

# SHAPING THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS

The Bottom Line 2022  
College of Business



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**New Mexico State University**





# 'Engagement and energization'

**O**n July 5th of this year, I was honored to start my new role as dean of the College of Business at NMSU. As of this writing, I've been an Aggie – and a New Mexico resident – for approximately two weeks. I've spent the past 16 years living near Cincinnati, Ohio, and have previously lived in Arizona, Virginia, Connecticut and Florida. Some of my past experiences include being a professor and administrator at Miami University, working for companies like Honeywell and Procter & Gamble, and a stint running nuclear plants in the United States Navy.

I want to thank interim Dean Eileen Hogan for her leadership over the past year. She has done amazing work to prepare us for the upcoming AACSB re-accreditation review this year. I would also like to thank my COB colleagues. They have been warm and welcoming and have helped me quickly feel at home in a new place.

We move into the new school year with a theme of “engagement and energization.” On our beautiful campus, we need to be present, in the moment and thrive on the energy that comes from the interactions among students, faculty, staff and external stakeholders. In practical terms, this means we will:

- Work to bring more guest speakers, recruiters and industry leaders to engage with our students.
- Continue to transform our curriculum with a focus on professional competencies and experiential learning.
- Consider a brand identity for the COB to more effectively tell our story.
- Leverage our centers to strengthen academic research and engage external stakeholders.
- Focus on development and fundraising aimed at enhancing student

success.

In addition, this is our re-accreditation year for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. AACSB accreditation is the longest-standing and most prestigious accreditation that universities and business programs can earn. We will be preparing our report and for the review team visit in the spring of 2023.

I want to close with a bit more personal perspective and espouse a longer-term vision. As is typical, during my interview visit, I was asked to explain what drew me to the desert Southwest from so far away and to present my personal leadership vision for the College of Business. NMSU and the College of Business are suffused in the spirit of service and the belief in education as a driver of social mobility and life transformation. It was this spirit, codified in mission and vision statements, but more importantly, obvious in the institutional culture and hearts of my new colleagues, that so strongly appealed to me.

As for a “vision,” the steps above are the beginning of our journey to becoming the **destination business college**



JOSH BACHMAN

**in the Southwest and borderlands.**

World events are upending decades-old assumptions about supply chains, risk and business networks, making areas like the borderlands logical places for economic development and renewal. In the heart of this vital region, we have this wonderful university, talented and dedicated faculty and staff, and students eager to go into the world armed with the experience they have gained. I look forward to sharing more with you and re-engaging with our college and campus as we fulfill this vision.

**Bryan Ashenbaum**  
Dean, College of Business

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# Robert Ewing brings executive-level accounting experience

By Tatiana Favela

**N**MSU's College of Business is known for having a great reputation, and the Department of Accounting and Information Systems is part of that prominence.

Robert Ewing, associate professor of accounting and information systems, has been teaching at NMSU's College of Business for six years. He said the department and its faculty have been highly successful in preparing students for their future careers.

"The classes that we teach help students to prepare for the CPA exam. NMSU has one of the highest CPA exam pass rates in this area, and all the accounting firms that come here really want to hire our students," Ewing said. "Most students who go through the program and finish with a master's degree have their pick of which jobs they want because the employers here really like our students. Plus, I think this department is well-run in terms of the expectations and standards they have for students."

Ewing received his bachelor's degree in English literature at the University of Michigan and earned a master's degree in accounting from the University of Texas at Austin. In 2016, he received a Ph.D. in accounting from the University of Kentucky.

Before teaching, Ewing worked in several different positions in the accounting industry and has six years of CFO experience as well.

"Five of those years were with a national nonprofit organization, and one year was with a regional health care company," he said. "So, I bring executive-level experience to the classroom and use my background for teaching."

Ewing made the move to NMSU with a passion to help first-generation students and has paved the way for students with different majors to discover where they want to go in their careers.

"New Mexico State has really helped me to see students change. I enjoy seeing students who aren't quite sure what they want to do, and then helping them choose which direction they want to go," he said. "Some of those students end up choosing accounting, so then they go on to careers in accounting, and it's fun to hear how they've

largest accounting scandal in history. Her visit had a huge impact on the College of Business as well as the community," Ewing said. "I think that has really set the college apart in terms of the influence we have in the community as well as the emphasis we put on ethics. It's not enough just to know how to do accounting, you really have to have the courage to do it. So, her coming to NMSU has made ethics something that the college talks about now, and there's more emphasis on that. That to me was a huge highlight during



JOSH BACHMAN

Robert Ewing worked in several different positions in the accounting industry before joining NMSU's College of Business as a faculty member teaching accounting and information systems.

really changed and how that's helped them."

Last fall, Ewing helped bring Cynthia Cooper, an internationally recognized speaker who formerly served as the vice president of internal audit at WorldCom, to speak at NMSU's Las Cruces campus with more than 400 students and community members. The event was made possible through a grant from the Daniels Ethics Fund Initiative.

"She was the whistleblower for the

my six years of being here."

Ewing said he wants to continue to raise the profile of NMSU's accounting program and bring more employers to the surrounding region.

"We have quite a few that come, and I really think that we could expand the reach of the program, not just in the El Paso and Las Cruces area, but in the whole Southwest," he said. "That's what I'm hoping for."



# Kim Kerr shares passion for risk management with students

By Carlos Andres López

**K**im Kerr brought nearly 25 years of risk management experience to NMSU when she joined the College of Business in 2019. Kerr, a former executive management professional who also served in the United States Army for nine years, teaches finance and risk management courses in NMSU's Finance Department.

"I've been in risk management for many years," said Kerr, who finished her third year of teaching at NMSU in May 2022. "I've been in risk management and executive risk management since the mid-1990s."

Before coming to NMSU, Kerr worked as the risk management director at Alliant Insurance Services, a national insurance brokerage firm with more than 3,200 employees and 120 locations across the United States. Her primary responsibilities involved claims management, insurance placement, business continuity, audits and compliance.

Kerr spent much of her career in the public sector, serving as a city manager in Lone, California, and later as an assistant chief administrative officer in El Dorado County, California. She also worked as a risk manager in Humboldt County, California.

Kerr decided to go into teaching after retiring and relocating to New Mexico with her husband.

"I've always wanted to teach, and when a job opened up at NMSU in risk management and insurance, I knew it would be a perfect fit," she said. "It's been wonderful to engage with students. I've really enjoyed my time so far."

Kerr said introducing students to her life's passion – risk management – has been a rewarding experience.

"I'm just blown away by our students and their stories. We've got some who juggle school and hold down multiple jobs while caring for their families," she said. "My goal as a teacher is to give our students an education that will help them find success and improve their lives."

She said most people – like herself – "fall" into risk management. But she



INGRID LEYVA

Kim Kerr, a former executive management professional with more than 25 years of professional experience, teaches finance and risk management courses in NMSU's Finance Department. Kerr completed her third year of teaching at NMSU in May 2022.

believes understanding risk from a business standpoint can be a lucrative skill applicable across many fields.

"Risk management is a great career," she said. "If you want to work in sales, this is a great place to do it. You can also be on the broker side, or you can work on the support side and manage accounts. If you want to help with people, it's a wonderful place to do that."

She added that risk managers are nearly always in demand, and there's a growing need for workers with expertise in cyber risk. She encourages students at NMSU to take risk management classes to learn about the field before they graduate.

"Any major at NMSU with a minor in risk management can walk into an insurance company and get a job," she said. "Right now, there's a need for young people."

Kerr said her teaching approach relies on showing the realistic side of risk management.

"In my classes, we talk about the different types of risk and how it applies to

different organizations. I have my students do case studies and actually go out and assess risk and apply risk treatment to a business," she said. "We look at broad risks and how to address them. I want to teach them what questions they should ask because risk management professionals are not experts in operations. Rather, we are advisers who can help an organization problem solve and mitigate risk."

**“I’ve always wanted to teach, and when a job opened up at NMSU in risk management and insurance, I knew it would be a perfect fit.”**

**–KIM KERR**



# Risk Management and Insurance program eyes expansion

By Carlos Andres López

**T**im Query has spent the past 16 years at NMSU teaching a mix of insurance and risk management classes in the College of Business as the Mountain States Insurance Group Endowed Chair.

Query is the second faculty member from NMSU's Finance Department to hold the chairmanship since it was established in 2003 through a \$1 million gift from the Albuquerque-based Mountain States Insurance Group. Query took over the role when he arrived at NMSU in 2006, following the retirement of Barry Smith, a former finance professor and department head.

As chair, Query plays a leading role in overseeing NMSU's risk management and insurance (RMI) program, which allows undergraduate students to supplement their major field of study with specialized expertise in the field of risk management and insurance. The program consists of three pathways: an 18-credit RMI minor open to most students, an RMI concentration for finance majors, and an actuarial science and insurance emphasis for math majors.

"We have a minor open to all majors other than finance, and within finance, we have an RMI concentration. So, students majoring in finance can have an RMI concentration," he said. "With the math department, students can pick up what we call an have an emphasis in actuarial science."

Query said the program saw several years of significant growth in the early 2000s, but enrollment began stalling around the time of the Great Recession. The program, he said, is now starting to see a turnaround.

"We're actually looking to expand into

other areas beyond the College of Business," he said. "A vast majority of our risk management minors come from the College of Business, and we'd like to expand more into math as well as criminal justice, which would tie into insurance fraud, and engineering, which would tie into loss control."

Query teaches several courses in the RMI program. His classes focus on employee benefits, life and health insurance, and business risk management. On top of teaching,

broker in Indiana. After earning a master's degree in financial management from Indiana State University, he began teaching at ISU in 1991. By 1994, he was working on a Ph.D. in risk management and insurance at the University of Georgia in one of the top-rated RMI programs in the nation.

Query earned his Ph.D. in 1999 and landed a teaching job at Illinois Wesleyan University. He stayed at the small liberal arts university until he learned of a job



JOSH BACHMAN

Tim Query holds the Mountain States Insurance Group Endowed Chair. Query is the second faculty member from NMSU's Finance Department to hold the chairmanship since it was established in 2003 through a \$1 million gift from the Mountain States Insurance Group.

he also regularly publishes articles on a variety of insurance-related topics.

"This endowment encourages research, but it's a little different. I work on academic research, but I also conduct more practical research that's more in tune with what the insurance industry is looking for," he said. "So, I not only publish articles in academic journals, but I also write for industry publications."

Query started his career as a securities

opening at NMSU.

"I thought NMSU was doing some interesting things. I was looking for a challenge at the time – and the weather didn't hurt either," he said, adding, "I'd been to about 38 states at the time, but I hadn't been to New Mexico. When I came for the campus visit, I thought worst-case scenario I could at least check off another state on my list. But that was 16 years ago, and I haven't left."

# Mamkhezri studies economic impacts of renewable energy

By Nicole E. Drake

Inspired by regional and international energy contributions to climate change, Jamal Mamkhezri has dedicated his time to researching the impacts of renewable and nonrenewable energy within economics. Although he has a wide variety of economic interests, including experimental economics and health economics, he has focused on environmental and natural resource economics with an emphasis on energy.

At NMSU, Mamkhezri is the principal investigator on three grants supporting research on the economics of energy efficiency and clean transportation. The first two grants were funded by the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department and explained the results of a system dynamics model evaluating the impacts of potential energy efficiency programs across New Mexico government districts.

The third grant was funded by the New Mexico Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, called EPSCoR, for the 2021 SEED award. Here, Mamkhezri, along with his undergraduate and graduate assistants at NMSU, collected data to build a system dynamics model to evaluate the environmental and economic impacts of alternative electric vehicle policies in the state.

“These projects can all potentially directly guide New Mexico’s energy and transportation policies,” he said.

Mamkhezri’s current research focuses on renewable electricity generation and its impacts on people’s opinions concerning non-market valuation, the economy and the environment.

To do so, he is conducting two surveys – one exclusively for New Mexico residents and the other nationwide. The first survey explores whether New Mexicans’ willingness to pay for an energy policy, such as Renewable Portfolio Standards, differs between pre- and post-regulation. In the second, Mamkhezri is collecting national primary data and estimating U.S. drivers’ attitude toward electric vehicles.

He currently has 10 research papers under review for top-tier journals. His research has appeared in a variety of peer-reviewed journals, such as *The Energy Journal*; *Journal of Environmental Management*; *Journal of Environmental Economics and Policy*; *Energies*; *Sustainability*; *Energy Reports*; *Frontiers in Environmental Science*; *Frontiers in Public Health*; *Atmósfera*; and *Addictive Behavior Journal*.

While conducting his research, Mamkhezri has found the lack of data to answer research questions is one of his biggest challenges.

“When possible, I overcome this challenge by conducting surveys and building my datasets,” he said.

Mamkhezri joined the NMSU faculty in fall 2019 as an assistant professor of economics, applied statistics and international business. He holds a doctorate and a Master of Arts from the University of New Mexico, a Master of Science from Allameh Tabatabai University in Iran, and a Bachelor of Science from Urmia University in Iran, all in economics.

When Mamkhezri is not conducting research or teaching classes, he is getting involved in the area. An Iranian national champion in kickboxing and full-contact in 2003, 2005 and 2006, he trained martial artists in Albuquerque for three years before training NMSU students in mixed martial arts prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. He also enjoys staying fit, participating in outdoor activities and taking the time for personal development.



JOSH BACHMAN

Jamal Mamkhezri joined the NMSU College of Business in fall 2019 as an assistant professor of economics, applied statistics and international business. His research interests focus on environmental and natural resource economics, with an emphasis on energy.



# Lutz, Wimberly honored with Hall of Fame awards

By Carlos Andres López

**T**his spring, NMSU alumnus Bobby Lutz was inducted into the College of Business Hall of Fame along with his mentor and former NMSU golf coach Herb Wimberly.

Lutz, a Dallas businessman who graduated from NMSU in 1973 and 1975 with bachelor's and master's degrees, received the Hall of Fame Award during an awards luncheon held in April. The award recognizes outstanding College of Business alumni who have distinguished themselves in their careers.

"No one ever earns an award like this – they simply get lucky," Lutz said. "What a gift, what an honor – I am truly flattered, and I know how lucky I am."

Lutz's ties to NMSU and the College of Business date back to 1969. That year, he joined the NMSU golf team after Wimberly, the team's head coach at the time, convinced Lutz to play for NMSU. Lutz spent four years on the team and was also active in Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Beta Alpha Psi and student government during his time at NMSU.

Lutz credits much of his business success to Wimberly and the education he received at NMSU.

"Not just this award, but almost everything good that has happened to me since leaving school is a result of Herb Wimberly," Lutz said. "Everything but my wife, I did that with the help of a couple of others. My character, integrity, work ethic, and, to some degree, my faith can be traced back to our relationship. I would charge hell with a bucket of water for Coach Wimberly."

Lutz has maintained close ties to NMSU over the years. He has presented class lectures, mentored students, provided one-on-one consultations to aspiring entrepreneurs through NMSU's Arrowhead Center and served as the college's "executive in residence." He currently sits on the NMSU Foundation Board of Directors (past chairman) and on the College of Business Advisory Council. He and his wife, Rebecca, also created a scholarship

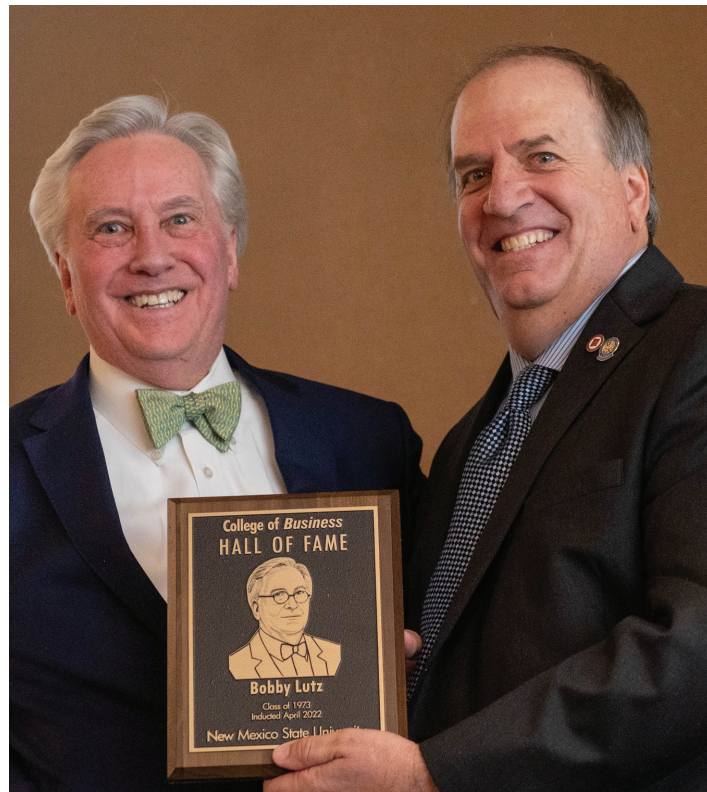
to support students in the College of Business.

Wimberly, who served as the head coach of the NMSU golf team from 1962 to 1993, was also honored during the Hall of Fame luncheon, receiving the college's first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award. The honor recognizes individuals who have given outstanding contributions or service over their careers. The college also renamed its golf management program after Wimberly.

Wimberly established what is now known as the Herb Wimberly Golf Management Program in 1987. At the time, it was the third program of its kind in the nation to earn an endorsement from the Professional Golfers' Association of America. It is currently one of 18 programs in the United States fully accredited and endorsed by the PGA.

During his tenure at NMSU, Wimberly was also named "Coach of the Year" six times by the Missouri Valley Conference and once by the Big West Conference.

"Plain and simple, Herb Wimberly is a legend. Herb and his brother, Guy, were instrumental in bringing the golf management program to NMSU," said Pat Gavin, the program's current director.



NMSU alumnus Bobby Lutz accepts the 2022 Hall of Fame Award from Pat Gavin during the College of Business's Hall of Fame luncheon in April 2022.



Herb Wimberly, center, received the first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award during the Hall of Fame luncheon. Wimberly served as the head coach of the NMSU golf team from 1962 to 1993.

The final Hall of Fame award went to First American Bank, which received Corporate Traders Award. The honor recognizes outstanding contributions by corporations to the College of Business's mission.

# Summer boot camp prepares students for MBA program

By Tatiana Favela

**M**any undergraduate students in NMSU's College of Business choose to continue their education by receiving a Master of Business Administration. However, some may feel overwhelmed if they are unaware of what's expected to succeed in the MBA program.

"Most people do not know where they will end up in life and business when they are choosing their undergraduate majors. Many then find themselves in a business career thinking they would benefit from an MBA degree only to dismiss the idea when they see the prerequisites," said Dwight Kealy, interim MBA director for the College of Business.

In order to get students on the right track, NMSU offers an intensive summer boot camp program to provide new MBA students with the background knowledge they will need to fulfill prerequisites.

The program started at NMSU in 2015 and consists of four one-hour credit classes on accounting, economics, mathematics and finance.

"The MBA boot camp program was created to provide the essential background knowledge necessary to enter a graduate-level program in business even for those who did not satisfy the prerequisites as undergraduates," Kealy said.

"Each summer, students from all over the United States attend a three-day weekend on Zoom and continue in their courses online throughout the summer semester," said Debra Cardinali, MBA program adviser. "The program was created to offer students without a business degree the chance to complete the background courses. Each

year, the participants get to know each other as a group and often continue as a cohort for the two-year curriculum."

Over the past seven years, 98% of the students enrolled in the boot camp have successfully passed their courses with a grade "B" or better and feel more prepared to take graduate-level courses.

"The biggest appeal is the condensed format, affordable tuition and the face-to-face meetings on Zoom that promote interaction between students and faculty members and among students," Cardinali said. "We feel the boot camp is essential for the success of the program as it attracts a diversity of applicants with different backgrounds and life experiences."

Kealy added that this program has provided a faster way to satisfy prerequisites for talented individuals such as physicians and veterinarians managing their practices, university employees, public school teachers wanting to become administrators, and professionals from various industries wanting a better foundation in business administration.

Several MBA students who participated

in the program said the support they received from professors, advisers and others on campus was always expedited and friendly. They added that they believe the MBA program is truly investing in shaping each student's future for the better.

Students seeking or starting their MBA application are advised to enroll in the boot camp.

"Typically, students start inquiring about the MBA program six months to a year before they plan to apply," Cardinali said. "Online students who reach out for advising prior to making their application are notified and encouraged to consider enrolling in the summer program as the prerequisite courses must be completed prior to entering the cohorts."

NMSU's MBA program is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. It is offered in-person and online, and recognized as one of the best online MBA programs in the nation by U.S. News and World Report.

For more information about the MBA boot camp, contact [mbaprog@nmsu.edu](mailto:mbaprog@nmsu.edu).



Dwight Kealy is the interim MBA director for the College of Business, which offers an intensive summer boot camp program that provides new MBA students with the background knowledge they will need to fulfill prerequisites. The program consists of four one-hour credit classes on accounting, economics, mathematics and finance.

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# Outstanding students

Compiled by Tatiana Favela and Carlos Andres López

## **RICHARD BAILEY:** Finance major praises business professors

When looking at where to go to school and what to study, Richard Bailey was lucky enough to have family who recommended NMSU's College of Business.

Bailey said it was a no-brainer decision to attend NMSU because of its affordability. He recently graduated in May 2022 with a bachelor's degree and reflected on his initial decision to study business.

"My dad told me when I was younger to just make sure to go into an industry that's always going to have demand, no matter how the economy is doing. I figured finance; there's always going to be someone running the numbers," Bailey said.

During his time studying in the College of Business, Bailey said many of his professors and instructors enriched the learning experience.

"First and foremost, I really do think that there are wonderful professors at New Mexico State, especially in the College of Business. I can think of three professors off the top of my head who significantly impacted and changed my course or direction in life for the better," he said. "So, I think the faculty here is just absolutely amazing."

Bailey said he also enjoyed meeting all

sorts of people at NMSU and learning new things from them.

"Everyone comes from a different place, but I think NMSU is great because it's a melting pot," he said. "We have a lot of people from a lot of different backgrounds, and I think we contribute to each other's ability to develop perspective and to have a more well-rounded worldview."

As for prospective students, Bailey shared some insight that helped him when he first started at NMSU.

"My advice to incoming students who are still up in the air about their decision is to go talk to James Hoffman. He's the former dean of the College of Business and now is a business management professor," Bailey said. "I think the world of him, and I honestly think he does a great job of convincing and telling students why a business degree, especially from a school like NMSU, is so valuable."



JOSH BACHMAN

Komla (Basile) Koumi is a graduate student in the College of Business's Doctor of Economic Development (DED) program. He hopes to return to Africa after graduating to help develop his home country.

## **KOMLA (BASILE) KOUMI:** Graduate student seeks to help others with DED degree

Komla (Basile) Koumi believes economic development is the best way to move society forward. That's why the Togo-born scholar and entrepreneur relocated to New Mexico in 2020 to earn a doctorate through NMSU's Doctor of Economic Development (DED) program in the College of Business.

"The DED program at NMSU is teaching me how to not only develop an economic development plan but how to implement it successfully," said Koumi, a Fulbright Scholar originally from Togo, a country in West Africa. "I hope to return to Togo after I graduate to help my country and other African regions where there is a need for development."

Before coming to NMSU, Koumi worked as a financial assistant for Peace Corps in Togo and as an educational adviser for the United States Embassy in Togo. In 2014, he co-founded a consulting firm, KMK Consulting Group, where he served as a senior consultant.

Koumi earned a master's degree in

international economics and finance in 2011 from Brandeis University in Boston. He also completed an undergraduate degree in economics and management in 1999 from the University of Lomé in Togo.

During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, Koumi decided to go back to school.

"I was working for myself when I discovered the DED program at NMSU in 2020," he said. "I wanted more knowledge and tools to help others. So, I applied to the program, got accepted, and came here."

The DED program is the only program in the nation designed to provide advanced applied training for economic development professionals rather than academic economists. The program prepares graduates to navigate the theoretical and analytical worlds of academic economics and practical problems of economic development at all levels.

Koumi said he has enjoyed his experience in New Mexico so far.

"I can't believe there is a place that is just like Africa," he said. "People at NMSU and around Las Cruces are welcoming here, and I'm integrating into the community. I've even started learning Spanish."

Koumi said the DED program has

JOSH BACHMAN



Richard Bailey graduated in May 2022 with a bachelor's degree in finance. He said he chose to attend NMSU because of its affordability.

## STUDENT PROFILES

given him an opportunity to share his international points of view with students and faculty at NMSU.

"Now, I'm trying to see how I can bring others from Togo to NMSU," he said.

### MARGARITA LEAL: NMSU's diversity helps international student succeed

As an international student, Margarita Leal found that the diversity at NMSU helped ease her college experience and led her to accomplish much more than she originally anticipated.

"Coming to the U.S. overall was a very big step for me," said Leal, who is from Chihuahua, Mexico. "Being at NMSU, which is so diverse, specifically with Hispanics, I felt very confident, and it was easier to relate to people here. We have a wide variety of professors regarding race and ethnicity. That was cool and important for my development. They always understood where I was coming from, or they had a different view of certain things. They always made sure to look at different aspects in their teaching, so I really enjoyed that."

Leal graduated from NMSU's College of Business in May 2022 with a bachelor's degree in finance, economics and international business.

"The College of Business has been awesome. It's given me so much by now, and how the program is set up allowed me

to accomplish three majors in four years. Also, the professors are very welcoming and helpful all the time. Most of the majors I added were because of great professors I had," she said.

As an international student, Leal said she's interested in international business because she can relate more to certain aspects of it and enjoys discovering different perspectives.

"I wanted to get better knowledge in that area and expand that into a worldwide view," she said.

Leal was also involved in research projects during her time at NMSU. For three semesters, she worked as a research assistant for economics professors.

"I always try to look for the opportunity of implementing the international aspect," she explained. "Overall, I've always been interested in business, not really starting my own, but being a part of one and growing it to other places."

Looking ahead, Leal plans to attend the University of British Columbia in September to get a master's degree in economics. She said she feels NMSU gave her all the tools she needed to get there.

"I wouldn't be going there without being here first. It also takes more than grades, of course, to get into such a school. But I did because of everything this university offered me, specifically the College of Business," Leal said. "They prepared me the best they could, and I honestly feel they did a really good job."

### HUNTER PIRKLE: First-generation college student charts own path at NMSU

Hunter Pirkle earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in information systems from the NMSU College of Business in May 2022, becoming the first member of his family to graduate from college.

"Neither of my parents graduated from college, nor did my grandparents or their parents, or anyone from my family," said Pirkle, who completed his degree in three years. "So, it's really like uncharted waters, and they're really proud of me. It's exciting to show that no matter where you've come from and what's happened

before, you really chart your own path, and you can make anything really happen."

Pirkle is now working as a payment analyst for Verizon in Florida.

At NMSU, Pirkle helped establish several student organizations, including the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization and Supply Chain NMSU, a supply chain club. He also served as the president of the Financial Management Association, was active in Aggies for Christ and Christian Challenge, and worked as a greenhouse assistant for the NMSU Chile Pepper Institute under the institute's director, Dennis Lozada.

"I really value all the friendships and connections I made at NMSU," Pirkle said. "I was very blessed to have such great mentors who were always looking out for the best for me."

Pirkle said he decided to attend NMSU because of the university's affordability and its proximity to Albuquerque – his hometown. But there was something else, he said.

"It wasn't UNM – that was the main reason I came to NMSU," he said.

Pirkle said majoring in business at NMSU bridged many of his interests and talents.

"I like being creative, but I'm not really artistic or anything like that," he said. "But creativity and business go pretty well together. So, I thought getting a degree in business administration would be a perfect fit, while picking up some technical skills in information systems."

JOSH BACHMAN



Margarita Leal came to NMSU from Chihuahua, Mexico, to study finance, economics and international business. She graduated in May 2022 and plans to attend the University of British Columbia in September to get a master's degree in economics.

JOSH BACHMAN



Hunter Pirkle is the first member of his family to earn a college degree. He graduated in May 2022 with a bachelor's degree in business administration from NMSU.



# Ashenbaum aims to create a 'destination business college'

By Tatiana Favela

Following a national search, NMSU selected Bryan Ashenbaum as the next dean of its College of Business. Ashenbaum began his role on July 5.

"We are delighted to have Dr. Ashenbaum join NMSU. He is accomplished, ready to serve, and will bring a fresh perspective to NMSU," said Dorothy Campbell, interim provost and chief academic officer. "He is confident, and his background will support the goals of our campus with a focus on student excellence, embracing diversity, equity and inclusion, and community engagement — especially with the business community."

Lakshmi N. Reddi, dean of NMSU's College of Engineering, served as chair of the search committee.

"We had a very strong candidate pool and several exceptional finalists for the College of Business dean search," Reddi said. "The search committee members were dedicated and diligent in their review of the candidates. I am pleased with the final choice and believe that Dr. Ashenbaum will be an effective leader for the business college."

Ashenbaum earned his Ph.D. in business administration from Arizona State University in 2006. He also holds a Master of Business Administration in supply chain management and a Bachelor of Science in microbiology from ASU.

"I am humbled and honored to be selected as the next dean of the College of Business," Ashenbaum said. "The College of Business has top-notch programs, strong students, and faculty and staff devoted to education and research excellence."

Ashenbaum said his goal is to transform the college into a "destination business college in the Southwest and borderlands."



Bryan Ashenbaum, center, began serving as the dean of the College of Business on July 5. Ashenbaum said his goal is to transform the college into a 'destination business college in the Southwest and borderlands.'

"World events are upending decades-old assumptions about supply chains, risk and business networks, making areas like the borderlands logical places for economic development and renewal," he said.

Before joining NMSU, Ashenbaum served as the associate dean for

**“The College of Business has top-notch programs, strong students, and faculty and staff devoted to education and research excellence.”**

**—BRYAN ASHENBAUM**

Curriculum and Graduate Programs in the Farmer School of Business at Miami University. He was previously the chair of the Department of Management, and before that, director of the Miami Professional Institute for Management Education (PRIME) program.

"Under Bryan's leadership as associate dean, we have grown enrollment in graduate programs, are redesigning the MBA, managed a turbulent 18 months with global programs, and gained approval to launch the Center for Real Estate Finance and Investment," said Jenny Darroch, dean of the Farmer School of Business.

Ashenbaum has been published in numerous academic journals such as the Journal of Supply Chain Management, the Journal of Business Logistics, and others. He is currently the co-editor-in-chief of Transportation Journal. He has numerous honors and awards for achievements, including "Outstanding Professor" awards for undergraduate and graduate teaching.

Prior to his academic career, Ashenbaum held various positions with Procter & Gamble, Honeywell, NIBCO and Perrier. He also spent six years in the United States Navy's Nuclear Propulsion Program, serving as a nuclear reactor operator and quality supervisor on the USS Bainbridge.

Ashenbaum succeeds interim Dean Eileen Hogan, who served from October 2021 until Ashenbaum joined NMSU.

JOSH BACHMAN

# \$1 million gift from alumna to support graduate fellowships

By Tatiana Favela

**J**ulie Dill, an NMSU College of Business alumna, is providing students an opportunity to receive graduate fellowships by creating a \$1 million transformational gift.

Dill, who earned a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1981, said the education and experience she received at NMSU helped set her on a career path she could have never imagined.

"I had outstanding professors who taught me foundational business principles, and I believe my education was every bit as good as my colleagues' who went to bigger, more well-funded, 'brand-name' schools," Dill said. "As I am now able to give back to the college that gave me so much, I want to be able to assist students to achieve their goals."

Having previously funded a scholarship for undergraduates, Dill wanted to ensure the new funds would be allocated where they were most needed – graduate fellowships.

"I am hopeful that by providing this gift, it will help support NMSU's vision of achieving the highest Carnegie research status by allowing students to focus on their studies without having to worry about financial aid," she said.

By providing a pathway for students to reach their highest potential, Dill hopes others who support NMSU can follow her lead and contribute as well.

"I recently heard someone say that successful fundraising starts with the first donor – so I am hopeful that with this 'first' donation, other alumni and business organizations will consider making a gift to NMSU," she said.

Dill is currently a non-executive director at Rayonier Advanced Materials and Sterling Construction Company. With more than 35 years of corporate

experience in various executive roles, she brings a broad perspective to the corporate boards she is involved with.

Dill also actively mentors young professionals and has a strong passion for helping young women.

Some of Dill's accomplishments include being inducted into the NMSU College of Business Hall of Fame in 2000 and receiving the Business Distinguished Alumni Award in 2010. She has received other awards, such as Most Powerful Businesswomen in Texas in 2016. Dill created the Julie Dill Endowed Scholarship at NMSU in 2017 and is an active member of the NMSU College of Business Advisory Council.

With all her success, she still prioritizes and makes time for visiting students at NMSU's College of Business.



COURTESY PHOTO

The NMSU College of Business will create fellowships for graduate students through a \$1 million gift from NMSU alumna Julie Dill, who graduated from NMSU in 1981.

## Las Cruces mayor schools students

By Tatiana Favela

**K**en Miyagishima keeps busy, with his dual roles as a business owner and mayor of Las Cruces, but he still found time to share his experience in the insurance and personal finance industry with students in NMSU's College of Business, after stepping in to teach a course in the principles of personal finance in the spring.

"I've always been a big advocate of financial literacy," said Miyagishima, an NMSU alumnus who earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in real estate and finance in 1985.

In spring 2022, Miyagishima taught Personal Financial Planning and Investing in a Global Economy in the College of Business. Students learned some of the core principles of personal finance, including taxes; credit; consumer, home and auto loans; insurance; and retirement planning.

While he took on this new role at NMSU, Miyagishima is no stranger to the



JOSH BACHMAN

Las Cruces Mayor Ken Miyagishima taught Personal Financial Planning and Investing in a Global Economy in the College of Business during the spring 2022 semester.

classroom. He previously taught personal finance at Doña Ana Community College from 1990 to 1996.

Miyagishima's class was a "viewing a wider world" course at NMSU, meaning any student had the opportunity to take the class without prerequisites. He said it's crucial for all students to learn about the importance of planning their financial future.



# 2021-2022 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

## Travis Melham

Director of Finance, Ascension Medical Group

## Michael Anaya

Head of Attack Surface Analysis, Palo Alto Networks

## Todd Bisio

Director of Operations, Redwire Engineering Solutions

## Kathy Brook, Ph.D.

NMSU professor emeritus

## Craig Buchanan

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## Laura Conniff

Associate broker, BHFRE-Steinborn & Associates

## John Cordova

Sports Marketing Strategic Project Management

## Bradrick Cripe

Presidential teaching professor, Northern Illinois University

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## Christopher Dennis II

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## Julie Dill

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CEO president, Nusenda Credit Union

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Retired, Shell Oil Co.

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Retired

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## Victor Pacheco, Ph.D.

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## Blas Pina

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## Karen Waterman

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## James Wetherbe, Ph.D.

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Treasury-credit supervisor at Phillips 66

## Trevas Younger

Owner, The Heritage Assisted Living

## Jason Wyatt

President-CEO, Western Commerce Bank/ Western Bank Clovis





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## COLLEGE QUICK FACTS | Academic Year 2021-2022

### ENROLLMENT BY GENDER

#### Undergraduate

Women ..... 685  
Men ..... 687

#### Graduate

Women ..... 128  
Men ..... 148

### ENROLLMENT BY ETHNICITY

#### Undergraduate

Hispanic ..... 837  
White ..... 360

Non-resident ..... 57  
Black or African American ..... 41  
American Indian ..... 30  
Two or more races ..... 24  
Asian ..... 13  
Unknown ..... 10  
Native Hawaiian/other  
Pacific Islander ..... 2

#### Graduate

Hispanic ..... 133  
White ..... 69  
Non-resident ..... 46  
Asian ..... 10

Black or African American .... 8  
Unknown ..... 4  
American Indian ..... 3  
Two or more races ..... 3

### GRADUATION DATA

Bachelor's degrees ..... 292  
Master's degrees ..... 43  
Doctorates ..... 4