Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to introduce our latest Department of Accounting and Management Information Systems newsletter, which provides a snapshot of our diverse programs and initiatives; the accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff and alumni; and the changes underway to build on these achievements.

We have seen tremendous growth in our department, including the launch of Project THRIVE — a diversity program that is a particular point of pride for our department and our partners and one poised for continued growth. We have also welcomed three new outstanding tenure-track faculty members, who are excited to continue our department's renowned legacy of excellence in research and teaching. We have also made great progress in preparing and introducing a groundbreaking Master of Accounting curriculum that emphasizes the ever-growing importance of data and analytics in our field.

Over the past year, our faculty, staff and students have also been recognized repeatedly for their accomplishments. We are particularly proud of the contributions of our students and alumni, both as business leaders and as valuable contributors to their communities. We were thrilled to see graduates recognized as winners of the Elijah Watt Sells Award, a doctoral student receiving a prestigious Deloitte Fellowship, and a student tax team gaining national recognition. Our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program garnered university-wide recognition and continues to serve as a shining example of the learning and service that we value.

We also continue to partner with leading organizations to advance Fisher and our industry. One such example is our recently announced collaboration with the American Accounting Association (AAA), which will serve as the administrator and home for the Accounting Hall of Fame. As you may know, the Hall was founded at Ohio State in 1950 to honor the accomplishments of the industry’s top leaders, forever establishing the university as a champion of accounting. This new arrangement leverages the AAA’s century-old commitment to leading-edge accounting research and publications while simultaneously elevating the reach, visibility and rich history of the Hall of Fame.

As we reflect on these developments and look forward to many more in the year ahead, we are united in a feeling of gratitude. We thank you for the critical role you play in planning and supporting the programs, students, faculty and staff that make up our academic mission, and we look forward to this continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Brian Mittendorf
Chair, Department of Accounting and MIS
Project THRIVE
Introducing underrepresented students to accounting and MIS

A n ever-expanding program at Fisher for underrepresented students interested in accounting and management information systems is offering them access to increased opportunities to grow and succeed in these fields.

Launched in 2016, Project THRIVE is designed to create a community of minority and underrepresented accounting and MIS students who are equipped for success at Fisher and beyond. The initiative combines classroom curriculum with co-curricular opportunities and provides students with increased access to accounting- and MIS-related tools and resources at the college.

“The response to THRIVE has been one of excitement from the students and great support from the alumni and partners,” said Dr. Cynthia W. Turner, senior lecturer in Fisher’s Department of Accounting and MIS and coordinator of THRIVE. “In fact, I believe that it is because of the joint efforts of our current Project THRIVE students, our department and our college that we welcomed a record number of underrepresented minority freshmen direct admits (22) into the AMIS program this fall, more than tripling last year’s total.”

THRIVE, meanwhile, has grown from 18 participants in its first year to 26 in 2017. Turner expects to nearly double that participation by the end of the year.

Project THRIVE (Transcend fear; Harvest the power of knowledge; Raise the standard; Invest time wisely; Value others; Embrace excellence) builds on Fisher’s world-class accounting curriculum to provide students with a holistic accounting and MIS education experience.

“The generosity and support of these recognized firms is helping Fisher connect with talented young students who may not have considered a career in accounting,” Turner said. “This program continues to open doors of opportunity and has the potential to make an incredible impact on accounting education here at Fisher, as well as the practice of accounting.”

Among the key facets of Project THRIVE:
- Students complete AMIS 1000, an accounting survey class.
- Participants receive mentorship and advising from AMIS alumni.
- Participants put their business, accounting and technical skills to work on a minimum of two community outreach projects.

This fall, THRIVE students partnered with Junior Achievement to teach middle school students about financial literacy.

Additionally, Project THRIVE students have access to an accounting library and tutoring services in conjunction with Fisher’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion Student Services, as well as opportunities to apply for scholarships.

THRIVE students, staff and supporters gathered in October for the program’s inaugural Homecoming Reception. The event honored Ibi Krugurbo (BSBA ‘02) with the 2017 Alumnus of the Year Award for his support of the program. Krugurbo is managing partner of EY’s San Jose office.

PwC, EY, and KPMG are among the major accounting firms that are supporting Project THRIVE. PwC has provided funding for scholarships, while EY has given in support of the accounting library and personnel. KPMG has given in support of programmatic costs.

Support Project THRIVE
Help create a community of minority and underrepresented accounting and MIS students who are equipped to succeed at Fisher and beyond.

go.osu.edu/givetothrive
Tzachi Zach is an associate professor and faculty director of Fisher’s Master of Accounting (MAcc) Program and has served as an accounting faculty member at Fisher since 2008. His research interests include financial reporting and its relation to capital markets, earnings management, managerial incentives and empirical accrual models. Dr. Zach’s research has been published in leading journals, including The Accounting Review; Journal of Accounting, Auditing and Finance; and The Review of Financial Studies.

In the classroom, Dr. Zach is a dynamic professor who enjoys sharing his insights into financial accounting with undergraduate students in the Accounting Honors Program and MAcc students.

What has you most excited about the direction of Fisher’s MAcc Program?

I think our MAcc program is growing and attracting more talented students from more places around the country and the world. I look forward to expanding our reach even further. We are at a point in which the accounting profession is going through some significant changes, and it is important for our program to reflect these changes and incorporate them into the curriculum.

I think our relatively quick involvement with KPMG and in advancing the data and analytics side of the curriculum is an example. I am excited to see how this innovation will affect our other programs as well.

What are some trends you have seen as students explore and pursue a MAcc degree?

We continue to see a high demand for studying accounting in the U.S. from China. I hope this trend continues. Additionally, students seem much more job-oriented now than they were in the past.

What update can you provide about the KPMG Master of Accounting with Data and Analytics Program and why this program is significant?

We launched the inaugural class of MAcc students with the involvement of KPMG. I think KPMG’s involvement has focused our attention to an aspect of our faculty’s competency that we have not traditionally brought into the classroom, specifically, analyzing and drawing conclusions from large data sets.

It is becoming clear that future auditors will need to be comfortable with large data sets, and we are ready to prepare them. Another aspect of KPMG’s involvement is that the demographics of our MAcc class have become more diverse. We will have students from 30 states represented in the class of 2018, and that is exciting to us and the students.
What are your research interests and some insights gained from that research?

Some of my current research interests involve equity analysts. We have a project that looks at the types of recommendations that stock analysts put out and investigates whether “buy” recommendations from different analysts mean the same thing for all analysts and brokerage houses.

We find that they do not mean the same thing, and it is important for investors to put these recommendations in the context of who issued them. Other research interests include earnings management, and how managers’ incentives interact with debt contracts.

What is your life like away from Fisher? Hobbies? Interests?

I go to the gym regularly, although Professor Arya does not believe this to be true. Right now I am also involved with a video card game called Hearthstone. I enjoy playing it, although I am not a top-level player.

Furthermore, I like to analyze the game statistically. In that regard, together with my brother, I run a very popular website in which we analyze a large sample of games and present our findings every week. You can find us at vicioussyndicate.com.
Meet our new faculty

Eric Holzman, Assistant Professor
Hometown: Ellicott City, MD
Previous Academic Institution: Indiana University

Please share your research focus and teaching interests.

My research interests center on the interaction between disclosures, managers and capital market participants. Broadly speaking, the research I have conducted to date has two distinct themes relating to capital market accounting research: (1) investor response to public disclosures and (2) the influence of corporate managers on disclosures and market outcomes. My research on corporate disclosures examines how the information content of a disclosure interacts with investor characteristics to shape the market response. Similarly, my research on managers examines how managerial qualities, such as ability and incentives, shape the production of public disclosures and market outcomes.

What brought you to Fisher?

I had a great job market visit at Fisher, and I value the commitment to research and teaching shared by the faculty in the Department of Accounting and MIS. I knew that by coming to Fisher I would learn from some of the best research-active senior faculty in the nation. I also was impressed by the quality of the PhD program.

Tell us about some of your hobbies and interests.

My wife and I are the parents of two impossibly energetic little boys. We enjoy just about anything that gets us and the boys out of the house on the weekend. In our free time, we enjoy putting on our microbiology hats to brew creative craft beers. When we are not parenting, we love to travel in search of home-brewing inspiration. I also dabble in cycling, jogging and weightlifting.

Jon Kerr, Assistant Professor
Hometown: Renton, WA
Previous Academic Institution: Baruch College–City University of New York

Please share your research focus and teaching interests.

I have broad interests in research questions regarding taxation, capital and debt markets, information environment, accounting quality, and asset liquidity. I find the international setting to be a compelling one and look for ways to broaden my research to the global setting. I have taught taxation for the past four years, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Prior to teaching taxation, I taught courses in financial accounting and financial planning and analysis.

What brought you to Fisher?

I couldn't pass up the opportunity to be a part of such a great research institution with excellent colleagues and students. Although this is my first time living in the Midwest, I am looking forward to everything that the Columbus area has to offer.

Tell us about some of your hobbies and interests.

I enjoy the arts, whether it be theatrical productions, museums, the symphony, opera or ballet. I also enjoy the outdoors and love to camp and hike with my wife and children. At the end of the day, I enjoy unwinding with a good book or television program.

Amy Sheneman, Assistant Professor
Hometown: Grand Rapids, MI
Previous Academic Institution: Indiana University

Please share your research focus and teaching interests.

My research focuses on management control systems and the extent to which the capital markets respond to risk. In my dissertation, which received the Gil Geis Memorial PhD Scholarship from the Institute for Fraud Prevention, I examined how cybersecurity risk influences a firm’s cost of capital. Specifically, I found that the occurrence of a data breach is associated with an increase in the cost of privately placed debt. Prior to pursuing my PhD at Indiana, I was a senior manager in risk advisory services at EY. Leveraging my prior public accounting experience, I will teach the undergraduate auditing course, which I previously taught at IU.

What brought you to Fisher?

I joined Fisher because of the people. At the department level, the accounting faculty is a prestigious group of scholars; I look forward to learning from them and contributing to the department. At the college level, I am excited about the opportunity to engage with The Risk Institute, as my research aligns well with their mission. At the university level, I am honored to be part of such a premier research institution and look forward to teaching such a talented group of undergraduate students.

Tell us about some of your hobbies and interests.

I enjoy spending time with my husband and three children: Riley (9), Krey (5), and Bodey (2). As a family, we enjoy boating, theater and college sports. In my free time, I also enjoy reading, cooking and traveling.
Donor Reliance on Accounting and Its Consequences for the Charitable Distribution Channel
Production and Operations Management (2016)
Anil Arya and Brian Mittendorf

Donors and ratings groups often rely on accounting measures of program spending levels in evaluating how efficiently charities use public contributions. These measures show how much of an organization’s funds go toward programs rather than “overhead.” This research study demonstrates that overreliance on such measures could prove counterproductive by rewarding giving grants over conducting direct charitable activities. Giving grants to another charity permits a leaner operation on paper, but essentially passes the administrative burden to the grant recipient. As a result, charities that face pressure to lower administrative costs may actually reduce overall efficiency by adding a layer between themselves and the ultimate beneficiaries of program activities.

IRS Attention
Journal of Accounting Research (2017)
Zahn Bozanic, Jeffrey Hoopes, Jacob Thornock and Braden Williams

Professors Bozanic, Hoopes, Thornock and Williams study how public and private disclosure requirements interact to influence both tax regulator enforcement and firm disclosure. To capture IRS enforcement activities, they introduce a novel data set of IRS acquisition of firms’ public financial disclosures, which were labeled for IRS attention. The professors examine the implementation of two new disclosure requirements that potentially alter IRS attention: FIN 48, which increased public tax disclosure requirements, and Schedule UTP, which increased private tax disclosure. They find that IRS attention increased following FIN 48 but subsequently decreased following Schedule UTP, consistent with public and private disclosure interacting to influence tax enforcement. The professors next examine how private tax disclosure requirements under Schedule UTP affected firms’ public disclosure responses. They find that, following Schedule UTP, firms significantly increased the quantity and altered the content of their tax-related disclosures, consistent with lower tax-related proprietary costs of disclosure. The results suggest that changes in SEC disclosure requirements altered the IRS’ behavior with regard to public information acquisition, and, relatedly, changes in IRS private disclosure requirements appear to change firms’ public disclosure behavior.

Managerial Ability and Credit Risk Assessment
Management Science (2017)
Eric Holzman, Sam Bonsall and Brian Miller

Given the growing importance of the U.S. corporate bond market over the past decade, it is important for firms to understand the factors that lenders consider in assessing and pricing default risk. Prior research has focused extensively on the role of firm characteristics and accounting information in the credit rating process. However, credit rating agencies also stress the importance of having a skilled team that is incremental to strong fundamentals. Employing a proxy of managerial ability that measures how efficiently managers convert capital and labor inputs into revenues, Professor Holzman and his colleagues show that managerial talent drives significant variation in firm bond ratings and new bond issuance credit spreads. Interestingly, they find that managerial ability is as important of a factor in driving credit risk assessments as conventional measures of firm-wide profitability (i.e., return on assets and interest coverage ratios).
A Teaching Note on the Controllability Principle and Responsibility Accounting
Eric Spires, Rick Young and Steven Schwartz

Accounting numbers are widely used in performance evaluation. The idea that employees should be evaluated and held responsible only for the things they control seems like common sense. However, sometimes applying common sense leads to fallacies. Controllability is neither necessary nor sufficient for a measure to be useful in performance evaluation. What is important is that the measure is informative, conditional on all other information available. This note illustrates a situation where a performance measure is clearly informative in light of other information available; that is, it is conditionally controllable, but still is not useful in performance evaluation. The rationale underlying the illustrations and analogies to business settings are discussed.

Subjective Beliefs and Management Control: A User’s Guide and a Model Extension
Federation of Business Disciplines Journal (2016)
Rick Young, Anthony Meder and Steven Schwartz

Recently published research by Professors Young, Meder and Schwartz studies contracting between a superior and subordinate who have different beliefs regarding the subordinate’s ability. The typical assumption is that the subordinates are overconfident, in that their beliefs regarding their productivity are higher than warranted. Maintaining this assumption, this paper illustrates that overconfidence can lead to large increases in the riskiness of subordinate compensation and lower expected compensation costs for the superior. Also included are a brief analysis of the effects of under-confidence and a discussion of the plausible real-world effects of manager overconfidence. The paper concludes with an extension of previous modeling to explore conditions under which the effects of overconfidence are predicted to be most pronounced.

Online Word of Mouth: Implications for the Name-Your-Own-Price Channel
Waleed Muhanna and Dale Stoel

The Internet has given rise to new sales formats, including the “name-your-own-price” (NYOP) model first popularized by Priceline.com. Under this format, a prospective buyer “names” a price, which is accepted if it exceeds an undisclosed threshold price. However, the increased technology-enabled word of mouth sharing among consumers of pricing information raises questions about the viability of the NYOP format as a price discrimination vehicle. Using an analytical model, Professors Muhanna and Stoel show that increased “word-of-mouth” transmission of information about its undisclosed threshold price does not unambiguously erode the NYOP retailer’s profits, and find that consumer valuations need not be positively correlated with haggling costs for the NYOP selling strategy to dominate posted-pricing format.
Zahn Bozanic, assistant professor of accounting, was named a recipient of the 2017 Deloitte Foundation Wildman Medal Award at the American Accounting Association’s annual conference.


Relying on Benford’s Law, the researchers develop a composite, firm-year measure to determine whether the overall distribution (rather than a single digit or account) of a firm’s financial statement numbers conform to Benford’s Law, which they term the Financial Statement Divergence (FSD) Score.

The paper shows that
- deviations from Benford’s Law are positively correlated with accounting quality and earnings management measures
- firms that just beat zero earnings have higher deviation from Benford’s Law than firms that just miss
- the restated financial statement numbers firms report more closely conform to Benford’s Law than the originally misstated numbers
- divergence from Benford’s Law is negatively associated with earnings persistence and predicts material misstatements

The paper, both during its working paper stage and after publication, has received a tremendous amount of attention beyond academia. It has been featured in numerous press articles, including Forbes, CFO.com and The Wall Street Journal. Investors have taken note, as the FSD Score has been the topic of several institutional investor research reports. The implications of the paper have also drawn the attention of regulators, such as the the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Others have commercialized the measure. Audit Analytics, a major data vendor to academics and investors, uses the measure in its Accounting Quality and Risk Matrix (AQRM), alongside Altman’s Z Score and Beneish’s M Score, in order to flag suspect financial performance and accounting. The FSD Score is available to professional investors worldwide through the AQRM app on the Bloomberg Terminal.

The Deloitte Foundation Wildman Medal Award was founded in 1978 to commemorate John Wildman and to encourage research relevant to the professional practice of accounting, to which much of Wildman’s life was devoted.

Other Awards

Eric Spires received the 2017 MAcc Outstanding Faculty Award

David Williams received the 2017 Undergraduate Program Major Teaching Award
Best in Class
Alumni among the top performers on the CPA exam

Continuing a legacy of accounting excellence at Fisher, two alumni have been honored as among the top performers nationwide on the Certified Public Accountants exam.

Peter Kampf (BSBA ’15) and Kathleen Koehl (MAcc ’16) were among 58 candidates selected to receive the Elijah Watt Sells award for their performance on the 2016 exam.

Presented by the American Institute of CPAs, the award is granted to individuals who, each year, obtain a cumulative average score above 95.5 across all four sections of the Uniform CPA Examination and pass all four sections of the examination on their first attempt. More than 102,000 individuals sat for the 2016 exam.

“This award reflects Peter and Kat’s hard work and their dedication to the practice of accounting,” said Brian Mittendorf, chair of the Department of Accounting and MIS at Fisher. “This tremendous accomplishment is a testament not only to the high-quality and high-caliber programs at Fisher, but also to the college’s recruiting and admissions staff, which identify the very best students, such as Peter and Kat.”

Koehl was also recognized with the Illinois CPA Society’s Gold Medal Award, which is presented to the state’s top performer on the CPA exam each year. She is employed by RSM in Chicago as a tax associate.

Kampf is a staff accountant at Cohen & Company in Cleveland.

What does winning the Elijah Watt Sells Award mean to you?
It’s honestly very surprising — I didn’t even know the award existed when I was sitting for the CPA exam. It certainly makes all the long hours of studying seem worth it! Kathleen Koehl
(MAcc ’16)
RSM US, LLP, Tax Associate

How has Fisher helped develop you as an accounting professional?
The most significant take-away from my time at Fisher was the importance of asking questions. It’s one thing to take the law as written and apply it, but in my limited experience, the best professionals question why things are as they are. Having an inquisitive mind helps you find the optimal solution for your clients and benefits your own professional development.

Peter Kampf (BSBA ’15)
Cohen & Company, Staff Accountant

What does winning the Elijah Watt Sells Award mean to you?
Honestly, winning this award was not my goal when taking the CPA exam. I wanted to study hard and be confident I would pass all four parts of the exam on the first attempt. With that being said, I feel honored to have won the Elijah Watts Sells Award. It is special for me to be able to represent both my firm as well as Fisher and highlight how they can help their people succeed. On a more personal level, it feels great to know that hard work pays off and that a lot can be achieved if you dedicate yourself to it.

What are your thoughts on being among the 58 individuals (out of more than 102,000) who sat for the CPA exam to earn the award?
Well, that is one crazy statistic. Part of me feels very proud and humbled; most of me feels like a complete nerd.

How has Fisher helped develop you as an accounting professional?
Fisher has undoubtedly given me the tools necessary to succeed as an accounting professional. All of my classes specializing in accounting aided me in taking the CPA exam and are still applicable to the work I do on a day-to-day basis. More importantly, the various other business classes I took at Fisher molded me into someone who not only can bust out some mean debits and credits but is also not afraid to speak up or give a presentation.
For 22 years, the Accounting Careers Awareness Program (ACAP-Ohio) has provided minority high school students with opportunities to explore career options in accounting and business. And for exactly half of that time, Edwin Jones has been involved in ACAP-Ohio either as a student, counselor, chair, executive director or advisor. Jones (BSBA ’08, MBA ’15) returned again this year, where he shared his experiences not only with the program’s students, but also with those in charge of this year’s event. For Jones — and other former participants-turned-leaders — giving back to the program is part of what makes ACAP-Ohio special.

“As a student, the program was tiring, amazing, educational and fun, because I was learning what it’s like to be a college student,” said Jones, a client representative at IBM. “Over time, those same learnings have taken on a different meaning, as the week isn’t about me, but it’s about the students participating. I want the program to be educational, or else it’s a waste of everyone’s time. I want the program to be amazing, so the parents know we have given as much to their students as we could.”

The ACAP-Ohio program began in 1995 at Otterbein University before moving to Ohio State two years later. The weeklong residency program includes interaction with Fisher faculty, professional speakers, team-building exercises, networking events, site visits and a college fair. Since its inception, 16 graduate assistants in Fisher’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion Student Services (ODISS) have served as executive directors of the program. The involvement of the graduate assistants, many of whom participated as high school students in ACAP-Ohio, has created a legacy unique to the program and lifelong connections.

“Edwin had a huge influence on me while I was in the program and as an alum,” said Mariah Scott (BSBA ’15, MAcc ’16), who participated in ACAP-Ohio after her junior year of high school in 2010. “He is one of the most genuine people that I have ever met. His phone has always been available whenever I need a pep talk or just someone to run through ideas with. He was a huge advocate for me to get the (ODISS) graduate assistantship to help fund graduate school, and I know that if I ever need him, he’ll always be there.”

Scott, a financial services advisory at EY in New York City, has been a counselor with the program and served as executive director in 2016. Allison Stewart is the latest in a long line of ACAP leaders. Stewart, a second-year student in Fisher’s Master of Human Resource Management program and an ODISS graduate assistant, is this year’s ACAP-Ohio executive director. She credits the success of the program to her predecessors.

“Edwin and Mariah have been so helpful,” she said. “They have provided so much support and always answer my questions. Overall, the ACAP program would not nearly be the same without them. The students rave about them.”

It’s no coincidence that past ACAP participants have contributed to the sustained success of the program, said David Harrison, ODISS executive director.
“The principle of ‘paying forward’ is very much embodied by these former ACAP students and leaders,” Harrison said. “They recognize the incredible value that the program provides and want to help in any way possible to continue the incredible legacy and impact ACAP-Ohio has had on so many minority students.”

Scott remembers how ACAP-Ohio changed the course of her educational experience.

“ACAP allowed me to see what career opportunities were out there and provided me with relationships to help me realize them,” she said. “I received my first internship at a Big Four company my freshman year by leveraging the relationship I made with a recruiter at ACAP.

“As an alumna of the program, I learned the importance of giving back. I saw people that looked like me who were successful in college and in their careers, and I knew it was possible. Now, I try to be that example for everyone who is walking in my footsteps.”

Jones said lessons from his ACAP experience come in handy every day.

“When I need to coordinate a team response to a project or a customer appreciation event, I know what it takes to do so,” he said. “When something doesn’t work well, I know when to change course and how to rely on a team to get the job done. These are just a few of the ways I use what I’ve learned and experienced during my time in ACAP-Ohio to be successful.”

Said Scott: “The fact that former ACAP students are always eager to serve as leaders proves that the program is doing something right. It proves the value that the program provides students extends way beyond the week of ACAP and that the alumni want to share their stories to help younger students following the same path.”

ACAP-Ohio is presented by the Ohio Society of CPAs, the Ohio CPA Foundation, the Columbus Chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants, and Fisher’s ODISS in conjunction with the Department of Accounting and MIS.

go.osu.edu/ACAPOhio
Student Internship Spotlight

Nicole DeLoye

Nicole DeLoye is a fourth-year accounting student who is minoring in communication. She spent her summer as an intern at GBQ Partners, LLC in Columbus, where she helped the firm in two areas — tax return preparation for those who were extended for 2016 and income tax planning. Her internship provided her with the opportunity to prepare returns for individuals, partnerships, C-corps and S-corps. She also worked with GBQ clients to create estimates for what they should pay throughout the year toward their tax liability.

“GBQ HAS HELPED ME DECIDE WHICH CAREER PATH OF ACCOUNTING I WANT TO FOLLOW AND HOW TO BE A CO-WORKER PEOPLE WANT TO WORK WITH.”

“GBQ helps me understand the underlying math and what is going on within the different companies whose returns I have worked on. Before my internship I had never really been exposed to the world of public accounting. This internship has provided that introduction and taught me how important communication is to a good working environment. GBQ has helped me decide which career path of accounting I want to follow and how to be a co-worker people want to work with.”

Sara Liang

Sara Liang is a third-year management information systems student who is also minoring in business analytics and engineering sciences through Fisher’s Integrated Business and Engineering program. She spent the summer as an intern at AEP Data Science in Columbus, where she put her coding skills to work on projects that provided insights into key areas such as workforce optimization, public vulnerability and customer segmentation.

“This internship is the exact same type of work that the other data scientists in Analytics Services are doing,” she said. “At AEP, the Analytics Services group is only a couple of years old and serves almost like an internal consulting function. Working as a research assistant for Professor Muhanna has been by far the most helpful experience at Ohio State. While I had the introduction to programming languages such as R in class, I gained a lot of skills, as well as an understanding of machine learning algorithms, evaluating models and making predictions through the project I worked on throughout the spring semester.”

“WORKING AS A RESEARCH ASSISTANT FOR PROFESSOR MUHANNA HAS BEEN BY FAR THE MOST HELPFUL EXPERIENCE AT OHIO STATE.”

go.osu.edu/AMISUndergrad
Ellie Rodriguez knows accounting gets a bad rap. "There’s a stigma that accounting is boring, sitting in a cubicle all day punching numbers," said the second-year Ohio State student.

So even she was a bit surprised when it became her major.

"I came in with the general idea I wanted to do business, although I wasn’t sure which specialization," she says. That all changed in the spring of 2016 when she took a trip to New York City with the Business Scholars program.

"We visited the Deloitte offices in Rockefeller Center, which showed me a whole new side to accounting that I didn’t know existed," she said. "Accounting can be exciting and fun and can remain challenging even after years of experience."

Another surprise for Rodriguez was how quickly her former interest and skills in, of all things, ice skating returned when she came to Ohio State. She is now part of the school’s synchronized skating team, a club-level competitive sport.

"I grew up skating on and off, but hadn’t been on the ice for a few years due to other commitments," she said, a native of the Philippines who lived in Richmond, Virginia; Bexley, Ohio; and San Antonio, Texas, before coming to Ohio State. "I thought I’d give it a shot and try out, and I’ve loved it since. I try to get on the ice at least four times per week."

Rodriguez is also involved in the Pi Beta Phi sorority, the professional business fraternity Delta Sigma Pi and College Mentors for Kids.

"I am extremely passionate about the difference mentorship can make in the trajectory of a student’s life, especially for at-risk students," she wrote in an essay that earned her the top scholarship from the Ohio State Alumni Club of San Antonio in 2016.

Now she regularly mentors a fifth-grader, expanding that young student’s horizons through a variety of activities such as visiting the ROTC building on campus, and meeting and learning about service dogs.

"We are big on recognizing volunteerism, and we like to see students who are serious about being involved on campus and contributing to the community," said Greg Jellick, president of the San Antonio club.

Today, as a Buckeye, Rodriguez is doing all that and more.
Twelve Accounting Honors students traveled to New York City; Norwalk, Connecticut; and Washington, D.C. to gain industry experience and network with accounting alumni at leading companies.

Led by Professors Rick Young and Tzachi Zach, the students spent nine days visiting the offices of Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC — the Big Four public accounting firms — and met with affiliates at Goldman Sachs, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board and many alumni in the area.

“The Accounting Honors trip allowed me to gain insight on the complexity of the accounting profession,” said student Thomas Herrera. “The many presenters were amazing and helped show that accounting isn’t as clear-cut as many students believe it is and that it is subject to judgment. The Accounting Honors Program is teaching students how to think critically instead of solving problems in a formulaic way.”

Students met with more than a dozen recent alumni working at the Big Four firms in New York and several working in Washington, D.C. These meetings offered students the opportunity to learn about potential career paths and to get professional advice.

“Every alumnus we visited talked about how fun and helpful it is to stay in touch, and I can already tell that my classmates are people I want to keep talking to.” —Ty Bender

Alumni who engaged with the honors students included Kevin Gallagher (BSBA ’11, MAcc ’11) at EY; Robert Sledge (BSBA ’05, MAcc ’06) with the SEC; Jayson Edell (BSBA ’05), Alex Holdsworth (BSBA ’07), James O’Brien (BSBA ’13) and Claire Sasowsky (BSBA ’14) with PwC; and Nellie Debbeler (BSBA ’08, MAcc ’09) with KPMG.

The students also met with alumnus Mike Thompson (BSBA ’90) and several affiliates with Deloitte for a fine-dining experience in New York and discussions about the accounting field.

“Meeting alumni was like seeing the light at the end of the tunnel,” said student Ty Bender. “These were successful former students doing work that they enjoyed and that they were prepared to do. The best part of the trip, though, was that I really got to know my classmates and professors.”
“When you spend over a week traveling with people, you get a sense of who they are, instead of just another face in the classroom, and you become friends. Every alumnus we visited talked about how fun and helpful it is to stay in touch, and I can already tell that my classmates are people I want to keep talking to.”

The trip marked the fifth such Accounting Honors trip. Previous destinations included Chicago, New York City, London and San Francisco.
Undergraduate Class of 2017 Career Success

**Average Salary (Accounting)**
$53,042

**Median Salary (Accounting)**
$52,000

**Salary Range (Accounting)**
$30,000–$85,000

**Average Salary (Information Systems)**
$61,505

**Median Salary (Information Systems)**
$63,000

**Salary Range (Information Systems)**
$32,000–$80,000

**Companies Making Multiple Offers**
- Abercrombie & Fitch
- Cardinal Health
- Cohen & Company
- Crowe Horwath
- Defense Finance & Accounting Service
- Deloitte
- Eaton Corporation
- EY
- GBQ Holdings
- General Electric
- Grant Thorton
- Honda
- JPMorgan Chase
- Julian & Grube
- KPMG
- Nationwide Insurance
- Ohio House of Representatives
- Oracle
- Plante Moran
- PNC Financial Services
- PwC
- Progressive Insurance
- RSM
- State of Ohio Auditor’s Office
- The Ohio State University

**Geographic Distribution**
- Beijing, China
- Hong Kong, China
- Shanghai, China
- Shenzhen, China
- London, United Kingdom
The Accounting and MIS PhD program aims to help students prepare for productive careers as faculty members at leading research-oriented universities. The program currently has 11 students. In the 2016–2017 academic year, PhD alumna Jing Davis received a faculty position at Chapman University’s Argyros School of Business and Economics.

Sam Adams, Ray Stahl and Daniel Yang joined the PhD program for the start of the 2017–2018 academic year.

Sam Adams
BS in Mathematics and Economics, Tulane University
BSM in Finance, Tulane University
Master of Accounting, Tulane University

“I chose to attend The Ohio State University for two reasons — this school has an impressive group of research-active faculty, which develops high-quality PhD candidates, and the Columbus metropolitan area is very livable for myself and my family while I pursue my studies.”

Ray Stahl
BA in Economics, University of Chicago
MS in Accounting, University of Illinois at Chicago
MS in Finance, University of Illinois at Chicago

“The Ohio State University was among a selective list of schools I considered when applying to PhD programs. My interest was piqued by the university’s reputational strength in financial accounting research and the placement of its graduates at leading research institutions. I was impressed by the capabilities of the faculty, the rigor of the program and the intellectual caliber of the PhD students in the accounting program. When I was offered admission to the program, I did not think twice about accepting the opportunity. I feel fortunate to be here today.”

Daniel Yang
BS in Operations Research, Columbia University
MS in Business Administration, Seoul National University

“I chose Ohio State’s PhD program in accounting because it is a highly respected program in the world and offers rigorous training for doctoral students. For me, the choice could not have been easier.”

Awards & Recognition
Hailey Ballew: Deloitte Foundation Doctoral Fellowship
Brent Schmidt: AAA/Deloitte Foundation/J. Michael Cook Doctoral Consortium Fellow

Standing, from left, Ray Stahl, Min Park, Sean Kannengieser, Aaron Nelson, Brent Schmidt, Daniel Yang, Hailey Ballew. Seated, from left, Mary Cowx, Diana Choi, Danyang Jiang, Sam Adams.
What is your favorite business school-related memory from Ohio State and Fisher?

One of my favorite memories from Fisher was taking on a random accounting project with one of my friends from the Accounting Honors program. At the time, I was well-versed in Excel and relatively interested in financial accounting, and my friend was well-versed in accounting and interested in Excel. We enjoyed working together and ended up staying up all night working on a financial modeling project, finishing the night at 5 a.m. at Waffle House. It was one of my first experiences in college where I was given an interesting challenge worth solving, and the satisfaction of solving the case made the all-nighter worthwhile many times over.

What are your professional plans following graduation?

I am currently working for Deloitte Consulting LLP. I’ve been accepted into their Business Technology Analyst program, which focuses on building recent college graduates into business technology professionals. Specifically, I am in a division that implements Oracle solutions for very large businesses. I plan on continuing my education and enrolling in an MBA program in a few years through Deloitte’s Graduate School Assistance Program.

Which Ohio State/Fisher programs made a significant impact in your life? Why?

I was part of the Dean’s Leadership Academy (DLA) my sophomore year. The DLA invites the top-performing academic students to a class focused around building leadership skills. The DLA really helped provide context and worked as a mental exercise to better my understanding about business leadership.

Leadership in business is a multifaceted, soft skill that really takes time to develop. My biggest takeaway from that class was that leadership is a learning process, and you can only improve through practice. This class gave me the confidence to take leads in my projects and, more broadly, to take an active leadership role in my own career.

Why did you choose your area of study at Fisher?

Growing up, I had worked for my dad’s small business solving IT problems. That experience in high school gave me the opportunity to discover that I had an interest in solving business problems, yet held a deep passion for technology. Choosing the Management Information Systems program at Fisher was a no-brainer for me. The program seemed tailored to my ambitions and interests, and once I started, I never looked back.

Do you have a favorite business faculty member or mentor who helped shape who you are today?

Professor Jeff Rodek was one of the Dean’s Leadership Academy professors, and he has had a strong impact on who I am and what I do. His background is in managing complex technology companies, and naturally, I was inspired by his story. Through class and one-on-one meetings with him, he has given me direction to understanding my passions and where they fit within a business and technology context. Especially given the flexibility to take electives in other areas offered by Fisher.
Kaylah Wicker, BSBA Accounting ’17

What is your favorite business school-related memory from Ohio State and Fisher?
I remember getting coffee every morning at the Rohr Café with friends and talking about how we were all going to fail our next exam. We never did, but it was always a running joke.

What are your professional plans following graduation?
I graduated in May 2017 and am currently working at Honda North America in the finance department.

Which Ohio State or Fisher programs made a significant impact in your life? Why?
Project Thrive made a significant impact on my life at Ohio State. Through this program, I was able to mentor a freshman studying accounting at Fisher. She had not yet taken an accounting class, so I enjoyed being able to teach her the basics so she would feel more prepared going into her first accounting class.

Why did you choose your area of study at Fisher?
I chose to study accounting because I love numbers and the behind-the-scenes of business. I took my first accounting class my junior year of high school and completely fell in love with it.

Do you have a favorite business faculty member or mentor who helped shape who you are today?
Cynthia Turner. Not only did she care about my work in the classroom, she also genuinely cared about what I was doing outside of it. Before I accepted my job, we sat down together to go over the contract and decide if it was a good fit for me.

Tahmina Ahmed, MAcc ’17

What is your favorite business school-related memory from Ohio State and Fisher?
My best memories are from my orientation days. Getting to know the campus and the people was the most thrilling experience for me as an international student.

What are your professional plans following graduation?
I am working as a lecturer of accounting at a top university in my home country, Bangladesh. As I plan to become a professor of accounting, I wish to pursue a PhD in accounting as soon as possible.

Which Ohio State or Fisher programs made a significant impact in your life? Why?
MAcc has changed the way I think about accounting and business, in general. Learning from and with the best in business has made me more confident in pursuing my future goals.

Why did you choose your area of study at Fisher?
Fisher is one of the top-tier schools for accounting. The professors and their well-known research were the main reasons why I wanted to learn accounting at Fisher.

Do you have a favorite business faculty member or mentor who helped shape who you are today?
Professor Tzachi Zach was someone I learned a lot from. Professor Anil Arya helped and motivated me throughout the MAcc program.
Jing Davis, PhD ’17

Now that you’ve completed your PhD studies, what are your professional plans?
I am a newly hired faculty member at Chapman University, where I have two sets of professional plans. First, I want to be a good scholar in my chosen research area. Second, I would like to be a good educator for my students.

What was your research focus during your PhD studies at Fisher?
My research focuses on the application of experimental economics in managerial accounting. Specifically, my studies investigate how social norms, for instance trust and reciprocity, play a role in the effectiveness of employment contracts.

How do you anticipate continuing that research during the next phase in your career?
Chapman University provides a really good environment for experimentalists. I expect to have good opportunities to run more experimental studies there, and find new colleagues to work with on collaborative projects.

Will you have the opportunity to teach at your next assignment?
Yes, I teach Introduction to Managerial Accounting in the fall semester of 2017.

How do you anticipate your Fisher PhD studies and research benefiting your students?
Our program at Fisher provided me really good training in theories of economics and carefully designing experiments to test ideas. I believe I will use similar training to help my students become scientific scholars or professional accountants.

What is it about Fisher that drew you here to pursue your PhD studies?
The accounting PhD program at Fisher offers various research areas: analytical managerial, experimental managerial and financial empirical. It was extremely important and helpful for me to explore all the areas before I needed to settle on one that I was really interested in.

What distinguishes Fisher students from other students you’ve interacted with previously?
I taught Intermediate Financial Accounting I in the summer of 2015. The students in my class were really self-motivated to learn the subject and actively engaged in group presentations. Relative to students I have encountered before, I found Fisher students in my class had clear career plans for their future and worked really hard toward their goals.

What is your favorite business school-related memory from Ohio State and Fisher?
I really enjoyed our PhD seminars in which professors assigned papers for us to read each week, and we got to discuss and give comments on the papers. I learned more about the literature in my area and enjoyed having intellectual conversations with my professors and colleagues.
The Ohio State University’s Office of Outreach and Engagement honored Fisher’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program with the 2017 Distinguished Service-Learning Award during the office’s annual recognition awards ceremony. The award recognizes VITA’s contributions to service and scholarships at the university, and it provides additional funding to support the program’s continued efforts.

VITA is an IRS program that provides free income-tax preparation service for low- to moderate-income tax filers throughout the United States. Fisher’s VITA program, which began in 2005, is a partnership between the college, Ohio State University Extension and Godman Guild, one of several United Way agencies throughout Franklin County that participate in the federal VITA program.

Stephanie Lewis, CPA, a senior lecturer and undergraduate accounting coordinator in Fisher’s Department of Accounting and Management and Information Systems, has served as director of Fisher’s VITA program since 2013. She appreciates the opportunity that the VITA program provides MAcc students to learn through hands-on experience, as well as the opportunities for students to grow in their roles as VITA tax preparers.

“It’s nice to see the efforts of our students recognized at the university level,” Lewis said. “The amount of dedication students put into the program each year is unparalleled to anything I’m involved with at Fisher.”

For many people, tax season is a challenging time of year, but the VITA program helps to alleviate that stress. For Fisher’s MAcc students, the program allows them to apply lessons learned in the classroom to help actual clients and give back to the community.

Terry Althouse, director of community engagement and health and wellness at Godman Guild, has been involved with the VITA program at the community organization for the past decade. Throughout the years, she’s observed Fisher students’ ability to treat Godman Guild’s clients with dignity and respect.

“For that reason — and others — folks keep coming back year after year,” she said. “The Fisher volunteers have played an integral role in providing this service. In fact, it would be all but impossible to do it without them.”

Additionally, Althouse has been impressed with the willingness of the students and their advisors to devote weekend time to help others.

“It is this kind of social commitment that keeps me encouraged for the future and the young adults who will be taking up the fight for justice and equality,” she said. “Building a society where all citizens have the opportunity to maximize their efforts goes a long way toward giving them some control over their lives.”
VITA (continued)

Each fall, MAcc students complete technical training and become IRS-certified tax preparers by passing ethics and tax-law tests. The in-class training helps prepare the students for the rigors of advising clients during tax season.

In winter semester, students volunteer approximately 1,000 hours over six weekends, an effort that serves community residents while returning money to the local economy in the form of tax-preparation savings and income-tax refunds. During the 2017 season, Fisher students served 331 clients, saving them more than $60,000 in tax-preparation fees and returning $475,694 in federal tax refunds to the local economy.

Since the Fisher VITA program’s inception, more than $5 million has been returned to area taxpayers, and more than 3,200 clients have been served.

“Fisher’s VITA program benefits students because they get to apply some of what they learn in the classroom to real-world situations,” Lewis said. “They also get to interact with a number of taxpayers and get to learn about people from different walks of life.”

MAcc Gives Back

MAcc Gives Back is a day of service in which MAcc students and accounting faculty and staff dedicate their time to organizations in the Columbus community.

This past year, 60 individuals — including more than half of the MAcc class — volunteered at eight different sites. The service activities included reading to children as part of the Same Page Foundation, building furniture at the Furniture Bank of Ohio for people in need, delivering food to seniors in the community for the Gladden Community House Food Pantry, and packing approximately a week’s worth of meals for 1,200 people at the Mid-Ohio Food Bank.

“MAcc Gives Back is really significant because it expands the perspectives of students like me from campus life to our surrounding community. By becoming aware of certain areas of need, we can figure out how to use our unique skills to help. Beyond that, the hope is that we inspire people to understand the importance of caring for and investing in their communities and encourage them to continue to make an impact for the future.”

— Carly Jackson MAcc ’17

MAcc Gives Back is a day of service in which MAcc students and accounting faculty and staff dedicate their time to organizations in the Columbus community.
The annual EY MAcc Speaker Series helps students develop a richer understanding of the complex world they will confront as professionals. The 2016–2017 series featured the insights of renowned experts from a variety of industries, addressing topics that inspire and educate students. Issues discussed included leadership lessons from the battlefield, an inspiring personal story that helped grow a grassroots organization, economic consulting, life in a regional accounting firm, conceptual framework and insights from Ohio’s top auditor.

Dave Yost
Auditor of State
State of Ohio

As Ohio’s Auditor of State, Dave Yost works to build a legacy of fighting fraud. Since 2011, more than 80 corrupt public officials have been convicted as a result of Yost’s investigations, and he has identified nearly $19 million in stolen and misspent tax money. He is currently working to bring increased accountability to Ohio’s charter schools. Yost also helps state government, local communities and schools become more efficient through performance audits. He also recently launched the ShareOhio program to help communities share heavy equipment and save tax dollars. Yost earned his undergraduate degree from The Ohio State University and law degree from Capital University. A former Columbus Citizen Journal reporter, he moved into public service as Delaware County’s Auditor and Prosecutor.

Randy Myeroff
Chief Executive Officer
Cohen & Company

Cohen & Company looks to Randy Myeroff for overall strategy and vision, and particularly to attract and develop additional leaders to serve the firm and its clients. Since becoming CEO in 1997, Myeroff has helped the firm grow more than eight-fold in size and to significantly expand service offerings since. Myeroff provides firsthand knowledge of what it takes to develop and run a successful business. Navigating mergers and acquisitions, offering proven negotiation skills, tapping capital resources, structuring ownership succession plans, and providing strategic and family planning are all key areas of his expertise.

Doug Ulman
President and CEO
Pelotonia

Doug Ulman, three-time cancer survivor and 1999 Brown University graduate, joined Pelotonia as president and CEO in November 2014. He also serves as an advisor to The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center. Pelotonia is the United States’ largest single-event cycling fundraiser, which has raised more than $100 million for cancer research.

Christine Botosan, PhD
Board Member
Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB)

Dr. Christine A. Botosan joined the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) in July 2016. Prior to joining the board, she served as a professor of accounting at the David Eccles School of Business at the University of Utah. Dr. Botosan has a broad knowledge of accounting issues, with particular expertise in the areas of financial statement analysis and valuation. In addition to her tenure as a professor, she served as a leadership fellow in the office of the vice president and as the George S. and Dolores Dore Eccles Presidential Chair in Ethical Financial Reporting. Dr. Botosan is an immediate past president of the American Accounting Association. She received her PhD in business administration from the University of Michigan and a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada.
Major Samuel Linn first deployed to Iraq in 2003 with the 101st Airborne Division for OIF 1, where he served as company Fire Support Officer, and then Civil-Military Operations Officer. Afterward, he was assigned to the 75th Ranger Regiment, where he served three combat rotations with Ranger Regiment; one to Bagram, Afghanistan, and two to Iraq to various locations, (2004–2006) where he conducted direct action raids to kill/capture high value targets. He then took command of a Stryker Company at Fort Lewis, Washington, which he commanded for three years. Major Linn currently serves as an economics instructor for the SS201 Course. He is also involved with the non-profit, Team Red White & Blue. Major Linn attended the United States Military Academy, where he earned his BS in economics. He also earned his MBA in entrepreneurial management from The University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Karl N. Snow has more than 25 years of experience as a consultant, an academic and a professional in the investment and mortgage banking industries. He provides consulting advice and expert analysis on a wide range of issues involving financial securities, insurance coverage and valuation, mortgage markets, structured products, hedge funds, contract claims, bankruptcy and discrimination in mortgage and labor markets. Prior to joining Bates White, Dr. Snow was a senior economist at Welch Consulting in Silver Spring, Maryland. He also served as principal economist in the Housing Analysis and Research group at Freddie Mac, and as director at UBS Investment Bank (formerly UBS Warburg). In addition to his professional experience, Dr. Snow held professorships in the finance departments of the Kenan-Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the Stockholm School of Economics, and in the economics department at Brigham Young University.

“I think the MAcc talks were a great addition to our experience in the program and gave us insights into what we can do in the future with our MAcc degrees. I am so grateful we had the opportunity to hear from professionals from such a wide range of industries. It is so inspiring to see what the future might hold for all of us. I hope members of our class are fortunate enough to gain the experiences and insights that might allow us to come back to campus as speakers one day.”
—Susan Vogelgesang (MAcc ’17)
# MAcc Class of 2017 Career Success

## Average Salary
$52,524

## Median Salary
$52,000

## Average Signing Bonus
$3,571

## Graduates with Bonuses
17%

## Salary Range
$40,000—$65,000

## Graduates with Job Offers
75%

## Domestic Graduates with Job Offers
98%

## International Graduates with Job Offers
51%

## Geographic Distribution

## Companies Making Multiple Offers
- Cohen & Company
- Deloitte
- EY
- KPMG
- Plante Moran
- PwC
- Schneider Downs

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- Beijing, China
- Shanghai, China
- Shenzhen, China
Alumni Spotlight: Karl Frey
Professor’s dedication inspires alum’s continued engagement

When Karl Frey (BSBA ’89) was pursuing his degree in accounting at Fisher, he received some sage advice:

“Be willing to try different things and be open to life’s endless possibilities.”

That advice came from none other than Thomas J. Burns, a beloved professor who taught at the college from the late 1960s until 1994 and established the Accounting Honors program.

Little did Frey know at that moment that Professor Burns would become a beloved mentor as well and that his advice would shape the remainder of Frey’s undergraduate studies, influence his decision to pursue an MBA, and act as a driving force for many of his career decisions.

The Inspiring Professor Burns

Whenever Frey reflects on his Ohio State and Fisher educational experience, he credits that period of his life with broadening his horizons and fostering a willingness to step out of his comfort zone — but at the center of that willingness is the continued influence of Professor Burns.

Frey recalls Professor Burns being strong-minded in how he ran the Accounting Honors program. Part of that strong-mindedness was Professor Burns’ willingness to push students to be their best. It was a method that some students responded to better than others. As part of his approach to building the program into what has become today, Professor Burns would hold mandatory debates, which Frey said made the program even more rigorous. But to test students’ mettle, Professor Burns added a twist.

“Professor Burns would hold the debates on football Saturdays,” Frey said.

Back then there were dorm rooms beneath the seats on Ohio Stadium’s west side and for two years, Frey called the Horseshoe home. He enjoyed the perks of living there, including running the stadium’s stairs for exercise.

“We had easy access to the field,” Frey said. “It was literally our backyard. Today, when I tell people I used to live inside the ‘Shoe, they have trouble believing me.”

But on football Saturdays when Professor Burns would hold those debates, Frey would go against the grain.

“The trek across the Oval to Hagerty Hall while other students and fans were wearing their scarlet and gray and heading to the stadium was grueling.”

However, Frey is quick to point out that his affinity for Professor Burns has grown even more with the passing of time.

“His approach was borderline intimidating, and as a student, you began to respond to it — positively or negatively,” Frey said. “There are many who rose to the challenge, and I’d like to think I rose to the challenge. It was a great experience all around.”

Frey’s advice to current Fisher students or recent grads echoes the advice he received as he was approaching graduation.

“You need to be willing to explore the unknown, and to take chances in life,” Frey said. “Don’t be afraid to fail. If a particular opportunity doesn’t work out, you’ll try something else.”
Alumni Spotlight (continued)

Success as a Career and Family Man
Frey has found success as a certified financial analyst and CPA. He holds the title of senior managing director for advanced strategies at Mesirow Financial in Chicago. He began working for the independent financial services firm in 2003 after a seven-year stint at the Dutch bank ABN Amro. He admits it was a stretch for him to pursue the opportunity and to change industries, but — adhering to the advice from Professor Burns he received years ago — Frey’s own willingness to be open to new opportunities benefited him in the transition from banking to investment management.

Frey feels a sense of accomplishment for his work at Mesirow, which manages money for a number of pension systems.

“The work we do allows people to live more comfortably and with dignity during the later years of life,” he said. “At the end of the day, you’re truly helping people.”

But above all, Frey puts family first. He and his wife, Meg, a corporate lawyer, have two children, ages 8 and 6. Much of the couple’s free time is spent focusing on their young family. When he’s not chaperoning his children at various activities, Frey enjoys running, working out and an occasional round of golf.

Building a Legacy
Frey has remained an active alumnus with Fisher and the university.

“In the early days, my involvement mainly centered around keeping in touch with former professors and returning to campus to speak in classes,” he said. “But because Fisher and Ohio State are so important to me and have been such an integral part of my life, I wanted to give back more. It’s been a natural progression for me to increase my involvement throughout the years.”

He’s maintained involvement with the Student Investment Club, served as a mentor to accounting students, and played host at Mesirow to Fisher students during Accounting Honors visits to Chicago.

Frey’s engagement with Fisher throughout his career has given him perspective on the increasing prominence of Ohio State, Fisher and the Accounting Honors program. He’s pleased with what he’s seen in terms of the caliber of students who choose to study accounting at Fisher.

“The continued advancement of Fisher and the accounting program has been tremendous,” he said. “It’s increasingly recognized around the country for the Accounting Honors program and graduate studies. As an alumnus, you benefit from the increased branding, and I’ve been very impressed with how the school has continued to develop its reputation and, most importantly, the development and placement of its students.”

In 2011, Frey joined forces with Professor Dan Jensen, another mentor during his time at Fisher, to create the Thomas J. Burns Accounting Honors Endowment Fund to honor Professor Burns and the Accounting Honors program.

For Frey, establishing this endowed scholarship fund was a way to give back something special to Fisher and to the university — and for the legacy of mentorship from Professor Burns and Professor Jensen to live on through Frey’s ongoing support of Fisher’s accounting students.

“I take great pride in working with Professor Jensen to get the fund up and running,” Frey said. “It’s something that is going to continue on for many years.”

Recently, Frey was honored with the 2017 Fisher College of Business Pace Setters Executive Award, the second time he has received a Pace Setters Award. The first was when he received the accolade as an undergraduate.

“It was a full-circle moment for me, and I believe in part recognition for some of my giving back to the university,” Frey said.
Accounting for Taste

When people outside the profession think of accountants, it’s not often that photography, writing, blogging, and food come to mind. But two women with ties to Fisher’s Department of Accounting and Management Information Systems prove that accountants’ passions go well beyond the balance sheet.

Christina Ciraldo (BSBA ’12), an alumna of the Accounting Honors program, and Mary Cowx, a second-year student in the Accounting PhD program, are prolific on social media in their love for local food and restaurants within the central Ohio community.

Christina Ciraldo

Ciraldo, who describes herself as “just a kid from Akron,” started her food blog — Cbus Food Authority — in September 2014 after returning to Columbus from a weeklong trip to Chicago with her sister. The sisters ate their way through the Windy City with the help of several Instagram accounts belonging to Chicago foodies. That experience inspired Ciraldo to start her own food blog.

Today, she works as a senior associate in assurance at PwC. Her career path there began with a summer internship while she was a Fisher student. For the last four years since graduation, she’s been working full time at PwC. Outside of work, when she’s exploring the Columbus food scene, Ciraldo says that people in the restaurant world tend to be surprised to learn that her day job is in public accounting. Her response: “I can’t imagine why!”

What motivated you to start a blog?

“My passion for food stems from my Greek and Italian ethnicity and my family’s collective focus on food at the center of all events. My mom and grandmothers taught me how to cook at a young age, and through our travels, I’ve been lucky enough to eat food from all over the world.

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“The Columbus restaurant scene has so much to offer, and I started my Instagram account in an attempt to bring more recognition to the city’s cuisine.”

What do you enjoy most about producing a food blog?

“To have a food blog or food-based Instagram account, you really have to love to eat and explore all types of fare, so I love being able to share my experiences with my followers. I have always loved to write, so ultimately, I would love to start an official website-style blog to share chef and restaurateur stories.”

In which part of town do you live?

“I spent my first five years postgrad in Harrison West, close to Victorian Village and the Short North, which was a great transition from campus living. I truly enjoyed my time there, and I think I managed to eat my way through the area. I recently moved to Schumacher Place near German Village and am really excited to explore the southern part of the city!”

Where can your blog be found?

facebook.com/cbusfoodauthority
twitter.com/cbusfoodauth
instagram.com/cbusfoodauthority
cbusfoodauthority.com (coming soon)

Mary Cowx

Cowx, also an Akron native, started her food blog after finishing her first round of graduate school back in her hometown. Although she had passed the CPA exam and became a homeowner, a feeling of boredom and the need for a creative outlet inspired her to begin a blog focused on recipes and healthy living.

She eventually relocated from the Buckeye state to Charlotte, North Carolina, for five years, but the move didn’t dampen her passion for food and blogging, and she began blogging about the city’s restaurant scene. Her professional life in Charlotte began at KPMG before she took her final corporate job at the Hearst Corporation, where she worked as a tax manager.

Cowx’s final job in Charlotte — an accounting instructor at Queens University — served as her foray into academia.

“I wanted to make sure I liked life in academia before I signed up for a five-year PhD program,” she said.

In 2016, she moved to Columbus, settled in Clintonville, and began her PhD studies at Fisher.

What drew you to Fisher for your PhD studies?

“Ohio State has a great placement record and a large, diverse, research-active accounting faculty.”

What motivated you to start a blog about food and the Columbus restaurant scene?

“When I got to Columbus, I realized we didn’t have an organized food bloggers group, so I decided to start #cbusfoodbloggers. I was new to town and knew little about the Columbus food scene, but I used my experience starting the group in Charlotte to form the group here. The Columbus food bloggers group has about 50 members now. The website is cbusfoodbloggers.com.”

What do you enjoy most about producing a food blog?

“The best part of blogging is access to a huge network of diverse people brought together by a shared love of food.”

Where can your blog be found?

“Most of my restaurant photos are on my Instagram feed, whereas my blog is mostly focused on recipes and healthy living.”

ferventfoodie.com
ferventfoodie
fervent_foodie
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AMIS Rankings

**RESEARCH RANKINGS**

7th globally in leading journal publications, 2011–2016
Brigham Young University Accounting Research Rankings

14th worldwide in top three accounting journal publications, 2011–2016
The University of Texas at Dallas Research Rankings

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM RANKINGS**

14th in the nation
(11th among public universities)
Public Accounting Report, 2017

10th in the nation
U.S. News & World Report, 2018

**MACC PROGRAM RANKING**

12th in the nation
(10th among public universities)
Public Accounting Report, 2017

**PHD PROGRAM RANKING**

25th in the nation
(19th among public universities)
Public Accounting Report, 2017
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