



Dr. Paul Grimes



KELCE
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Pittsburg State University

Kelce Connection

pittstate.edu/business • SPRING/SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Greetings from the beautiful campus of Pittsburg State University! We recently concluded the spring semester by celebrating commencement with 154 new business graduates. Family members and friends packed the Weede to watch 91 BBA students and 63 MBA students become Kelce alumni. Their future is bright as more than 90% of recent Kelce graduates report beginning professional employment or continuing their education within a few months of graduation. Kelce graduates are secure in knowing that they have earned a valuable degree that will pay dividends throughout their lifetime. This is reflected in the AACSB accreditation that each Kelce degree carries – a distinction that only six percent of all business schools world-wide have earned. This spring, the college was honored to announce that our accreditation has been extended through 2029. You can learn more about AACSB in this edition of Kelce Connection. The future of the Kelce College is also bright. As previously announced, the college will build a new facility in downtown Pittsburg to anchor the Gorilla Rising Educational District which will open in 2026. Plans for this new building are currently underway and the university will release details very soon. Our new home will expand our ability not only to serve future Kelce graduates but the whole community. Enjoy our recent news and stay in touch: cob@pittstate.edu

AACSB Accreditation 25th Anniversary

The Kelce College of Business achieved reaccreditation from the international agency that accredits the world’s top business schools. This spring, the college is celebrating its 25th anniversary year as an accredited business school by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. “This distinction reflects the dedication of our faculty and staff to provide excellent classroom instruction, high-quality research, and positive social impact in our community and region,” said Dean Paul Grimes.

After an extensive review of its business programs, Pitt State was one of 45 institutions world-wide to earn six-year reaccreditation from the AACSB this academic year. Achieving AACSB accreditation is a rigorous process that includes an in-depth assessment of internal activities, mentorship with an AACSB advisor, and a peer evaluation focused on continuous improvement. During this multiyear process, colleges focus on developing and implementing a plan to achieve their mission and align with AACSB’s accreditation standards. These standards require excellence in areas relating to strategic management and innovation, research, and teaching and learning. The college is annually ranked among the country’s Best Business Schools by the *Princeton Review* and among the top 5 Family Friendly business schools in the country.



2024 Pittsburg State University Outstanding Faculty Award

Three faculty members from across campus were chosen by students for the 2024 Outstanding Faculty Award. This award is given by the Student Government Association after students nominate who they believe deserves this award. There were 40 nominees this year and Dr. Lynn Murray, Associate Dean and Associate Professor of Marketing was nominated and chosen.

She earned her BBA in Marketing and her MBA from Pitt State. Her doctorate was completed in Marketing at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Dr. Murray serves as a co-advisor for the student organization Women@Work and led them to the 2023 Horizon Award and the 2024 Organization of the Year Award.

In her nomination a student said “She understands our needs and strengths and always gives 100 percent to help us succeed inside and outside the classroom. She has always made me feel like she believes in me and that I am capable of anything I put my mind to.”

Kelce Picnic

The bi-annual Kelce Picnic hosted this year in September and April is a celebration for the college. On the Kelce front lawn, faculty prepare hotdogs and hamburgers to serve students with a side of chips and a banana. This yearly tradition is a time to show students and staff how much Kelce appreciates their hard work. It is estimated that more than 200 students are served at each picnic. One highlight of the picnic this year was having emeritus professor of economics, Chuck Fischer and Kelce Board of Advisor, Tommy Elms back on campus to interact with students.



Pictured: Emeritus Professor of Economics, Chuck Fisher and Kelce Board of Advisor, Tommy Elms.



Women@Work Luncheon

Annually, Women@Work hosts a March Luncheon to celebrate Women's History Month. This event focuses on empowering and uplifting women of all ages in the community. This year, keynote speaker Lindsey L. Young, decorated PSU graduate, presented to the 70 attendees with her lecture "Branding Yourself for Success: You Are Your Logo." She emphasized the importance of creating your professional identity and how to be the ideal employee.

Prior to the lunch session, a panel discussing the "First 100 Days" was held for college women. Panelists included Dr. Lori Scott Dreiling, Director of Human Resource Services at PSU, and two 2023 BBA graduates, Zeli Estes of Ryan Transportation, and Amaya Harris a graduate student studying sports management. This panel addressed personal experiences and tips to navigate the transition into the workforce. To finish the day, Dr. Lynn Murray presented the Katie Beth Bakel award to Carmen Kent and Lisa Paterni. Each year this award is given to a student and a community member that have made significant contributions to Women@Work.

Souper Bowl

Thursday, February 8th was a celebratory day in the Kelce College of Business when the first annual "Souper Bowl" was hosted. Eight volunteer competitors crafted their best recipes and presented them to the 26 [ticket holding] judges in a crock pot. Judges were allowed 5 votes each, and after votes were tallied the "Kelce Souper Bowl Champion" title and trophy were awarded to Holly Kent for her creamy tortellini soup, second and third places went to graduate assistants Carmen Kent and Kate Radell. The event was hosted by the MBA Association (MBAA), attendees included club members, faculty, and staff. Overall, the event brought over \$200 to the organization to host events in the future.



Business & Basketball

In early December, the Kelce College of Business sponsored the men and women's home basketball games against the University of Central Oklahoma. This event was hosted to encourage Kelce students and faculty to become more involved on campus. During the games, prizes and two \$500 scholarships were raffled off available to any business major or minor in attendance. Business students were also fed Southeast Kansas Fried Chicken to celebrate the game.



VITA Program

VITA, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, is a free tax preparation service offered to the community. The program serves both students and the public, it is offered yearly on campus and is open most Mondays during tax season. VITA helps individuals file federal and state tax returns. Volunteers include students from Dr. Goedeke's individual and advanced tax classes. This provides students hands-on experience with tax software and different documents. Amanda Becker, a student volunteer, stated "I think it is a great opportunity for students to apply classroom knowledge in the real-world. A lot of international students use the VITA program, so it has been interesting to learn about the tax treaties that apply."

Kelce College of Business Represented in Las Vegas



Two undergraduate students had the opportunity to travel to Las Vegas to compete in the 48th Annual Association of Private Enterprise Education (APEE) Meeting this spring accompanied by Dr. Alex Binder. APEE is an organization of teachers and scholars from various universities that share a common interest, the system of private enterprise. Business students Adam Kahnk and Derek Yuza competed in a political/philosophical case study through the National Competition of Colleagues, hosted by the Gwartney Institute, an affiliate of APEE.

During the competition, Adam and Derek were provided a prompt pertaining to the Executive Branch and the restrictions that forbid the president to take action in combat zones without a congressional declaration of war.

Marketing Association Revived

The Marketing Association was reinstated this year after fizzling out because of challenges faced during COVID-19. Inspired by faculty, a few students took charge of getting the organization up and running again as an official student organization. Marketing Association's focus is to give students the opportunity to connect with marketing professionals and expand their knowledge on various marketing topics.

In the spring, the association hosted Brandee Johnson, CEO of Limelight Marketing. She shared her expertise on SEO (search engine optimization) and the importance of using it in online marketing. The organization also hosted a panel of marketing professionals from the Kansas City area. Panelists spoke about career preparedness and advances in technology within the marketing industry. The group is building upon these early efforts to organize an agency tour in Kansas City in the next academic year.

Two Students Go To France

Carmen Kent and Franklin Leiva, two graduate business students, will soon be departing for La Rochelle, France to participate in a dual degree program with sister school, Excelia Group. After the completion of program requirements, these students will receive a Master of Business Administration from Pittsburg State University and a Master in Management from Excelia Group. Requirements include taking courses from both universities, completing an internship, and writing a thesis paper based on primary research.

"This will be a once in a lifetime experience" Kent said, "I am very excited to take this leap and learn about international business while immersed in another city, country, and culture."



Kelce Student Spotlight

"I chose Pitt because it felt like a place, I could call home." Adam Kahnk, this semester's student spotlight, is involved heavily on campus and in the classroom. Adam is on the Pitt State Track

and Cross-Country team. He explained that being a student-athlete isn't all glory: it comes with its challenges. Juggling family, academics, sports, and a social life demands discipline.

Adam's academic journey has been dynamic. Adam is pursuing three majors including Accounting, Management, and Marketing. Each major represents a facet of his interests and a versatile skill set applicable to various career paths. Adding to his academic repertoire, Adam is also working on a Certificate in Internal Auditing and actively involved in the Institute of Internal Auditors at Kelce. He has also been inducted into Omicron Delta Epsilon and Beta Gamma Sigma. Adam says he realized his love for learning and pushing the limit which has greatly satisfied him when he achieves goals outside his comfort zone.



International Student Spotlight

Liam Gardner, this semester's exchange student spotlight, traveled here from Brisbane, Australia. In 2021 he graduated from the University of Canterbury, Christchurch of New Zealand with a degree in sports coaching. Before studying in New Zealand,

Liam was a commercial pilot. He still flies every now and then as a hobby. Liam's first semester at Pitt involved working as the graduate assistant under Coach Wright for the 2022 football season. Liam says his favorite part about coming to Pittsburg has been the mid-western hospitality and little traffic.



INTERNSHIP SPOTLIGHT



ALLARY LIBERATORE

MBA student, Allary Liberatore, came across a unique opportunity that crosses over between her school work and her sport and she decided to take advantage of it. She recognized the importance

of experiencing what is learned in the classroom in the real-world. As a student athlete on the National Championship Track and Field Team, she saw an

opportunity to create a social media internship from the team's social platforms. Two weeks after spring semester started, she organized a job description with roles and responsibilities, presented it to her coach and the internship coordinator and got it approved. "I knew how important finding an internship was but I didn't have the time to work for a company outside of Pittsburg due to my busy schedule." Allary said, "I was interested in social media marketing and saw the opportunity in front of me and had to take it."

If you are interested in finding an internship or looking for interns within the Kelce College of Business, contact Internship and Career Readiness Coordinator, Melissa Weed, at maweed@pittstate.edu.

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Phillip Frank



Dr. Phillip Frank joined the Kelce College of Business faculty in 2023, quickly becoming a student favorite. Originally from North Carolina, Dr. Frank completed his undergraduate degree at Appalachian State University in both Accounting and Marketing before moving on to High Point University to earn his MBA. After this Dr. Frank chose the University

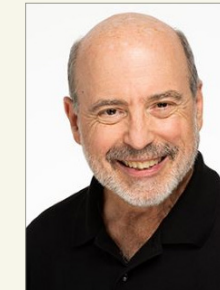
of North Carolina Greensboro to call home while completing his PhD in Consumer Behavior and Retailing.

Dr. Frank stays involved as an advisor to the Marketing Association and as a member of the Kelce Strategic Planning Committee. In addition to his involvements, he balances teaching several classes including International Marketing, Marketing Management, Retail and Channels Management, and Principles of Marketing. Dr. Frank makes it his mission to look at and better understand international marketing and youth culture however, the highlight of his job is getting to know his students and helping them achieve their career goals. In his classes he aims to bridge the gap between application and real world experience by working with community partners.

RETIRING FACULTY



Dr. Bienvenido Cortes,
Assistant Dean and Professor
of International Economics
and Development,
served Kelce for 38 years.



Dr. Stephen Horner,
Professor of Management,
taught Kelce students
for nine years.



Dr. Theresa Presley,
Professor of Accounting,
taught in Kelce
for nine years.

Kelce College of Business 2024 Outstanding Faculty Awards

The Kelce College of Business is proud to announce the recipients of the 2024 Outstanding Faculty Awards. This prestigious honor recognizes the dedication and contributions of faculty members who make significant impacts within the college. This year's awards were presented to three exceptional individuals at a reception held in their honor.

Each awardee received a plaque and a \$500 check from the Pittsburg State University Foundation. In addition, they were presented with a distinctive honor medallion. These medallions, which signify the recipients' high standards of

excellence in scholastic activity, are worn at commencement ceremonies.

Excellence in Teaching awards were presented to Jamie Brooksher, Courtesy Professor of Management, and David Weaver, Assistant Instructional Professor of Accounting. The Excellence in Service Award was presented to Mary Jo Goedeke, Associate Professor of Accounting.

We congratulate our award winners and thank them for their outstanding contributions.



Pictured above (l to r): Mary Jo Goedeke, David Weaver, and Jamie Brooksher



Alumni Spotlight: Jeff Ney

Jeff Ney graduated in 1991 with a BBA in Marketing and this spring received the Dr. Ralf J. Thomas Distinguished Service Award at the Alumni Association Awards ceremony. Ney is the president of New Dynamic in Overland Park, Kansas.

He serves his community in several positions including partner in the PSC Group, sales manager for New Resources Corp., and since 2014 as a member of the Kelce Board of Advisors.

Ney has greatly impacted the College by creating the annual Kelce College of Business golf tournament held in Johnson County. "Jeff is the driving force behind our annual Kelce College Golf Tournament" said Dean Paul Grimes. "For more than a decade, he has been the leader behind both the organization and production of this event. Each year, the fund's earnings are invested in a scholarship endowment held by the Pitt State Foundation. Thus, Jeff's contributions through his service will benefit business students not only in the near term, but for years and years in the future." This tournament has endowed \$75,000 and awarded \$27,000 in scholarships to business students over the past several years.

Lemos Brandecker Gorilla Alumni Scholarship

Sydney and George Brandecker are two alumni that made it their goal to positively impact Pitt State students. Sydney graduated in 2016 with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance and George graduated in 2015 with a Bachelor of Science in Plastics Engineering Technology.

The couple wanted to combine their passions to make an impact on as many students possible. George, a former PSU baseball player and pitcher, loved the baseball team and Sydney loved her professors and experience in the College of Business. Any baseball player that is studying as a business major can apply for this opportunity. The Brandeckers have awarded this scholarship for three years and said they created this scholarship because they were fortunate to receive scholarships while students at Pitt State and wanted to do the same for current and future students. "It is truly a gift to be able to give back to our alma mater!" Sydney said.

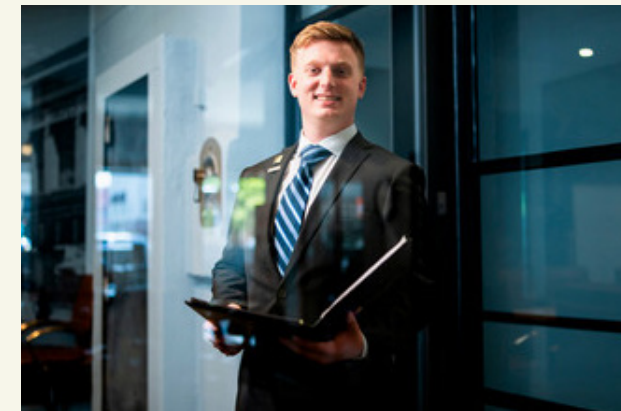
Although Pitt State was their first home away from home, the couple now resides in Arkansas and recently had a baby boy. They hope one day he too will become a Pitt State Gorilla. The couple continues to impact the University in different ways. Sydney has served on the PSU Alumni Board for 3 years and George recruits students on campus for his company and maintains close friendships with his former teammates.

CIS Changing to DSIS

Kelce faculty members are excited about the change of major name from Computer Information Systems (CIS) to Data Science and Information Systems (DSIS). The main driver of this change is the demand for employees with strong data science and information system skills. Business organizations, big or small, urgently need to understand their operations in ways beyond traditional reports so that potential opportunities and challenges can be properly handled. This trend has created vast opportunities for our students. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the job outlook for data scientists is a staggering 35% increase through 2032. The median salary for a data scientist is \$103,500 per year. The new DSIS curriculum will offer courses such as database design and SQL such as Python, R, Power BI, SAP Analytical Cloud, etc. that are extensively covered throughout the curriculum. Our graduates will be well equipped with the right tools and mindsets to face the job market and excel in their future endeavors.

Courses on information systems topics such as programming and systems analysis and design are still essential components of the curriculum. There will be two minors available: data science and information systems. Students can take four additional courses to learn "hard core" skills in their chosen minor so they can be more competitive and marketable in the future.

2024 Outstanding Senior Award



The recipient of this year's PSU Outstanding Senior Award is Tucker Jessip, a Management major from Frontenac, Kansas. Throughout his tenure at Pitt, Tucker's achievements were noteworthy. He was named the 2023 Homecoming King, in addition to being acknowledged as a Golden Gorilla. His involvement spanned across various campus organizations, including serving as President of the Honors College Association, Students for Sustainability and ENACTUS. Additionally, he works as a clerical assistant and will be a graduate assistant next fall while working toward his MBA. Tucker had the privilege of delivering a commencement speech to the graduating class of 2024 during the spring ceremony.

MBA adds Healthcare Administration

Responding to community and regional demand, the Kelce online MBA program recently added an emphasis in Healthcare Administration. The focus



Jason Wesco



Ross Turney

of this program is enhancing healthcare service quality. We currently have 33 students participating in the program accredited by AACSB and it is offered at an affordable rate. The program covers business principles, industry regulations, financial management, and strategic planning. Students in the program learn from experienced faculty in a flexible online format, developing communication skills for collaboration with healthcare professionals. The curriculum focuses on financial literacy, staff supervision, and record keeping accuracy, supported by small class sizes and quantitative analysis.

Jason Wesco, the president and COO of the Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas (CHC/SEK) and Ross Turney, a Kelce graduate and CFO of the CHC/SEK, are teaching HCA courses during the 2024 summer session.

66th Annual Kelce Scholarship Awards Reception

This spring semester Kelce celebrated its 66th annual scholarship reception. Students and their families gathered with faculty and staff in the Overman Student Center Crimson and Gold Ballroom to receive their well deserved awards. Over \$332,000 was awarded to relieve the financial burden from students to help further their education. During the reception, 33 students were recognized as our 2023 Kelce Scholars. In addition, 28 students were recognized as 2023-2024 Kelce Outstanding Seniors.



Online MBA Program Update

The online MBA program is still accepting applications from recent graduates who have earned a Bachelors of Business Administration or comparable business degree within the past three years. Receiving accreditation once again from AACSB our programs give students better career opportunities and give them the confidence to move on into their professional careers.



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AS 12 MONTHS



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TOTAL TUITION



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HOURS



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degree.pittstate.edu

2024 Spring Career Fair



The PSU Office of Career Development hosted the Spring Career Fair with 137 companies in attendance. The career fair gives students a chance to network with employers and find job opportunities in the local and surrounding areas. Kelce Graduate School of Business was represented with a table for our traditional and online MBA programs.

Gorilla Rising Update

Pittsburg State University recently received a matching grant from the State of Kansas Department of Commerce of \$12.5 million. This grant will help support the new building for the Kelce College of Business. This project will also include new student housing options in the historic Besse Hotel and an event center in the Colonial Fox Theater. If you are interested in donating to the Pittsburg downtown development please contact Becky McDaniel: remcdaniel@pittstate.edu

Please keep us informed

Stay in touch by sending your contact information and news updates to: cob@pittstate.edu

If you are an alumni of Kelce we would love to have one of your business cards!
Please mail to: Kelce College of Business, 1701 S. Broadway, Pittsburg KS, 66762

Your gift makes a difference

If you would like to support the Kelce College of Business, please scan the QR code to the right, or visit: pittstate.edu/givenow

Thank you for your support.

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