competitive program provides two $5000 research awards annually.

Since the inception of the program, the Institute has sponsored nine faculty scholars. In 2003, the Research Scholars Program was opened up to include colleagues from the world community. As a result, the Institute received over 40 applications from as far away as Australia, Canada, Great Britain, and Italy. This breadth of participation is an indication of strong and growing interest in family business research. Recently, the FOBI Advisory Board approved expansion of the program by increasing the number of annual Scholarships to four $5,000 awards. We anticipate even further faculty participation and look forward to their critical review of family business issues in our region and around the world.

A summary of our current FOBI Scholars and their research topics follows.
Professors Nancy Levenburg and Simha Magal – Grand Valley State University
Project: A Framework for Evaluating e-Business Applications for Family-Owned Businesses
This study examines the types of e-business applications that are implemented by family-owned businesses, the influence of selected characteristics on the types of e-business applications utilized, and which applications appear to be most beneficial to these businesses.

Professor Jaideep Motwani, – Grand Valley State University
Project: Succession Planning Practices in SME’s
This study examines the importance of succession planning in West Michigan family businesses, specifically small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Professor Ram Subramanian, – Grand Valley State University
This project aims at studying market orientation of family owned businesses and its impact on growth in revenues and ROI capital.

In support of our SSB faculty, leaders from the Grand Rapids family business community recently joined forces for a panel presentation entitled, “Preparing Future Leaders within Family Owned Businesses: The Family Member’s Perspective and Experience.” The presentation was part of the annual meetings of the Family Firm Institute (FFI). The highly successful program featured Grand Rapids family business leaders John Jackoboice of Monarch Hydraulics Inc., Jim Gordon of Gordon Food Service, and Len Slott of Vi-Chem Corporation.

Monarch Hydraulics (www.monarchhyd.com) is the oldest family firm in Michigan and the 64th oldest in the U.S. and is an industry leader in the manufacture of hydraulic power units and ergonomic equipment. Gordon Food Service (www.gfs.com) is the largest privately held food service distributor in North America with worldwide operations. Vi-Chem Corporation (www.vichem.com) serves global customers in the manufacture of engineered vinyl and thermoplastic elastomers compounds.

During the meetings, SSB faculty members Jaideep Motwani and Ram Subramanian presented their research entitled “How Market Oriented are Family Firms?” and Jeff Meyer of the Van Andel Global Trade Center participated in the workshops. The Family Owned Business Institute serves as a major sponsor of FFI’s research publication, the Family Business Review. Faculty also serve on FFI’s Body of Knowledge Committee, help foster FFI service provider study groups, and are part of a web consortium of partners bringing forth a single worldwide web portal for family business issues.
It was a chilly fall morning when Seidman alumni met for the first of the 2003–04 breakfast series at the new Millennium Park to hear the Secchia Park Commission’s leader relate the history of and future plans for Millennium Park. Former U.S. Ambassador to Italy and Chairman of the Board of Universal Forest Products, Inc., Peter Secchia shared his passion for this significant community project.

Established to honor the past, look to the future, and celebrate the Millennium, the new park will eventually extend five miles from John Ball Park to Johnson Park and will return approximately 1,500 acres of industrial land to publicly owned, urban, green space. It touches four cities: Grand Rapids, Walker, Grandville, and Wyoming, and will be more than twice as large as New York’s Central Park. Like the eventual population redistribution and growth around New York’s Central Park, it is envisioned that as the metropolitan area continues to move toward the west, Millennium will become a centrally located park. And what a park it is!

Clean water for swimming and fishing, meadows, playgrounds, picnic areas, beach houses, canoe and bike trails, recreation areas of all kinds, gardens, pavilions for receptions and parties — this park has everything, and it’s all state-of-the-art. It’s also free to the public. Secchia shared that, with no advertising, between 7,000 and 10,000 people of all ages and socioeconomic groups visited the Park the first two weekends that it was open in late summer.

The Park is a product of millions of state, county, and city dollars, but in true West Michigan style, the difference between a good park and a great park has been the private money, which has supported such features as an adventure playground, a “spray” ground, and a clock tower.

Spearheaded by Secchia and others, new and exciting Park features are materializing, and benefactors continue to come forward. Plans are in the works for a ferris wheel that will overlook the surrounding cities — and more, much more! Secchia envisions that Millennium Park will be featured in national magazines in the future and hailed as a tribute to the Millennium from a community that thinks about its future.
Spectrum Health CFO Defines Healthcare Value for SSB Alumni

It’s an exciting time in healthcare. Americans are living longer, and new drugs and technology are significantly improving our quality of life. Current research promises even more techniques, therapies, and disease prevention measures. So says Michael Freed, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Spectrum Health and a 25-year-veteran of the healthcare industry.

Freed shared his perspectives on the current state of healthcare at the second of the 2003–04 Alumni Breakfast Series. He discussed a consequence of Americans living longer and having access to new technology and drugs — rising costs of healthcare. In fact, the $1.5 trillion cost of healthcare in 2002 is projected to be $2.6 trillion by 2010, when the number of Americans over the age of 55 will increase from 61 million in 2002 to 75 million. Rising costs are causing purchasers, primarily employers, to make difficult coverage and benefit decisions. Spectrum Health is responding with its vision to lead Michigan in healthcare value by delivering the finest combination of quality, service, access, and cost.

Spectrum defines healthcare value with four factors. Its quality standards are determined by the risk-adjusted outcomes of the highest volume medical conditions for which patients are admitted. An investment of $567 million in infrastructure and new technology is planned through the year 2007. Since the Butterworth-Blodgett merger, Spectrum patients and insurers enjoy among the lowest hospital prices in Michigan, with a 1.5% annual increase accomplished through $373 million in hospital operating efficiencies. A fourth measure of value, community commitment, is demonstrated by Spectrum’s service to the needy. In fact, Spectrum provides more indigent care than all but one other hospital in Michigan.

The value of healthcare in West Michigan has not gone unnoticed, as evidenced by the eighth place national ranking that Grand Rapids enjoys with respect to trust in its hospitals.

… the $1.5 trillion cost of healthcare in 2002 is projected to be $2.6 trillion by 2010, when the number of Americans over the age of 55 will increase from 61 million in 2002 to 75 million.

Seidman School of Business Alumni Board

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Jonathan Nelson
Amy Norkus
Steve Peterson
John Reifel
Sharron Reynolds
Mike Rosloniec
Bill Smith
Sue Stoddard
Marsha Visser
Kathy Vogelsang
Kelly Israels (‘89 B.B.A.) has accepted a position as product analyst with Meijer Inc. of Grand Rapids.

John Marquis (‘84 M.S.T.) was named one of the “Best Lawyers in America” in the 2003-04 edition of Best Lawyers, which bases its listings on a yearlong survey of attorneys. He is employed at Warner Norcross & Judd LLP in Holland.

Paul Nicholson (‘87 B.B.A.) is an Account Representative with the Wausau Insurance Companies for West Michigan.

Christopher Wolter (‘88 B.B.A.) is the Senior Manager of Federal Income Taxes for The Boeing Company. Chris works in the company’s world headquarters located in Chicago, Illinois.

Zachariah Brevis (‘99 B.B.A.) was promoted to intern program manager/grassroots assistant director for the Armenian Assembly of America in Washington, D.C.

Carol A. Crawford (‘98 M.B.A.) has joined The Alternative Board (TAB) as a certified facilitator for the West Michigan area. She also manages her own company, The Crawford Group, Co., LLC, and is a member of the faculty of the University of Phoenix, teaching courses in management, human resources, and organizational behavior.


Kalyn Redlisk (‘98 B.B.A.) received a law degree from Michigan State University-Detroit College of Law. Kalyn is an associate attorney at Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone PLC in Kalamazoo.

Kathy Vogelsang (‘95 B.B.A., ’99 M.B.A.) has accepted a new position as Vice President/Senior Portfolio Manager in the Wealth Management Group at Fifth Third Bank.

Anne Marie Worfel (‘98 B.B.A.) has accepted a position as Product Analyst at Meijer Inc. in Walker.

Amy Ziel (‘98 B.B.A.) has joined the human resources department at Macatawa Bank as a human resources generalist.

Melanie J. Anderson (‘03 B.B.A.) is working part time at University of Michigan, while attending U of M to earn her Master of Science in Information. She hopes to be a Reference Librarian and eventually a Library Administrator.

Sarah Brenner (‘99 B.B.A., ’02 M.B.A.) is the first student to complete the dual JD/MBA through MSU/DCL and the Seidman School at GVSU. Sarah passed the Michigan bar exam May 2003 and joined the law firm of Raymond, Enwright & Ulrich, P.C., located in Farmington Hills, as a Junior Associate.

David DeVore (‘02 B.B.A.) is the area sales manager for OnStar, a General Motors Company, and XM Radio for the San Francisco and Hawaii regions.

Scott Pawlowski (‘01 B.B.A.) is a Claims Representative for the Social Security Administration, Holland field office. He specializes in determining applicants’ eligibility for federal social insurance benefits through interviewing applicants applying for retirement and disability insurance benefits.

Stephanie L. Sloan (‘02 B.B.A.) has accepted a position with Sam’s Club in Comstock Park as the Operations Manager.

Rachelle Warrick (‘99 B.B.A., ’03 M.B.A.) was promoted to SAP HR project implementation team leader at Holland USA Inc. of Muskegon. Rachelle has worked in the human resources department for three years.

Peter Whitehead (‘03 B.A.) received a full tuition scholarship to attend Michigan State University Law School.

**Please send us news about you! Send your information via e-mail to SSBalumn@gvsu.edu**
West Michigan has a long history of entrepreneurship. From our pioneering ancestors in the fur and logging trades to those who put furniture, soap, and food in offices and homes across America, West Michigan entrepreneurs have changed the world.

Today's entrepreneurs continue the dream ... and you can be part of it! Great Lakes Entrepreneurs Quest (GLEQ) brings together Michigan's finest entrepreneurs with the consultants, angels, and venture capital industry through its trainings, networking, and business plan competition.

Now in its fourth year, the Quest has provided more than 2,300 people with training sessions and given away nearly $500,000 in prize money. Entrepreneurs have connected with resources, businesses have been launched, and capital has been raised.

Each year's Quest provides free instruction, coaching, and educational materials, all aimed at helping participants put together a reality-based plan and to learn the specifics of launching a business in Michigan. GVSU has taken the lead in streaming live training video from its Grand Rapids campus to locations throughout the state including Michigan Tech and Northern Michigan University in the Upper Peninsula.

GVSU's faculty and staff are serving as trainers, coaches, judges, event hosts, and Board members. The SSB, through its Center for Entrepreneurship and the Small Business Technology Development Center, was one of two founding university members (in partnership with the University of Michigan), and served as co-managers of the program for three years. Other sponsors include the Dow Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and McKinsey & Company.

If you have the drive and the dream, the resources are available with a click on your keyboard. Visit the website www.gleq.com and take the next step to making your idea a reality.
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