

UNG

MIKE COTTRELL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
Magazine for Alumni and Friends

SUMMER 2023



Unlocking Potential in the
**COTTRELL CENTER FOR BUSINESS,
TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION** *page 4*



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A Message from the Dean



Dear Friends of the MCCB,

We officially opened the Cottrell Center for Business, Technology & Innovation with our ribbon cutting ceremony last September. At that time, I shared how the new space had already been transformative for the college, yet we had only just begun to understand what that meant.

Over the past 11 months, we have seen an increase in engagement with alumni and employers and witnessed students realizing they finally have a place to study between classes and a place for team and student organization meetings. Having well-equipped classrooms and space to better connect with students and colleagues was a welcome change for faculty. The Don and Connie Cottrell Ballroom quickly became the place to host events for the college and for groups from across campus and the community. In this issue, you will see pictures of our new place, and hear how members of our community of students, faculty and staff are experiencing the Cottrell Center.

Having our new home for the Dahlonega campus was only one of the many accomplishments for the college this year. Our Institute for Cyber Operations received an additional \$1.4 million in funding from the Department of Defense for developing the critically needed cyber workforce. These funds provide scholarships for tuition and certifications, internship support, and professional development funds for faculty across campus. The NSA contract for the development of compliance and ethics certificates for graduate and undergraduate students was expanded to include full-tuition scholarships for

students enrolled in these summer programs for two summers, and our first cohort is underway.

The Cottrell MBA went fully online, and we will have two undergraduate degree options this fall, as well as officially launch our Masters of Science in Computer Science. We hired our first Director of Engagement and Student Professional Development, Robbie Ouzts, and she has already been a game changer for us. Most recently, the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation partnered with the Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce, Lumpkin County Development Authority, and Lumpkin County School System resulting in a \$200,000 grant from Google's Rural Communities initiative to map the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the city and county and develop programming to foster entrepreneurial activity. Those are only a few of the many exciting things happening in the Mike Cottrell College of Business! You will learn about more of our activities in the pages that follow.

We would love to hear from you and explore how we can engage you with mentoring our students, hiring interns or graduates, or help you find the graduate program in the college that is the right fit for your career goals. Reach out and let us know where you are and what you are doing. We look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary A. Gowan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary A. Gowan, Ph.D.
Dean, Mike Cottrell College of Business



UNG's Cottrell Center for Business, Technology & Innovation opens with transformational educational opportunities for students.

Open *for Business*

MCCB's Cottrell Center for Business, Technology & Innovation opens with transformational educational opportunities for students.

The Mike Cottrell College of Business proudly celebrated the opening of the Cottrell Center for Business, Technology & Innovation with a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 16, 2022. The new home for the college is a \$35 million, 86,483 square foot learning facility made possible by the generosity of Mike and Lynn Cottrell, for whom the building is named, and funding from the state of Georgia.

Distinguished guests, including UNG President Bonita Jacobs, University System of Georgia Chancellor Sonny Perdue, and State Senator Steve Gooch, spoke at the event. Lynn and Mike Cottrell, along with Dean Mary Gowan and other dignitaries, joined the platform party in cutting the ceremonial ribbon.

This visionary facility is equipped with state-of-the-art resources and provides students with exceptional educational opportunities to gain practical knowledge and skills in real-world settings. President Jacobs expressed gratitude to the supporters and state leaders for their unwavering commitment in enhancing students' educational experience, fostering their development as globally competitive leaders in business and technology.

Numerous regional businesses and individuals associated with UNG and the college provided naming gifts for classrooms, labs, and other spaces. These gifts will support student and faculty professional development activities.

Senator Gooch, an alumnus of UNG, commended the Cottrell Center, stating, "This building is critically important in supporting the high-quality education that UNG provides its students enrolled in its business and cybersecurity programs. I am proud to have supported state funding for this project." Faculty, staff, and students eagerly moved into the new building, witnessing firsthand the transformative impact the new space is already having on the MCCB's business and technology programs.

State Representative Will Wade, a MCCB graduate, remarked, "The technology available for application to UNG through these academic programs will help meet the demands of employers who are experiencing rapid innovation in their industries. I am pleased to see this facility development support its fast-growing and high-demand academic offerings."

Industry-focused spaces like the Syfan Logistics Lab, JT Stratford Finance & Analytics Lab, and Cyber Range provide students with simulated environments mirroring the workplaces of their future internships and careers.

Chancellor Perdue praised the Cottrell Center, stating, "This facility not only provides beautiful, spacious areas but also ensures that the University of North Georgia is among the best, not only in Georgia but in the United States."

Collaboration between students, faculty, staff, industry advisory board members and the architects played a pivotal role in shaping the specialized labs, classrooms, and engaged learning spaces within the center.

MCCB Dean Dr. Mary Gowan, highlighted the student-centric and learner-focused nature of the building, stating, “By including input from faculty, staff, and students in the discussion of what was needed, we ensured a better outcome. The wide array of spaces in this building allows students to come together and learn in an environment that mirrors their future job experiences.”

Students are thrilled with the abundance of teamwork and study spaces the building offers, fostering a sense of community. Catherine Jordan, a 2023 graduate with a marketing degree, expressed her enthusiasm, saying, “You can get to know people here. You don’t come here for a class and leave. You hang out.”

For other students, the possibilities presented by the new spaces are exciting. Jacob Sapecky, a 2023 graduate with a computer science degree, remarked, “The labs take computer science and cybersecurity to a new level. My first impression of the building is that it is revolutionizing the field.”

Faculty members have embraced the new learning and work spaces, recognizing their immense value. Dr. Mohan Menon, department head of management and marketing, described the facility as “absolutely, positively fantastic.” He emphasized that the infrastructure aligned with the programs offered, allowing students to gain practical experience through simulations and industry-standard software.

Designed to elevate students’ academic experience, the Cottrell Center fosters collaboration, innovation, and a globally-oriented approach to business education. Dr. Gowan proudly reflects on the ongoing achievements of the college and its students, stating, “Our students and programs continue to receive top recognitions, making the MCCB and UNG shine. The Cottrell Center for Business, Technology & Innovation sets the bar even higher for us, and we are ready to exceed expectations. We are eternally grateful to Lynn and Mike Cottrell for their visionary support that has inspired us to continuously elevate our programs, making them among the best in the state.”

“The Cottrell Center for Business, Technology & Innovation sets the bar even higher for us, and we are ready to exceed expectations. We are eternally grateful to Lynn and Mike Cottrell for their visionary support.”



Mike and Lynn Cottrell



*State Senator Steve Gooch,
MCCB Dean Mary Gowan,
UNG President Bonita Jacobs*



*UNG President Bonita Jacobs,
Lynn and Mike Cottrell,
MCCB Dean Mary Gowan*

Transformative Spaces



Photo by Cooper Carry



Photo by Cooper Carry

“The new MCCB building has transformed the student experience by creating student-focused spaces. With its modern design and state-of-the-art facilities, the building has become the center of activity and learning for our MCCB students. The incorporation of study rooms, collaborative spaces, and interactive technology has encouraged a more engaging environment for students. Additionally, the new building has improved the accessibility and visibility of the Student Success Suite by providing a dedicated space for academic support services and professional development programs (PROS) for MCCB students. Within the suite, students can meet with academic advisors, PROS staff, internship coordinators, and executives-in-residence. The suite also features interview rooms which allow employers to come to campus to conduct interviews and assist PROS with mock interviews.”



MICHELE RUBY.....
Associate Director of Engagement
and Student Professional Development



DR. ASH MADY

Associate Professor, Computer Science & Information Systems

“This new facility offers spaces tailored to each program we offer with advanced technology and well-designed learning environments and delivers a cutting-edge ecosystem for a successful and quality education for our students.”



DR. ELLEN BEST

Dept. Head and Associate Professor, Accounting & Law

“We can now offer students a number of specialty spaces in the Cottrell Center including a logistics lab, finance and analytics lab, a cyber range, and many more that really sets the academic experience here apart and allows our students to delve deeply into their areas of interest. There is a whole world available to our students at Mike Cottrell College of Business.”

EVAN CANTRELL

Sophomore Management Major

“The Innovation Lab is an excellent addition to the Mike Cottrell College of Business! I am constantly utilizing the space to study, collaborate with fellow students, complete work as a student assistant, and host innovateUNG Entrepreneurship Club meetings, drastically improving my student and academic experience at UNG. The inclusion of desktop computers, breakout rooms, dry-erase boards, and entrepreneurial resources make the lab a great student space.”



Photo by Cooper Carry



Photo by Cooper Carry

COTTRELL CENTER
receives AGC
BUILD GEORGIA award



AGC
BUILD GEORGIA
AWARD

STUDENT *Achievements*

CyberSEED 2023

#2 Team in the nation out of 192 teams
(Team members: Ben Huckaba, Houston Hall, Paul Kim, Dan Greeley)

National Collegiate Sales Competition

#3 team out of 70 universities

National Collegiate Sales Competition

Ashleigh Slaughter
First-place Grand Champion out of
140 students

innovateUNG 2023

Justin Burgess, Dian Kriel, Freddie Pellini, James Porter,
and Parker Whitton won the pitch with their product,
Woodtek, designed to enhance the experience of
sipping beverages

TiE Collegiate Entrepreneurship Competition

UNG's Woodtek Team chosen as 1 of 8 finalist teams

37th Annual AMA Atlanta Collegiate Conference/KMA Invitational

#1 team

Mid-Atlantic Regional Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl

#2 Team and participant in National Ethics Bowl

SANS Cyber Fast-Track Competition

Cyberhawks score #1 in Georgia

UNG's 28th Annual Research Conference

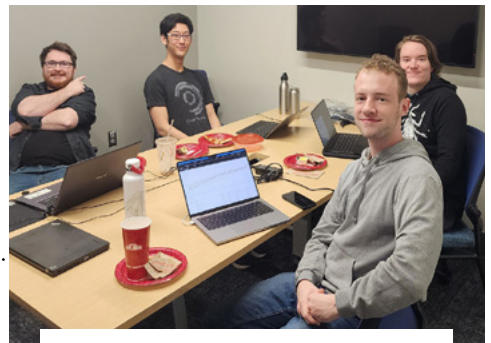
Jenna Gardner
Best Oral Presentation Award

Syfan Logistics Scholarship Recipients

Lillian Brentners and Hugo McCoy

Cyber Research Forum at the Citadel

Grayson Clark
Best Poster Award



ELEVATING EXPERTISE

MCCB LAUNCHES MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN COMPUTER SCIENCE



The Mike Cottrell College of Business now offers a master's degree in computer science, following approval from the University System of Georgia (USG) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

The degree includes a focus on cyber operations and machine learning. Depending on the electives selected, students can also complete a graduate certificate in cybersecurity or technology leadership.

Dr. Mary Gowan, dean of the MCCB, highlights the practicality of the certificate courses in workforce preparation.

"This program gives students expertise in cybersecurity as well as machine learning," she says. "The degree is unique among master's degrees in computer science in that it also provides the opportunity for technology professionals in or interested in moving into management roles to gain knowledge and skills focused on technology leadership."

Full-time students can complete the master's degree in one year, while part-time students have the option to finish in two years. Classes vary from fully online to some hybrid and some face-to-face. Depending on the courses selected, students complete between 30 and 32 credit hours.

"We believe this design will help us attract strong students and provide them the

flexibility they need to complete their degrees," Gowan says.

Students have the option to complete a thesis while conducting research with a faculty adviser. This research focus prepares students for jobs in the industry and enables them to enter a Ph.D. program.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 12% growth nationally in the employment of computer and information technology occupations from 2018 to 2028. This report places Georgia among the top states in the nation with a growing demand for jobs in the fields of computer science and information management.

MCCB sought feedback from alumni serving in management roles at employers such as IBM, the American Cancer Society, LexisNexis, Nordson, and MaxDefense as it crafted the new degree program. The alumni surveyed confirm that such a degree is desirable and considered a reliable indicator for employers to use in recruiting qualified professionals or for individuals to use in advancing their careers with existing or prospective employers.

Did you know?

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 12% growth nationally in the employment of computer and information technology occupations from 2018 to 2028.

Bright Futures

LINDSEY BROWN, '23, IS POISED FOR CAREER SUCCESS



In the ever-evolving world of business, having a solid foundation, the right skills, and a determination to succeed can make all the difference in one's career.

For Lindsey Brown, a 2023 marketing graduate, her academic experience at the Mike Cottrell College of Business has prepared her to leave an indelible mark in the professional world.

Born and raised in Columbus, Georgia, Lindsey's decision to attend the Mike Cottrell College of Business (MCCB) at the University of North Georgia (UNG) was deeply influenced by her family ties. "I proudly declare myself a third-generation graduate," Lindsey said. "My grandparents, aunt, and father all had the privilege of being part of the UNG community. I was inspired by the profound impact this institution had on my family, igniting my own curiosity and paving the way for my future."

Lindsey's passion for marketing became evident at a young age. "I was drawn to the idea of businesses creating and communicating value to their customers," she recalled. "I knew from day one of my freshman year in high school that marketing was my calling, and when the time came to choose a major at MCCB, the decision was a no-brainer." She opted for the Digital Marketing pathway, combining her love for social media and creativity with the fast-paced world of marketing.

During her time at MCCB, Lindsey made the most of her college experience, not only excelling academically but also actively engaging in extracurricular activities including joining the American Marketing Association her freshman year, serving as a student MCCB representative, attending numerous networking events and forging connections with professors, staff, and alumni, and spending three years as a tour guide for the Dahlonega campus, enthusiastically sharing her love for MCCB with prospective students and their families.

While the classroom laid the foundation for her success, her internship experience contributed greatly to her overall career readiness. Her experience of landing a particular internship is a testament to her resourcefulness and determination.

"With my sophomore year coming to a close, I scoured LinkedIn for internship opportunities in social media," Lindsey recalled. After numerous applications and rejections, she stumbled upon a listing for a marketing intern position at Liger Partners in Dunwoody, Georgia. Drawing on her shared connection as a UNG student, Lindsey reached out to Eric Holtzclaw, the company's founder. "I expressed my enthusiasm for the internship and my pride in attending the same alma mater," she said. Her boldness paid off, and she landed the role, which

provided her with hands-on experience in managing B2C marketing, learning marketing strategy, and planning networking events.

Reflecting on her time at MCCB, Lindsey remembers one course that stood out as a personal favorite—Consumer Behavior with Professor of Management and Marketing Dr. Mohan Menon. "His engaging class delved into the implications of branding and advertising for companies," Lindsey explains. "It explored how consumers interact with advertisements and make purchasing decisions and was really fascinating."

Lindsey is quick to credit the exceptional professors at MCCB for their positive influence on her academic journey. She highlights the mentorship and support she received from professors including Dr. Menon, Senior Lecturer Mary Norman, and Lecturer Hugh Scott. "These dedicated educators went above and beyond to get to know me personally and understand my passions," Lindsey added.

The Mike Cottrell College of Business provided Lindsey with a comprehensive education that has translated seamlessly into her professional life, and post-graduation, she has already achieved a significant milestone.

"I proudly accepted a position at Mansfield Energy in Gainesville, GA, as a Digital Content Producer," Lindsey shared. Her introduction to the company came through an additional marketing internship during which she made a lasting impression. "My main responsibilities at Mansfield Energy include social media management, content creation, and video production, allowing me to exercise my creativity and digital marketing skills," Lindsey explained.

When asked what advice she has for students starting their own MCCB journey, Lindsey encourages them to stay curious, build connections, be bold, and find moments of rest. "By staying curious and exploring interests," Lindsey advised, "students can make the most of their college days and discover meaningful work they will love."

The impact of Lindsey's MCCB education, combined with her internship experiences and the mentorship she received from dedicated professors, has positioned her for a remarkable career. As she ventures into the professional world, Lindsey's dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment to excellence are sure to propel her towards new heights. The Mike Cottrell College of Business proudly celebrates Lindsey's achievements and looks forward to witnessing the impact she will undoubtedly make in her profession.



“By staying curious and exploring interests, students can make the most of their college days and discover meaningful work they will love.”

-Lindsey Brown, '23

Lindsey Brown, '23, celebrates her academic achievements in the courtyard of the Cottrell Center for Business, Technology & Innovation.

Virtual Ventures

MCCB EXPANDS HORIZONS AND EMPOWERS STUDENTS WITH INNOVATIVE ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Mike Cottrell College of Business (MCCB) is expanding its range of online degree programs. Building on its legacy of academic excellence, the MCCB is reshaping the landscape of online education at UNG, presenting students with a variety of options for dynamic and engaging learning experiences. By harnessing the transformative potential of technology, the college is empowering aspiring business professionals to flourish in an ever-evolving educational environment.

The Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in management, the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in technology management, and the Cottrell MBA are included in MCCB's growing roster of online opportunities. Driven by the goal of meeting the needs of a diverse student body, the MCCB is determined to make high-quality education accessible to individuals who are already part of the workforce or reside in remote locations.

THE BBA IN MANAGEMENT AND BAS IN TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

"We have been discussing the possibility of offering these online business options for some time and are excited to have them available to our students," MCCB Dean Dr. Mary Gowan said. "We know there is a significant population of potential students who are working full time and want to either begin or complete a degree and need to be able to do so fully online. These options will enable them to do so."

Recognizing the shifting demands of the modern workforce, UNG is proactively adjusting its programs to ensure that students acquire the knowledge and skills required to excel in their chosen fields. Dr. Mike Lavender, MCCB associate dean of undergraduate programs, emphasizes the importance of providing learners with the opportunity to develop essential competencies without the constraints of physical classrooms.

"As people are facing the changes in needed job skills, the online programs gives them a chance to develop the knowledge and skills they need without having to attend classes on a physical campus," Lavender explained.



With the management degree in general management available across UNG's campuses, including Cumming, Dahlonega, and Gainesville, the online option amplifies the reach of this popular program. Furthermore, the technology management degree can now be completed in Dahlonega or Gainesville, offering students with applied associate degrees an accessible pathway to transfer credits and earn their bachelor's degrees.

"We need to give students options," says Dr. Mohan Menon, department head of management and marketing. "Some students excel in an online environment. If they want to continue their education, no matter where they are, they can do it here."

THE ONLINE COTTRELL MBA

UNG's innovative online offerings extend beyond undergraduate degrees, as the renowned Cottrell Master of Business Administration (MBA) program will also be available to new students in a virtual format. Recognizing the growing demand for flexibility among working professionals and prospective students nationwide, Dr. Wendy Walker, MCCB associate dean for faculty and graduate programs, highlights the transformative potential of the online MBA.

"We are moving the program online in order to meet the needs of working professionals who need flexibility and also to make the program available to prospective students around the country and around the world, including UNG alumni," explains Walker. "This also can

build the diversity of our classes, helping students to learn in an environment that better reflects the environments in which most of us work every day.”

The Cottrell MBA, renowned for its functional knowledge in various business fields, offers students a comprehensive education that addresses critical skills such as analytics, ethical decision-making, and leadership. In addition to a robust curriculum, the program fosters invaluable networking opportunities and competitive pricing, making it one of the state’s most esteemed and accessible options.

“An MBA can benefit students by improving their leadership and decision-making skills so that they can be more of an asset to their current organizations and have more leverage in the job market,” highlights Walker. “The MBA exposes students to new business challenges and experiences. Working with classmates from other industries and companies to solve problems helps them develop into better strategic thinkers.”

Since its inception in 2008, the Cottrell MBA program has empowered over 300 graduates to make a lasting impact in their careers. With the advent of online offerings, this prestigious program is set to reach new heights, fostering a vibrant community of diverse learners who will revolutionize the world of business.

As UNG’s Mike Cottrell College of Business breaks barriers and embraces the possibilities of online education, students now have unprecedented opportunities to succeed. The MCCB’s commitment to quality and accessibility is reshaping the landscape of business education, empowering individuals to realize their ambitions, regardless of their location or professional circumstances. With these online programs, the future is brighter than ever for aspiring business leaders, as they embark on a transformative educational journey that transcends boundaries and unlocks a world of possibilities.

“Many students excel in an online environment. If they want to continue their education, no matter where they are, they can do it here.”

Dr. Mohan Menon

ONLINE CERTIFICATES EXPAND

The Mike Cottrell College of Business recently received an extension of its contract with the National Security Agency (NSA) to create an undergraduate and graduate compliance and ethics certificate program. This funding enables tuition waivers for the online certificate programs and aims to prepare professionals for compliance certification and government agency roles. UNG’s strong partnership with the NSA, as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense, further supports the initiative.

“These steps make possible a future pipeline of early-career talent in the compliance field that will respond to needs evident in government and business today.”

NSA Academic Liaison Christopher Locke



Online Graduate Certificates

Compliance & Ethics
Cybersecurity
Entrepreneurship & Innovation
Technology Leadership



Online Undergraduate Certificates

Compliance & Ethics

Faculty *Spotlight*

JAMES. T. YOUNG BECOMES MCCB'S FIRST PROFESSOR OF REAL ESTATE

Meet Dr. James Young, recently appointed Associate Professor in Real Estate & Finance at the Mike Cottrell College of Business

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND

My background can best be described as non-traditional for academics in the sense that I started my real estate career as an appraiser, then a consultant, then a research analyst, then a consultant/academic, then as a full-time academic. I went from Arkansas to Detroit and Chicago, then back to Arkansas, then to Ireland, then to New Zealand as an academic at the University of Auckland. After 24 years abroad, I came back to the US to serve as Director of the Washington Center for Real Estate Research (WCRER) at the University of Washington in Seattle until last year when I learned about this position at the Mike Cottrell College of Business.

HOW DO YOU INCORPORATE YOUR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND INTO THE CLASSROOM?

I enjoy sharing stories that transform complex real estate topics into interesting real-world examples. Doing so allows me to talk about the rent/buy decisions in concrete terms, bringing in affordability and the ability of banks to make loans. You can expand the field to incorporate multi-family properties and then commercial property, gradually building the toolkit required to perform complex real estate analysis. This is where not only my industry experience comes in, but where the local real estate industry can get involved in training the professionals of tomorrow. Successful real estate programs rarely exist without high level industry engagement. With experience in that area as well, I hope to bring a wide variety of real estate experiences to our students.



Dr. James Young is MCCB's first professor of real estate.

CAREER READINESS



Director of Engagement and Student Professional Development Robbie Ouzts prepares students for career success and connects them with local and regional employers through a number of initiatives that provide students with opportunities to engage with industry professionals, gain invaluable career insights, and learn how to navigate real-world situations they will encounter during their job search.

What employers have to say about working with Mike Cottrell College of Business Students:

“I am incredibly impressed by MCCB students. The students are ready to engage with our representatives and have great conversations. The students blew me away during our mock interviews.” **Jessi Marquardt, Talent Acquisition Manager, Atlanta Group Enterprise Holding**

“We have had great success with our UNG new hires. The skills they have gained from their degrees translate extremely well to the needed skills they need to perform their jobs daily.” **Lisa Redding, PHR Director Talent Acquisition, Surgical Information Systems**

“Engaging with the College of Business has been rewarding as a business partner to take an inside look at what these students will bring to our community. On the other hand, having the opportunity to help build their confidence with corporate interviewing processes and give them feedback to help improve on responses and interaction is rewarding in itself.” **Angela Horne, HR Manager, Overdrive Logistics, Inc.**

WHY SHOULD STUDENTS STUDY REAL ESTATE?

Because everyone engages with real estate markets! Real estate and real property rights are as important as the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe. This is regardless of market conditions. Even when real estate markets are down, there are still people doing transactions, there are still managers looking after existing properties because it does not go anywhere, and investors are renegotiating their financing to maximize their returns. Real estate appraisers will be revaluing real estate portfolios regardless of market conditions. The list goes on and on of solid real estate careers that exist regardless of whether markets are up or down. Real estate is not only required for life as we know it, but it is also durable, and there are always jobs to be had in real estate. Study real estate and you are studying how people live. That is important for any professional.

HOW DOES REAL ESTATE FIT UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF FINANCE AND ECONOMICS?

Real estate is an asset class that attracts financial investment. It is traded in the marketplace and has unique economic characteristics when compared to other assets. The market is dominated by information problems stemming from the unique characteristics of each individual property, as well as transactions made through individually negotiated private contracts. In addition to being an investment asset, most residential real estate is also financed through mortgages and large commercial properties are often held by specialist Real Estate Investment Trusts which are publicly traded. With real estate representing either the largest or second largest expense item for most corporate balance sheets, as well as being typically the largest expense for households, it makes sense for real estate to be part of both economics and finance disciplines.

Fun Facts

- Dr. Young wears aloha shirts nearly every day. It is a rare day he doesn't wear one. He plans to make quilts from the collection someday.
- Dr. Young's 15-year-old blind cat, Paddy, has been to 3 countries and 10 states, but Dr. Young asserts Paddy does not care because he is a cat.
- Dr. Young has been to all 50 US States and all of the Canadian Provinces.

ALUMNI VOICES



Matt Wall, '09

After several years of running his own business, Matt earned his BBA in Marketing and unexpectedly ended up in banking, working in customer service. He soon advanced into project management and became a branch service representative in 2017 and a branch manager in 2019.

Advice to students:

“Consider banking! It isn’t all accounting and finance. There are great jobs in sales, project management, IT, cyber security, management, and leadership – you name it.”



Karen Thomas, '94

Karen found the value of her education in business at each juncture in her career journey from banking to children’s ministry to real estate. In 2017, Karen became a realtor and is currently with Headwaters Realty and is the President of the Georgia Mountain and Lakes Realtor Association.

Advice to students:

“If you have the chance to do a study abroad experience – TAKE IT! It will enrich your life and open your mind.”



Josh Sprayberry, '07

Josh opened his own Accounting firm in 2012, which grew into one of the larger firms in South Atlanta. After merging his firm with another, Josh and his wife opened their own marina called Anchors Marina on Lake Oconee in 2021 and are now working on a second location on Lake Sinclair.

Advice to students:

“Anything worth doing is never easy so you have to be stubborn enough to persevere through the difficult times. Things always seem to be their hardest right before you break through and most people give up closer to the goal line than they realize.”

MCCB Names New Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs



The Mike Cottrell College of Business recently appointed Associate Professor of Accounting & Law Mike Lavender (J.D.), as its new Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs. Associate Dean Lavender previously served as Director of Paralegal Studies at MCCB and Director of

Legal Studies and Co-director of the Center for Human Rights and Civil Liberties at the University of Southern Mississippi. His research publications and presentations include such areas as developing model rules for AI, French Laïcité and US First Amendment Rights, and eminent domain victim rights as related to the public use requirement of the Fifth Amendment. Prior to entering academia, he practiced law in Athens, Georgia in the areas of corporate law and real estate law. Specifically, he focused on advising nonprofit organization boards on best practices, appealing IRS denials, open-record requests, and commercial finance.

Cottrell Speaker Series

The Cottrell Speaker Series is an opportunity for students, faculty, staff and members of the regional business community to interact with business executives who are leaders in their respective fields.

Recent speakers included **Stephanie Stuckey**, CEO of Stuckey’s Corporation, **Andy Hiles**, Vice President of Plan Sponsor Insights and Health Equity at Aetna Solutions, **Nekia Hackworth Jones**, U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission Atlanta Regional Director, **Philipp Biechteler, '07**, Executive Director JP Morgan Private Bank, **Joshua Teteak, '94**, Chief Supply Chain Officer at Bluelinx Corporation, and **Rebecca D’Angelo, '02**, Battalion Commander of the 841st Transportation Battalion.



U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission Atlanta Regional Director Nekia Hackworth Jones presents to the MCCB community

Leading in Research & Innovation

FACULTY AWARDS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Jie Guo received a Presidential Summer Incentive Award for the proposal “Individual Drive and Gender Effect in Career Upward Mobility.”

Dr. Lu Xu and Dr. Varun Gupta completed the McLeod Software certification and Varun Gupta introduced a new course, Logistics Management and Analysis, which extensively utilizes this software.

Dr. Juanita Woods received an Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grant for \$30,000. She is collaborating with an interdisciplinary team of five faculty and a student assistant to develop a new project management open-source textbook and instructor materials, zero-cost.

Dr. Mohan Menon, Dr. Mitra Devkota, and Dr. Waros Ngamsiriudom presented a paper titled, “Using TikTok to Improve Students’ Learning Outcomes in Marketing Classes Through Active Engagement: An Exploratory Study,” which was awarded the “Best Paper in Track” at the 2022 Society for Marketing Advances Conference.

Dr. Anne Duke has published an article titled “Why Clients Might (or Might Not!) Want to Raid Qualified Plans” in the *Journal of Financial Planning*. The article discusses tax considerations of withdrawing money from tax-deferred qualified retirement plans.

Dr. Ellen Best and Dr. Anne Duke have published an article titled “The Power of Qualified Charitable Distributions” in *Tax Notes*. The article explains how qualified charitable distributions can benefit taxpayers who take the standard deduction, which has become more common after the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Dr. William Black and a colleague from Case Western University were recognized for their work, “Is success on the CPA Examination furthered by an institutional culture supportive of such effort at institutions of higher education” and awarded a \$5,000 grant.

Dr. Ash Mady has co-authored a research study titled “Social Media Branding in the Food Industry: Comparing B2B and B2C Companies’ Use of Sustainability Messaging on Twitter” in the *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*.

Dr. Kelly Manley presented a paper titled “Using a Personal Essay in Principles of Microeconomics to Enhance Learning,” at the USG Teaching & Learning Conference in Athens, Georgia in March 2023. The analysis focused on workplace reflections completed in the first two weeks of the semester to help students view concepts from a personal perspective.

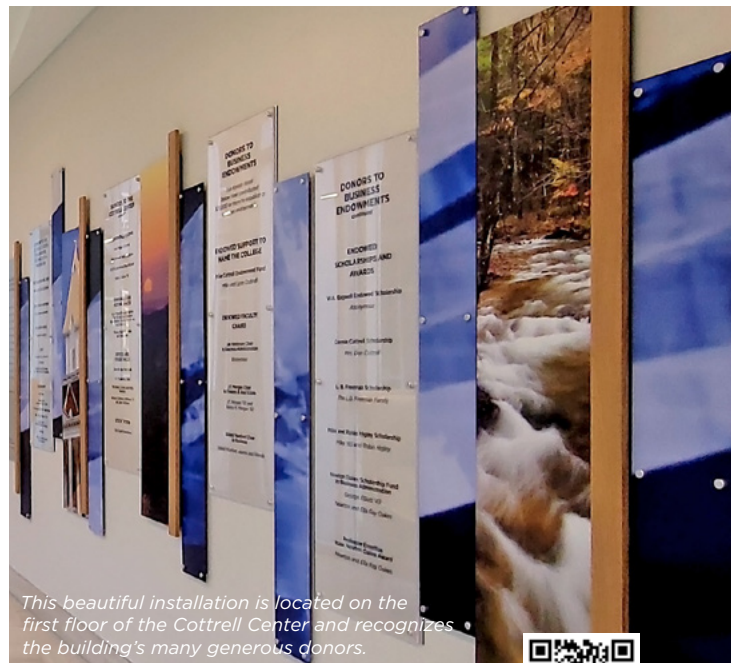
Dr. Kirill Pervun co-authored the paper, “From Athletes to Entrepreneurs: Participation in Youth Sports as a Precursor to Future Business Endeavors”, in the *Journal of Small Business Management*.

NAMING OPPORTUNITIES *In the* Cottrell Center for Business, Technology & Innovation



The new home on the Dahlonega campus for the Mike Cottrell College of Business offers an exciting opportunity for our corporate partners, alumni and friends to have their name(s) prominently displayed in the Cottrell Center. Since construction costs were covered through the generosity of Mike and Lynn Cottrell and the State of Georgia, these naming opportunities can be directed in other impactful ways.

Naming gifts will enable us to continue to build and elevate signature programs, keep up with ever-changing technology, provide valuable certifications to faculty and students, and even more that will set us apart as the place to study business and computer science in Georgia and beyond.



This beautiful installation is located on the first floor of the Cottrell Center and recognizes the building's many generous donors.

Scan the QR code to explore more opportunities to support the MCCB.



AVAILABLE NAMING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUILDING :

\$500,000

- Exterior Space/Courtyard

\$200,000

- Cyber Range
- Collaboration/Innovation Lab

\$100,000

- Tiered Classroom (72 seats)
- Institute and Centers Suite
- Hardware/Networking Lab
- Cyber Security/Forensics Lab

\$50,000

- Large Student Engagement Space
- Graduate Programs Office

\$20,000

- Associate Dean Office
- Executive-in-Residence Office
- Department Head Office

\$10,000

- Student Engagement Spaces
- Administrative Assistant Office

Naming opportunities are available from \$10,000 to \$500,000.

For a complete list of naming opportunities or to learn about additional ways to give to MCCB, please contact Director of Development Kim Vickers at 706.864.1623 or kim.vickers@ung.edu or visit us online at unggive.org/cottrell-center.

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Left to right: Senator Steve Gooch, Jim Syfan, Allen Earls, Mike Higley, Barbara DeMarco Williams, Rope Roberts, Todd Ferguson, Bob Swoszowski, Bill Mitchell, Mike Scholes, James Terry, Wayne Baird, Alex Gregory

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA
SUMMER 2023



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