

# SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

## SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

### ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

#### DEAN'S CORNER

Greetings! Fall semester has kicked off and the campus is buzzing with activity. The School of Business and Economics brings a lot of momentum into the new semester. In the past year alone we have developed a new Executive MBA program (see <http://tiny.cc/EMBA686>), launched the Tasting Room Management Certificate, began work on a Wine Business Certificate, expanded the Wine Entrepreneurship program, launched the Career Mentor Program, expanded our engagement with the business community, hosted the North Bay Economic Outlook Conference, partnered with the Sonoma Mountain Business Cluster and Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce, grown our graduate enrollments, conducted two cohorts of the Hospitality Management Certificate for River Rock Casino, awarded the first Outstanding Alumni honors, continued the success of the Accounting Forum, expanded the number of internships for our students, conducted our first Career and Internship Expo, produced 29 research publications - just to name a few of our recent accomplishments!

While we are looking forward to an exciting year ahead, we also have been preparing for the long term. In the 2008-2009 academic year, ideas for a five year

strategic plan were discussed in school meetings, executive team retreats, and in advisory board sessions.

In the spring of 2009, a formal strategic planning summit was held involving 40 faculty, staff, students, alumni, university leaders, and members of the business community. Out of this summit, a draft strategic plan has been developed and is being circulated for feedback. This fall we will assemble teams to refine elements of the plan, to develop a set of action items to support the strategy, and to catalyze progress toward the School's goals.

Out of these efforts, I see the SSU School of Business and Economics emerging as the educational nucleus of a thriving collaborative North Bay economy. We will provide memorable and transformational educational programs for the global business professionals of the future, and for the emerging leaders of North Bay enterprises. We will be an exemplar of best practice by developing and applying the business tools, methods, and strategies we teach our students. We will convene and engage the North Bay business community toward generating regional economic prosperity.

I invite and welcome your involvement with SSU's School of Business and Economics:

- Apply for a spot in our new Executive MBA program (<http://www.sonoma.edu/sbe/emba/index.shtml>).
- Participate in a Wine Business seminar (<http://www.sonoma.edu/exed/wine/>).
- Work with a student intern or hire one of our graduates (<http://www.sonoma.edu/sbe/careercenter.shtml>).
- Make a financial investment (<http://www.sonoma.edu/sbe/>).

Join us in the center of the North Bay's business community.

Best,  
Bill



Dr. William S. Silver, Dean  
School of Business and Economics  
Sonoma State University



## SPOT LIGHT ON DR. LIZ THACH

The School of Business and Economics along with the Wine Business Institute would like to congratulate Dr. Liz Thach on the publication of her new book, "[How to Launch Your Wine Career](#)". Renee Thompson of the Wine Business Institute sat down with Dr. Thach to talk about her new book and to learn more about her journey.

RT: What drew you to the wine business?

LT: I was in college in the Bay Area (Belmont) and for my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday a friend took me to Napa to go wine tasting. I immediately fell in love with wine. From that day forward I began taking classes, traveling to wine regions in the U.S. and expanding to international wine regions. During this time I completed my Ph.D. in Management, and when Sonoma State University posted a position to teach "Introduction to Wine" I pursued it. It was a perfect match, and I have been teaching at SSU ever since.

RT: Can you tell me one or two key people who inspired you to take this avenue and why?

LT: There are so many who have been influential in my career. It's hard to choose just two. I would say that Paul Dolan, currently the Owner of Mendocino Wine Company, really opened my eyes to the environmental and sustainability issues of wine. He has truly been a mentor to me. Tim Matz, CEO of Foley Family Vineyards, had a big influence on me as well. We had met at a wine function, and I mentioned how difficult it was to teach wine business without any textbooks, and he suggested we edit a book together. This resulted in [Wine: A Global Business](#), and we just published our 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Both of these men have left a lasting imprint in my life professionally and personally.

RT: Tell me about some of the challenges you have faced along the way.

LT: I really wanted to become a part of the "Wine Family" and started volunteering as much as possible with non-profits and the like. It is really important to give back and build relationships. It took some time, but it has been a road worth traveled. I have met some wonderful people along the way and feel very welcomed

by the industry.

Another challenge has been the small vineyard I planted on my property. When you actually have your own vineyard you realize all of the issues that arise with protecting it. I had to battle powdery mildew, deer, yellow jackets, birds, gophers, and water issues. I lost much of my crop for 2 vintages, and spent some time crying in the vineyard. I now have so much more respect for anyone who is a winegrower. However, the whole experience has proven to be very rewarding. Altogether I have 120 vines: 30 Cabernet, 30 Cabernet Franc, 30 Sauvignon Blanc, and 30 Pinot Noir. It's a family affair, with my husband and daughter helping with sulfur spraying, pruning, harvesting, etc.

RT: You are currently working on the Master of Wine certification. Tell me about that process.

LT: The Institute of Masters of Wine was established in London, England in 1953. There are currently 277 members of the Institute from 25 different countries. There is a 90% failure rate in taking the 4 day exam the first time. It has been the most difficult thing I've done; harder than getting my Ph.D. I passed the first half last year and just took the tasting part in June. The results won't be in until September. Once you pass the exam, you then have to spend another year or so researching and writing a dissertation before you can be accepted as an MW. It is an extremely rigorous program, but I am enjoying the challenge and the process.

RT: With your busy schedule, how do you balance your professional life and your private life?

LT: I have to say, I don't always do it well. I receive many invitations to speak at conferences and seminars, and it is hard to turn them down, but I have to. I set aside time to write, which I love to do. Sunday's are for down time and family time. I have also started the practice of computer free weekends. Creating balance is a work in progress.

RT: You've recently published a book entitled "[How to Launch Your Wine Career](#)". What prompted you to write

this book?

LT: I had a conversation with my publisher Elliott Mackey of the Wine Appreciation Guild, and we discussed where the need was. Wine career's was the perfect subject. There hasn't been a book published on this subject and so "[How to Launch Your Wine Career](#)" was born.

RT: Why did you choose Brian D'Emillo as your co-author?

LT: I wanted to involve an expert in the field of wine Human Resources and Brian was one of the first HR people I met when I moved to SSU 9 years ago. The book is a comprehensive compilation of how to build a wine career from the ground up. It explains job descriptions, educational and skill requirements, the "career ladder", how to get started, and job hunting strategies.

RT: With all of your accomplishments you could have a successful career outside of SSU. What does the classroom give back to you?

LT: I love teaching and doing research at SSU. I worked in the private sector for 15 years and traveled internationally. I wanted to give back, and teaching is a wonderful way to share knowledge. I love watching the students grow and develop in their educational and professional careers, and I enjoy mentoring them. I feel there is no point to life if you don't give back.

We are fortunate and proud to have Dr. Thach a part of our distinguished faculty.



Dr. Liz Thach

## SBE CAREER CENTER

### SBE Career Center

We've changed our name! SBE Career Center resonates better with the employment community, and since we're all about finding jobs and preparing students to be competitive for them, the new name should serve us well.

A key goal for the Center this year is to develop a strong alumni connection. Here's how we're doing this:

**Alumni Speaker Series:** Join us at these events slated for September 21 and October 14 from 11-12 noon in Salazar 2016. Tom Scott, MBA '05, Oliver's Market General Manager and Kevin Evans, Management and Economics '79, EnergyConnect founder, CEO and President are our featured alumni this semester.

**Mentor Program:** Become a mentor to a current student. A successful pilot in Spring 2009 has now become a permanent SBE program. Nearly one-third of the Spring mentors were SBE alumni from these companies: Golden Pacific Systems, SSU Athletics, Wells Fargo, State

Farm, and Moss Adams.

### Career and Internship

**EXPO:** Join us as a job-seeker or registered company on October 21, 5-7 PM, Cooperage. Several alumni represented their companies last year (Jeff Fuller of Enterprise Rent-a Car, Darren Krause of Valley Yellow Pages, Sarah Davila of Foster's Wine Estates, and Beth Jacobs of Exchange Bank were a few). Our students enjoy the opportunity to interact with you!

**Internship Program:** Send us internship opportunities at your organizations. Completing an internship is one of the best ways for our students to get a job upon graduation.

**Jobs Listing:** Check out this site for job opportunities ([www.sonoma.edu/sbe](http://www.sonoma.edu/sbe)). Send in more!

**LinkedIn:** Join our group, Sonoma State School of Business and Economics Students and Grads ([www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)). Job postings and career leads are starting to come in from alumni. You are our best role models for current students, our

strongest link to the employment community, and the reason why SSU SBE has a solid reputation in the workplace. Use our services. Stay in touch!

Contact: Sarah Dove, Career Center Director  
[sarah.dove@sonoma.edu](mailto:sarah.dove@sonoma.edu); 707-664-2548



Sarah Dove



## WINE BUSINESS INSTITUTE ALUMNI COUNCIL

The Wine Business Institute is proud to announce the formation of the first Wine Business Institute Alumni Council. Our first meeting took place on August 4th in which all members were introduced and a brainstorming session began about the council's mission and objectives. A mission statement was created.

### Alumni Council Mission

#### Statement:

*Our purpose is to create, strengthen and broaden relationships from within the wine industry for the purpose of networking, mentoring and promoting to past, present and future stu-*

*dents the prestige of the Sonoma State University Wine Business Institute by connecting students with alumni, faculty, fostering 2-way communication and facilitating the consideration of the industry's needs.*

On September 8th the council elected members to the following positions with 2 year term limits:

#### President:

Arman Khachaturian

#### Vice President:

Amanda Ravenscroft

#### Secretary:

Remy Moore

#### Treasurer:

William Goebel

#### Director of Communication:

Gary Long

The council hosted their first event on Oct. 7th. The Wine Business Fall Social aided in the exposure of the Wine Business concentration. The evening was well attended by freshman and sophomore business students.

The council will meet again on Oct. 27th to plan their next event.



Korbel Champagne Cellars

## 2002 ALUMNI ANGIE GRAINGER

Many are called to action, and some take the opportunity at hand. Angie Grainger is one of those people who has not only taken the opportunity, but has captured and acted upon her call.

Angie Grainger, CPA/PFS, CFP®, graduated from SBE in Accounting in 2002, and will graduate at the end of this year with her Masters in Taxation and Financial Planning from Golden Gate University.

Angie leads and participates in community financial literacy trainings which include: Dollars and Sense Workshops for Adults, Teen Financial Smarts at Chops Teen Center, Financial Trainings to other non-profits participants, as well as various articles and webinars on financial education & wealth protection. She also serves as a Member of the Finance Committee for the YWCA. Angie is the in-coming Chair for CalCPA Personal Financial Planners Committee. With her committed involvement in these and other organizations Angie understands the needs of the community.

With a successful career as a CPA and financial advisor, Angie is launching a very exciting and innovated business "RETHINK Financial Services, Inc." with her partner Gary Gottlieb, also an SBE alumnus. Angie and Gary are fulfilling a need by providing the public with tools that will empower their relationship with money. The focus is on helping people understand their money, gain new skills and behaviors to become more at peace with money AND get what they want. They do this through a variety of coaching, consulting and training programs with employers, workshops and individuals. Their signature program is "7 Steps to 7 Figures" a seven week program covering seven areas that build awareness, education and understanding:

**R**evue, Reflect, Revise, **E**valuate Your Net Worth,  
**T**arget Your Cash Flow, **H**arness Your Expenses,  
**I**ntegrate Your Asset Strategies, **N**egate Your Li-

Along with her new business venture, Angie is spearheading the creation of a Financial Literacy Center. In partnership with the School of Business and Economics, Community Action Partnership, Sonoma County Office of Education and CalCPA and CalCPA Education Foundation, Angie is collaborating with these organizations and others to launch this non-profit organization. The Financial Literacy Center will provide an efficient delivery system for financial literacy education, improve the financial health and stability of our community, and be an unbiased resource for the community for personal money concerns. This exciting program will benefit those in our community who need help, and provide knowledge sharing that is essential to a successful financial life, and partner with local businesses to rebuild the financial health of Sonoma County.

Angie is working with Professor Sherri Anderson to establish an Alumni Financial Literacy Project to involve you, our alumni, in this exciting program. For further information on how you can help, please contact Angie Grainger at [angie.grainger@RETHINKfsi.com](mailto:angie.grainger@RETHINKfsi.com)

On May 9, 2009 the School of Business and Economics was honored to award Angie with the **Alumni Community Achievement Award**. We wish Angie great success and look forward to our partnership in developing the Financial Literacy Center.



Angie Grainger

## ANNUAL MBA/ALUMNI MIXER

Come join us for our **3rd Annual MBA Mixer** on *January 29, 2010 from 7:00-10:00pm* at the North Bay Business Cluster.

Guest speaker: Randy DeCaminada, Director of Service and Sales at P.G.&E. will discuss the "Wave Power Generation Project of Sonoma Coast"

For further information please contact Renee Thompson at: [thompren@sonoma.edu](mailto:thompren@sonoma.edu)

We hope to see you there!

## ALUMNI ARMEN KHACHATURIAN

Armen Khachaturian graduated from Sonoma State University's School of Business and Economics with a concentration in Wine Business Strategies in May 2003. Intrigued by the business of wine and the constant changes of the industry, Armen found that the SSU's Wine Business Institute had the best curriculum around. "The program builds a great foundation and sheds light on the industry." Armen worked as an intern at Fritz Winery and Landmark Vineyards during his time at SSU which provided priceless hands-on experience. After graduation Armen went to work for The Henry Wine Group as a sales representative, as the National Sales Manager for Hanzell Vineyards and now is the Director of Sales and Marketing for Crocker and Starr Winery and Bridesmaid Wines.

Armen sits as President on the new Wine Business Institute Alumni Council. He has always envisioned wine business alumni coming back to help promote and assist in elevating the program. "This is a great opportunity for the Wine Business Institute alumni to come together for the benefit of the current students and the program. This provides an opportunity for us to actively participate in the enrichment of this great program."

On May 9, 2009 Armen was honored at the School of Business and Economics Graduation Banquet and presented with the school's **Outstanding Alumni Award**. Armen has returned to SSU many times to be a guest speaker, and gives tirelessly his time and enthusiasm in the support of SSU and the Wine Business Institute. He mentors wine business graduates and helps to find them jobs. Armen has co-authored 2 chapters in both the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Wine: A Global Business.

## SSU ALUMNI ASSOCIATION: DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

The School of Business and Economics would like to congratulate

**Sheila Mackintosh-Sims**  
*Distinguished Alumni Staff Award*

Sheila graduated from Sonoma State University with a B.A. in Geography in 1981 and holds the position of Academic Advisor for the School of Business and Economics

## OUR DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

**Dr. Thomas S. Atkin**, Associate Professor of Supply Chain Management recently published a paper titled, "Appellation as an Indicator of Quality" in the International Journal of Wine Business Research.

**Dr. Armand Gilinsky**, Professor of Business recently submitted two of his cases, "Koots Green Tea" (with co-authors Carl Kay and Wakako Kusumoto) and "Western Union in 2008: Send Me the Money!" which were accepted for publication in the *Strategic Management, 12th edition, McGraw-Hill/Irwin/Pearce & Robinson (2010)*.

**Dr. David Horowitz**, Professor of Marketing presented his research paper "'Cult' Wine?" at the 2009 Bacchus Wine Conference in Dijon, France.

**Dr. Steven Cuellar**, Professor of Economics publication "The Sideways Effect: A Test for Changes in the Demand for Merlot and Pinto Noir Wines" was accepted in the *Journal of Wine Economics*.



## SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS CLUBS

### ACCOUNTING FORUM

The Accounting Forum is a club that sponsors social and recruiting events for the purpose of exposing students to career opportunities in public, private, and government accounting, and giving them access to these jobs. Speakers from Fortunate 500 companies, the largest public accounting firms in the world, and local companies provide a variety of information at noon club meetings. There are social gatherings like Back to School Night and Softball BBQ. These major events attract 200-250 students and employers in facilitating graduation to employment opportunities. It is student run and the largest club on campus in terms of members.

### FINANCE CLUB

The finance club creates value for its members by providing a friendly environment in which students can both explore various financial careers and learn how to improve their personal finances. The club invites speakers from various finance related careers to discuss possible career paths with students. Past speakers have included commercial and investment bankers, professional traders, financial advisors, retail sales employees, and insurance company representatives. The club sent eleven students to the RISE (Redefining Investment Strategy Education) Global Student Investment Forum at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio last March where they met and talked to leaders in the world investment community.

### WINE CLUB

The SSU wine club is about to start its 9<sup>th</sup> chartered semester. We support and promote the culture and history that wine has to offer. Twice a month we will have a different winery come and host our events in the Schultz library. Our average attendance usually ranges around 40 to 50 and our membership is open to the entire Student body (Over 21) plus faculty and friends. Some of the wineries that presented last semester were Domain Chandon, Twomey Cellars, Matanzas Creek, and Chateau St Jean. We are looking forward to some really spectacular wineries this year and potentially a road trip to the Santa Barbara wine country for a tasting experience.

### MARKETING CLUB

In Spring 2009 the SSU Marketing Club had several guest speakers and attended outside events. Guest speakers included representatives from Infineon Raceway, Enterprise Rent A Car, and several others. There was also a resume workshop held during none of the meetings to help club members with their professional development. There were two events for Club members off campus, the Golden State Warriors' Job Fair where members were invited to a game afterward, and a social outing to a San Francisco Giants game. All of these activities are meant to help club members learn more about marketing and get them involved in the greater business community.

### MANAGEMENT CLUB

The Management Club is recognized to be one of the most dynamic of professional interest clubs in the School of Business and Economics at SSU (SBE). Collectively the Club is very engaged with the SBE Career Center and have been active participants in many of the Center's activities. Club members have found great value in the mentoring program, resume writing workshop staffed by area Human Resource Managers, and the fabulously successful SBE Career Fair, which is attended by some of the most prominent area employers. The Management Club is focused on making opportunities to explore career paths. Last year they invited speakers to talk of their personal journeys representing careers as varied as professional sports marketing, retail management, marketing distribution, and general management. The Club entertained industry guests from Kraft Foods, Kohl's, Target, SSU, and Enterprise Rentals as well as others. Some of the organizations that hired club members upon graduation include, Kohl's, Target, Hertz, Walt Disney. Our members have found that participation in the Management Club can be both fun and profitable.

### ECONOMICS CLUB

If asked to define Economics, what would you say? You may mumble something in regards to money, monetary policy, or even the Federal Reserve, but what if I told you that Economics is more? Economics is used to identify various things including trends in Capital punishment, wage discrimination, welfare policy, and it can even be used to identify the best option a pitcher in baseball can make between a fastball or a curveball. The Economics Club is comprised of a group of students and professors that enjoy discussing these topics as well as current events. Not an Economics major? No worries, we are welcoming to all individuals that share a common interest in the subject matter or those who wish to learn. Not interested in learning? Well, we have room for you too. Come on out for Friday Football and throw the ball around with us. If you are intrigued and want to know more about the club check us out on our new Facebook page or ask about us in the School of Business and Economics.