Awarding Innovation
Marketing and accounting disciplines confer top honors to Eller visionaries.

American Marketing Association
Harold H. Maynard Award for Most Significant Theoretical Contribution in Marketing during 2004 to Robert F. Lusch, Eller College marketing department head, and co-author Stephen L. Vargo (University of Maryland).

American Accounting Association
2005 Deloitte Widman Medal for Most Significant Contribution to the Advancement of the Practice of Accounting to Lillian F. Mills, Eller College accounting associate professor and Steve Eller Fellow, and co-author George A. Piesky (MIT).

VITAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LEARNING ORGANIZATION ARE THE INTEGRATED FUNCTIONS OF PRACTICE AND PERFORMANCE, CONCEPTS THAT COMBINE AT THE CORE OF ELLER EDUCATION.

In the book *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter Senge writes of the need to create learning organizations “where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire,” and create what may be the most critical organizational advantage of the future: the ability to learn faster than competitors.

Vital to the development of a learning organization are the integrated functions of practice and performance, concepts that combine at the Eller College to create that most important quality of leadership education: the ability to make knowledge relevant in solving real problems.

Bringing together the expertise and experience of our faculty with the latest advances in knowledge and theory, we create the instruction and practice through which students prepare for professional success. At the same time, the Eller College emphasizes performance. Internships, competitions, and action learning challenge students with the complexities, ambiguities, and shifting circumstances of real-world business and leadership beyond the classroom.

The process overall is not unlike that of a musician learning an instrument. With instruction, the violinist learns new notes and theory. Through practice, she refines the quality of her music and develops her personal style. Recitals, like internships and experiential learning opportunities, are both practice and performance, readying the musician for her place within—or leading—a greater orchestra later in life.

The Eller College of Management has just graduated a new class of students, eager to take their place in the worlds of business, non-profits, and public administration, realizing fully the relevance behind the Eller education. In this issue, we explore some of the many ways the Eller College prepares students for that next step as a learning organization, connecting instruction, practice, and performance for unparalleled success.

Kenneth R. Smith
Interim Dean
Paul Portney Named New Eller College Dean

Describing the ideal leader for the Eller College, UA president Peter Likins says, “We were focused on hiring a dean who would provide forward-looking leadership with a combination of talent and experience.”

The UA found this and more in Paul Portney, who will take the helm of the College in July.

Since 1972, Portney has worked with Resources for the Future, an independent, non-partisan research and educational organization in Washington, D.C., specializing in natural resources and the environment. He became vice president of the organization in 1989 and was named president in 1995.

Portney earned his Ph.D. in economics from Northwestern University. He has served as a visiting professor at the University of California at Berkeley and Princeton University. From 1979 to 1980 he was chief economist for the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

UA executive vice president and provost George Davis, commenting on the Eller College’s mission of connecting management, entrepreneurship, and technology, notes that “Dr. Portney’s leadership is ideally suited to this elevated and transformed mission objective.”

Look for a conversation with the new Eller College dean in the fall issue of Progress.

Leadership Conference Unites Women in Management, Engineering, and Science

Some 100 young women gathered at the third annual UA Women’s Leadership Conference (WLC) at the Westin La Paloma Resort and Spa on April 3, 2006. Every year, WLC brings together outstanding women from the UA’s Eller College of Management and Colleges of Engineering and Science. The Conference expanded this year to also include students from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, strengthening the growing alliances between Eller and innovation-oriented colleges across the UA campus.

“The Eller College stresses the importance of merging business and technology, and this is just one of the great ways that mission is expressed,” notes economics senior Rebecca Vasallo, chair of the 2005 WLC.

The only cross-college UA conference for women, WLC is designed to give female students the opportunity to interact with and learn from contemporary female leaders and students from other disciplines across campus. Together, the students practice team-building and networking, learn from accomplished women leaders, and develop a personal leadership plan for the coming year.

Panels of experts bring outside leadership to the event. This year’s main panel included women leaders from Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Arizona Department of Agriculture.

Susan Butler founded the WLC and the Susan Bulkeley Butler Institute for the Development of Women Leaders. A member of the Eller College National Board of Advisors, Butler shaped her career at Accenture, joining the company in 1965 as its first professional female employee and becoming its first female partner in 1979.

New Faculty Chair Advances the Eller Vision

An endowed chair, a gift whose income supports the teaching, research, and public service of a professorship or leadership position, represents one of the most important contributions a college receives.

The legacy of the endowed chair most likely began at Oxford where, in 1497, Lady Margaret Tudor, mother of England’s King Henry VIII, established what became known as the “Margaret Professorship” in divinity. The tradition crossed the Atlantic to Harvard in 1721, and to this day endowments play a key role in the advancement of U.S. education.

This fall, the Eller College is honored to add a new endowed chair to that rich history of education advanced through the generosity of private supporters.

Arnold Lesk Chair in Leadership

Brian Lesk, BSBA ’80 Accounting and Marketing, has committed $1.5 million to the Eller College of Management to endow a new professorship, the Arnold Lesk Chair in Leadership, named in memory of his father. Activities of the Lesk Chair will focus on education for managing innovation—developing leaders with the skills and knowledge to champion the merger of technologically innovative and market opportunity. In addition to the new chair, Lesk will support two Lesk professorships as well as the Management and Policy Excellence Fund.

Brian Lesk is the founder and president of Diversified Human Resources, Inc., which serves companies by handling the administrative and back-office functions associated with employee management. He is an active philanthropist who was named Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year in 1999 by Ernst and Young and was recipient of the UA 2004 Technology and Management Distinguished Service Award.

“Economic progress depends on transferring innovative knowledge sets and technologies into the commercial marketplace, and that takes a special brand of leadership. My father would be honored that the Lesk Chair will play a key role in creating that leadership for generations to come.”

Eller College interim dean Ken Smith appointed Stephen Gilliland, head of the management and policy department and former vice dean, as the first Lesk Chair. “Dr. Gilliland has the expertise to help lead the College in the critical direction of innovation leadership as part of our goal of becoming a top-5 public business school,” commented Smith. “Gilliland has launched key initiatives within the management and policy department, attracted outside funding, and instilled vitality within the department’s strong faculty roster.”

Gilliland is currently managing the development of a new state-of-the-art leadership assessment program. Due to launch later this year, the program will impact students across the College with ongoing leadership assessment and development activities.

The Lesk Chair will help ensure the highest level of energy, talent, and creativity in leadership at the Eller College, ultimately serving the economic progress of our nation.
Entrepreneurial Eminence
At the top of its game, the McGuire Entrepreneurship Program continues to lead The University of Arizona in merging innovation and market opportunity.

One of the key objectives informing the education, research, and public service of the Eller College is merging innovation and market opportunity. The McGuire Entrepreneurship Program and Karl Eller Center thrive at the heart of that mission, and so far, 2005 has been a red-letter year even by the program’s already exceptionally high standards.

Topping the Charts
McGuire Program Ranks #2
In March, Entrepreneur magazine ranked the McGuire Entrepreneurship Program second in the nation and first among public schools nationally for the second year in a row. The annual Entrepreneur ranking is the only survey that evaluates entrepreneurship exclusively independent of other programs and departments within a school. The 2005 survey further distinguished Eller’s McGuire Program as one of only four schools nationally for the second year in a row. The annual Entrepreneur ranking is the only survey that evaluates entrepreneurship exclusively independent of other programs and departments within a school. The 2005 survey further distinguished Eller’s McGuire Program as one of only four schools nationally for the second year in a row.

Planning for Success
Student Ventures Win National Recognition
The Karl Eller Center functions in a number of ways to facilitate the transfer of knowledge sets and technologies into commercial ventures. The most important may be its McGuire Entrepreneurship Program, which every year graduates 85 new entrepreneurs and produces 20 new businesses or business plans ready for implementation.

Student teams begin developing business concepts on day one. The concepts make their public debut at the program’s annual New Venture Expo tradeshow, a chance for students to practice critical communication skills and refine their ideas as they pitch to investors, business leaders, and established entrepreneurs. The 2006 Expo showcased 20 venture concepts, ranging from a model for online sales of cultured diamonds to a low-cost raw materials solution for the solar panel industry to a feature-rich product for accurately and conveniently delivering insulin and other injected drugs.

Roughly 30 percent of the showcase ventures are based on UA-developed technologies. One of those ventures, AutonomX, LLC, combines artificial intelligence, technology from the UA Optical Sciences Center, and savvy business planning in advanced autonomous vehicle applications. The company is a cross-campus entrepreneurship team made up of students from Optical Sciences and the MBA and Management Information Systems programs at the Eller College.

In March, AutonomX won third place in the Spirit of Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development (S.E.E.D.) Collegiate Business Plan Competition in Santa Barbara, Calif., and has already captured the attention of more than one investor. The company has also caught the eyes and ears of industry leaders, who have sought out the students behind AccuScout’s BOB Jr., the smaller of the two robots created by AutonomX.

BOB (an acronym for “Brains on Board”) may look like an overgrown Stomper toy, but he’s much, much more. For starters, UA optical sciences technologies allow BOB to “see” where he’s going. Other sensors and complex software tell BOB his direction and location. Ultrasonic sensors even let BOB “hear” to some extent, and GPS technology tells him (and his operators) where he is in the world at any given moment.

All of this sounds pretty impressive, and it is. So impressive, in fact, that when BOB made his debut in the annual Honeywell Growth Challenge—a competition the manufacturing giant created to incentivize MBA teams to dream up innovative applications leveraging the company’s existing technologies and capabilities—Honeywell signed its name to BOB’s dance card and has begun talking to powerhouse consumers like John Deere about possible applications for the little robot.

But the fact is, technology alone was not enough to launch BOB’s career. The lynchingpin was the business strategy created by AutonomX, LLC, the company formed by the Eller entrepreneurship team that created BOB and is now guiding his success.

“Honeywell has all the technology to create something like this,” explains Jim sandrick, the McGuire Entrepreneurship Program advisor to the AutonomX team. “What this team did was create a strategy for applying the technologies, beginning with a very specific initial niche market.”

Thus, it’s likely that BOB’s first career will be in agriculture, rolling between rows of crops, planting seeds with superhuman precision and later delivering controlled bursts of pest control with equal precision in exactly the same location, replacing costly, less efficient methods in use today.

Brains on Board: Eller Entrepreneurs’ “Thinking” Robot Primed for Growth

BOB, the smaller of the two Brains on Board vehicles created by AutonomX, LLC.
Dan Dhaliwal Named Editor of Premier Accounting Journal

In June 2005, Dan Dhaliwal, accounting and finance professor and head of the Eller College accounting department, will assume editorship of The Accounting Review, the premier journal publishing accounting research and research methodology.

Dhaliwal was named to the three-year appointment by the journal’s editorial board. He previously served as the Review’s associate editor from 1996 to 1999, and the journal has published several of his articles, including a 1994 article authored with Eller economics professor and vice dean, Stanley S. Reynolds.

“We’re very proud of Dr. Dhaliwal’s appointment,” says interim dean Ken Smith. “He has been a leader in the progress of the accounting field, and this editorship gives him yet another way to contribute to the quality of scholarship in that discipline.”

The Review’s editorship is the latest in a string of recent honors for Dhaliwal, who in 2004 was named the American Accounting Association Educator of the Year.

Eller-Rodel Pipeline Inspires at UA Day 101

“Throughout the program, you can see the change in the students’ attitudes as they start to believe that maybe college is a possibility and then realize it’s something they want.”

Students from Amphitheater Middle School eagerly left their ordinary school day behind on April 29 to take part in UA Day 101, the culmination of an annual series of mentorship events and activities made possible by The Rodel Charitable Foundation of Arizona.

After five weeks of working with Eller student mentors in their classes, roughly 250 eighth-graders arrived on campus at 9 a.m. and spent the day visiting the UA campus and listening to a host of UA professors, student leaders, resident assistants from dorms, and student athletes share their perspectives on the importance (and fun!) of a college education.

Now in its second year, UA Day 101 is the capstone annual event of the Eller-Rodel Pipeline for Excellence (ERPE), a program created through a gift from Don Budinger, Chairman and Founding Director of The Rodel Charitable Foundation of Arizona.

“The program, you can see the change in the students’ attitudes as they start to believe that maybe college is a possibility and then realize it’s something they want,” says Eller accounting senior and ERPE coordinator Jesamyin Meek.

“Throughout the program, you can see the change in the students’ attitudes as they start to believe that maybe college is a possibility and then realize it’s something they want,” says Eller accounting senior and ERPE coordinator Jesamyin Meek.

ERPE recruits outstanding Eller undergraduate students to take the College’s vision for combined business excellence and social responsibility to lower-income young learners throughout Tucson, inspiring the next generation of leadership with information about business, integrity, higher education, and career planning.

“The eighth-graders we work with in the program have so much potential that they haven’t realized yet,” Meek says. “In many cases, the students have never considered attending college or even graduating from high school because no one in their family has. To think that my work with the Rodel Pipeline may have helped make a new future possible for those 250 eighth-graders is so rewarding.”

Among the UA’s Top Teams

The UA honors two Eller College groups with the Team Award for Excellence.

The McGuire Entrepreneurship Program and Undergraduate Programs teams at the Eller College were honored in March with the University of Arizona Team Award for Excellence, the highest honor conveyed upon UA employees.

Exploding Entrepreneurship

The Eller College entrepreneurship team, led by director Gary Libecap, was recognized for its work on the Entrepreneurship Initiative in Knowledge Transfer and Economic Growth.

The initiative sparked rapid evolution of UA entrepreneurship in response to a university-wide call to stimulate entrepreneurial capacity at The University of Arizona.

Among the results of the team’s hard work: 14 new programs and courses in entrepreneurship and three new concentrations. The combined programs surged from serving 75 students a year to 530 and assessed the commercial feasibility of 104 knowledge sets, compared to a prior yearly average of 10.

“The dynamic growth in the McGuire Entrepreneurship Program stems from the vision and commitment of this outstanding team,” Libecap notes. “We’re so pleased to contribute to this discipline and to continue evolving this vital program for the benefit of the College, the University, and everyone who is affected by advances in knowledge transfer and innovation.”

Innovating Undergraduate Education

Serving 4,500 students a year, the Undergraduate Programs team was recognized for numerous innovative programs and the outstanding team dynamics that make them possible.

Not only can the team claim accomplishments like launching the Eller Student Management System—a set of online tools facilitating communications and data management to help advisors build more meaningful relationships with students—they also channel thousands of hours into responding to the University’s call to recruit minority and disadvantaged students, forging alliances with programs like Junior League (see story on page 11). Impressive, yes, but these initiatives are only two of some 17 achievements for which the team was recognized.

“The creativity, dedication, and collaboration of this team is our biggest strategic advantage in our goal of becoming a top-10 program,” notes Pam Perry, associate dean of Undergraduate Programs. “The difference that their work makes for students in our programs is immeasurable.”
Linking Policy and Law

A new partnership between the Eller College and the Rogers College of Law gives students a broader perspective.

The group then sent a summary of the report to state legislators where such laws were uncovered. Not all welcomed the news, but four states already have worked to out those discriminatory statutes from the books. "We hoped to have a real-world legal impact, and it happened," comments Chin. "I hope all the states repeal their laws; some may not, but it is extremely gratifying to see our work become law."

Connecting Two Worlds

While SPAP and the Rogers College of Law have offered a joint MPA/JD degree for many years, Hartley and Chin started UCJS as a way to connect the academic world of criminal justice policy to the "real world" of justice practitioners for all interested students. "The disciplines complement each other because in order to have good legal rules, you need to understand how government actually works; in order for government to work well, you need to draft good legal rules," Chin notes. The Jim Crow study was one of several research projects planned for the partnership. This summer, UCJS researchers will tackle issues ranging from how various states handle regulatory controls for licensed workers to what types of programs are in place to help ex-offenders successfully re-enter society.

Throughout the semester, UCJS sponsored a speaker series offering diverse viewpoints from guests such as Stanley Feldman, UA alumni and retired chief justice of the Arizona Supreme Court; Charles Flanagan, warden of Arizona prisons, and UA Regents Professor Richard Shelby, who for 30 years has taught inside the Arizona prison system. As another component of the program, several SPAP and law courses are now cross-listed, giving students in the two colleges even more opportunities to broaden their educations.

"When you marry the disciplines, you have opportunity to really learn from each other," Hartley explains. "Law students are getting a perspective of the criminal justice system that they'll never get in law school, and Eller students are getting a perspective on criminal law that they would never get from us. We're really building something."

Raising the Bar in Leadership Education

The new Eller Executive MBA for senior managers.

As of January 2005, more than 400 U.S. schools offered graduate programs in business accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. At any given time, there are hundreds of thousands of students pursuing graduate management education in U.S. programs. The trend isn’t hard to understand. Today’s increasingly complex global economy and the need to drive growth through innovation demands more knowledgeable leadership, more effective competitive positioning, and a better understanding of both the constraints and opportunities in the market, making an MBA de rigueur in American management.

Of course, when the bar for entry-level management rises, so does everything above it. Senior leadership in today’s business environment requires an unprecedented level of expertise. Launching experienced and accomplished leaders into that rare echelon of skill is precisely the concept driving a new MBA program the Eller College is launching this fall: the Executive MBA (EMBA).

Real-World Challenges, Real-Time Returns

"The Eller EMBA is uniquely structured to allow participants to transfer the body of knowledge of a top MBA program into their sponsoring organization in real time," explains Brent Chrite, associate dean and director of the Eller College MBA Programs. Assignments in the Eller EMBA program integrate functional and academic subject matters and contextualize content in a way that allows students to learn in an environment that is more closely aligned with the market in which managers and executives compete," Chrite explains.

"There is a much more immediate and sustained return on investment as a result of the content and structure of the Eller EMBA program. A project-based component embedded in the curriculum ensures that participants build their individual and institutional capacity throughout the program."

Highest-Caliber Cohort

Participation in the EMBA is reserved for the top ranks of today’s professionals—executives and business leaders with a minimum of 10 years’ significant professional experience and premier fast-track employees with proven potential and corporate-level sponsorship.

"Reserving admission for this group allows us to concentrate on a more advanced curriculum and bypass some of the more basic foundation activities standard in today’s MBA program," Chrite explains. "It also means we create a class of accomplished professionals facing similar, executive-level challenges."

Education Tailored to Top Brass

The structure of the EMBA has been radically re-engineered to serve the needs of its high-level participants.

The program is accelerated, completing in just 14 months what typically takes two years. Recognizing that executives can commit limited time away from work and other obligations, classes meet only Fridays and Saturdays every other week following a one-week, intensive introductory session at the program’s outset. This schedule also makes it feasible for professionals from Phoenix and throughout the Southwest to participate in the program, requiring travel only twice a month.

Knowledge delivery has been revamped also, taking a blended learning approach that combines on-site learning experiences with virtual classes and teamwork. Adding a dimension of sophistication to the program, every new module kicks off with a catered dinner and expert guest speaker. "Basically we’ve introduced a number of elements that dovetail for a unique educational experience. This is a major undertaking for the College that serves a real and distinct need in the professional community," Chrite explains.

"We’re committed to doing everything it takes to offer a program that gives participants an unsurpassed competitive edge in organizational leadership."
Sharing a World of Knowledge

The College’s first Global Awareness Competition teams Eller and high school students to match wits on world issues.

Consider two co-existing realities:

1. Studies suggest as many as 14 million jobs (10 percent of the U.S. labor force) are at risk for outsourcing, driving “global economy” education at business schools across the country (see page 14 for a story on Eller’s new outsourcing course).

2. A recent national survey found that more than half of Americans ages 18 to 24 couldn’t find India, a major player in professional outsourcing with a labor force three times that of the U.S., on a global map.

Startling juxtapositions like this sparked the creation of the Eller College’s first Global Awareness Competition in February, testing teams of Eller students and students from four of the College’s biggest feeder high schools—Ironwood Ridge, Mountain View, University, and Vail—on global economics, culture, geography, and current events. Four students from the management department’s Social Entrepreneurship class conceived the event.

“We were discussing the lack of global awareness that many UA students exhibit,” explains business economics senior Jennifer Copenhaver, one of the students who created the competition. “We administered a survey to both UA and local high school seniors, and we sat down with a local high school social studies teacher to review state guidelines for high school curriculum. The more we researched, the more we saw that high school education is really lacking in the area of current global affairs.”

Ultimately, Copenhaver and project partner Alero Akporiaye, also a business economics senior, merged their concept with an Eller-only competition created by Caroline Patrick, director of international initiatives for Undergraduate Programs. The resulting event created opportunities for Eller students to serve as role models for younger students in a relaxed but competitive environment.

Sponsorship from The Wall Street Journal bought $1,000 in prizes for winning teams, but the money was only the icing on the cake, Copenhaver explains. “We simply wanted to give students some motivation for learning about current global affairs at a younger age, so that they can remain informed and competitive in today’s increasingly global society. We already know of individuals who hope to compete again next year, and it’s that sort of excitement that will realize the competition’s goal of increasing global awareness.”

How globally aware are you?

How would you have fared at these questions from the Eller College Global Awareness Challenge? Check inside the back cover for answers.

1. U.S. expansionary fiscal policies abroad cause all but which of the following?
   A) Reduced U.S. real exchange rate
   B) Increased U.S. net exports
   C) Increased savings worldwide

2. What 1989 event is widely considered to symbolize the spread of free markets and democracy that dominates current global economics?
   A) The Japanese technology boom
   B) The increase in worldwide terrorism
   C) The fall of the Berlin Wall

3. What new “sea” did the International Hydrographic Organization establish in 2000?
   A) The Southern Ocean
   B) The Northern Ocean
   C) The Caspian Ocean

Extending E-tegrity

Students from the Eller E-tegrity board team up with Junior League to mentor “Kids with Character.”

Students at Davis Elementary worked with Emily Buckwalter (center photo) and other Eller volunteers as part of the “Kids with Character” program.

While the program is aimed at helping kids, they’re not the only ones who learn from the experience. “It’s important to get involved in any program that makes you re-evaluate your own beliefs,” explains master’s in accounting student Emily Buckwalter, one of the participants and an E-tegrity student board member. “The most difficult and most beneficial part was trying to define terms relating to character and integrity to the children. It forces you to simplify your thoughts and get to the heart of the meaning, which really helps you understand the true meaning of character and redefine your own outlook.”

That understanding translates into cultural change. “Kari Eller actually said, ‘Without integrity, motivation is dangerous.’” Buckwalter explains. “That’s really important to keep in mind because the business students of today will be the CEOs of tomorrow. Without a foundation of integrity, that kind of power can be dangerous. As a student board, our goal is to breed a culture of ethics and integrity in the College. We can bring in all of the best professors in the country, but if our students don’t leave with an ethical mindset, then they’re not fully prepared to succeed in the business world.”

Quit if you’re tough enough. Drugs at school aren’t cool. Saying no is like fighting back.

These were just a few of the lines from anti-smoking posters created by students at Davis Elementary School working with Eller College undergraduates—target messages that would give any marketing guru a run for his money.

The poster-making activity was one of the final events of the “Kids with Character” program operated by Junior League. Eller students became involved this year for the first time as a community outreach component of the E-tegrity initiative. The program paired Eller students with elementary school students, grades 3 through 5. Working together one night a week for six weeks, the teams explored concepts of fairness, integrity, sharing, cooperation, tolerance, and other character-building traits through a series of activities such as role-playing, games, and crafts.

“The kids really look up to these students more so than just any adult,” noted Kim Hicks, a committee member for the “Kids with Character” program and next year’s chair. “Because they’re closer in age, they tend to see them more as friends, whereas they tend to see other adults more like parents.”

The camaraderie that’s developed between the “Eggs” and “Littles” (as the program calls them) was apparent as the students chattered comfortably around tables, snipping images from magazines to make their anti-smoking posters. It’s a bond that Sandra Gastelum, mother of 5th-grader Anthony Gambio, finds remarkable: “He has a basketball program through the UA Rec Center that he loves, but when I told him he had to miss it tonight for this, he had no problem!”

Alero Akporiaye and Jennifer Copenhaver (both pictured at far left) co-organized Eller’s first Global Awareness Challenge. Other photos: Eller students and students from Tucson-area high schools match wits, blending teams for the final face-off.

Eller College students with “Kids with Character.”
Tough Lessons for Tomorrow’s Top Brass

Extending classroom learning, field projects take first-year Eller MBAs to the school of hard knocks.


Conversations like this are the essence of the field projects undertaken by first-year Eller MBA students, a side of the story you don’t always hear, but a critical part of the experience. After all, Karl Eller himself said that we only learn from our failures, not from our successes (see page 19).

Tough lessons are bound to crop up given the caliber of work the students are challenged to do for the projects. “These are high-level people. They have high expectations, and so do I,” says Boulger, director of professional development for the Eller MBA program and supervisor to the student field projects.

The Project Lifecycle

“High expectations” might just be an understatement. The project scope for a small, product-based business includes conducting a study of growth opportunities through new distribution channels and preparing an implementation plan prioritizing ten growth targets. The scope for another company tasks students with creating a complete market entry plan, including competitive analysis, product and service planning, and strategic models for delivery channels and pricing structure.

The Project Lifecycle

That lifecycle begins with students and clients defining scope and drafting a contract, and ends with comprehensive presentations of study results, analyses, and action plans. Along the way, Boulger requires meaningful, bi-weekly project updates. The mandated format is “simple but rigorous.” He tells students, “If you master this, you’ll be heroes wherever you land.”

Reporting like this keeps the projects on track, earning praise from clients like Michael Greenbaum, CEO of CyraCom International, which debuted this year on the Inc. 500 list of fastest-growing privately held companies. Greenbaum chose to work with the MBA teams to bring fresh perspective to the table and capitalize on some of the more esoteric data analysis tools students could leverage under the supervision of Eller faculty.

“It’s been a wonderful experience for us,” Greenbaum comments. “The students have this incredible determination to get the job done. For them, it’s not something they get to do every day—their enthusiasm knows no boundaries.”

What No Textbook Can Teach

But of course, every project has its wrinkles—none textbook can do justice: scope creep, ambiguous direction, crossed communication. It’s these challenges—a reality to some degree in any project—that test the mettle of future managers like MBA student Spencer Ruhl.

“We were presented with a viable small business and asked to help make it a successful medium-sized business,” Ruhl says, adding, with promising diplomacy, “We’ve been responsible for defining a large part of the project. We didn’t expect to have such a degree of autonomy.”

But for all the challenges the projects present, they offer an even greater asset: the model of top-notch leadership. “Our client is a very dynamic and upbeat businesswoman,” Ruhl continues. “Working with her has really taught us the value of a positive attitude in business, even when things don’t go as planned.”

The Ultimate Outcome

Leadership examples like what Ruhl describes may be the best lesson of all, Boulger suggests. “These are ‘can do, will do,’ we’re gonna go places’ kind of people,” he says. “They’re decision makers, great leaders and mentors, and that may be the most important outcome—the students are around people who are successful.”

Boulger himself fits that bill nicely. After 25 years with Accenture, 13 as a partner, he knows a thing or two about consulting and the range of feelings those projects inspire.

“From time to time, everyone thinks, ‘Holy smokes, I’m not sure I can do this.’ Sometimes it’s the project complexity, sometimes it’s because expectations are so high. Almost all of these students have thought, at some point, ‘This is too hard, but that’s not inconsistent with any consulting engagement I ever did. At some point you go from ‘This is gonna be great’ to ‘Can I actually do this?’ What I try to do is push them to move at a fast pace no matter what. It’s harder to start up than to keep going. Don’t let anything slow you down.”

That advice echoes in the pep talk he gives to the downcast student with the disappointed client: “Let him cool off today, then get started again. Not in three weeks. Call him tomorrow. Tell him you’re disappointed that your work didn’t meet his expectations, and you’d like to understand those expectations better, and waiting three weeks is not the answer.”

It’s not an easy message, but “easy” isn’t what the Eller MBA is about. This message—the project and the process itself—is real.
Tackling the Global Workforce
A new course arms Eller students with expert information on outsourcing.

Recently the governor of Indiana awarded work to a U.S. subsidiary of a foreign company, selecting its project estimate of $15 million from bids that ranged as high as $38 million. When political activists stirred up a fracas over the lost jobs, the successor governor opted to cancel the contract. A number of jobs were saved. Or bought, depending on how you look at it: In the final analysis, Indiana taxpayers may end up paying more than $150,000 for each one of those saved jobs.

This mini case study illustrates a single small example of the complexities around outsourcing, one of the many kinds of issues explored in Outsourcing of Professional Activities, a new Eller College course launched in March.

While leveraging teaching tools like case studies and lecture, the course draws students from all over, including organizational activities in areas like law, IT, and medicine. Students in the inaugural course on Outsourcing: The Inside Track experienced this firsthand.

Students in MAP 471 didn’t just learn business strategy, they lived it.

"This is a great hands-on application," says business management senior Todd Knoch. "In addition to learning the information in class, we actually get to go out and use it." Classmate Heather Thomas, also majoring in business management, agrees, adding, "To have access to someone like Ben Lytle is just amazing."

For Lytle, who has been a guest speaker at Eller for five years, and who serves on the College’s National Board of Advisors, the experience was also part of a greater good: "This may sound terribly idealistic," he explains, "but I really do believe that the way you spread freedom in the world is through a free market. A business school creates the vision people who spread free markets. At the end of the day, if somebody comes out of here fired up as an entrepreneur or understands how to make business work better, that makes a difference."

It certainly makes a difference to these students. "They’re excited about applying what they’ve learned to something real," says fellow Suzanne Cummins, who teaches the Capstone course. "They’ve had to change gears a lot, but that’s the nature of private equity companies. They need to be flexible and responsive to evolving demands of the market and the enterprise. Things move quickly in this niche, and there’s no template for success."

That’s one side of the equation. Just as important as applied strategy, perhaps more important, Cummins’ class had the opportunity to witness applied leadership, learning from the best.

"Ben has been not just a successful entrepreneur and CEO," Cummins says, "as the leader of an enormous health insurance provider, he chose to measure his accomplishments in terms of lives saved and lives improved, rather than only the dollars earned. He is the kind of leader who sees a vision for the good of the firm that’s consistent with the good of the whole. These students are learning how great leadership and integrity carry credibility with investors and ultimately build success."
Marketing professors face an interesting phenomenon. All of their students are, in some way, experts. “Everybody in class—regardless of their age or education—has experience as a customer,” department head Robert Lusch explains. Marketing is part of everyday life, so there’s constant pressure from students who say, “Hey, I just noticed this ad.&nbsp;…”

Marketing in Action

“The term ‘buzz marketing’ wasn’t in our vocabulary 48 months ago,” Lusch notes. Nonetheless, buzz marketing, along with close cousins “peer marketing” and “viral marketing,” drove the strategies Eller marketing students created for automaker Chevrolet this spring.

The project challenged 36 undergraduates in the Advertising and Promotion Management course to market Chevrolet’s Cobalt coupes and sedans, persuading young consumers to test drive the sporty new rides. The project wasn’t an academic exercise—it was a real marketing initiative for the company that ranks third on the 2004 Fortune 500 list. To meet the challenge—which, by the way, students took on in addition to, not as part of, regular class work—the class formed Commotion Promotion, an agency with fully developed departments dedicated to project management, research, advertising, finance—all the functions of any successful agency.

After surveying hundreds of students, Commotion Promotion staged events to generate “buzz,” including a showcase at a statewide conference for high school students and a major event on the UA mall.

“Not only are the students learning about the mechanics, definitions, and concepts of advertising, they’re actually getting to practice these skills,” comments marketing lecturer Ed Ackerley, who taught the course. “The combination of theory and practice prepares students for real-world careers in a very meaningful way.”

Marketing senior Crystal Cheney agrees. “This project gives us a true feeling of satisfaction knowing that our ideas are being put to use in such a monumental way,” says Cheney, who is part of the public relations department of the student-formed ad agency. “I love being able to voice an idea and know that it has not only been accepted by my group, but will quickly be applied to the promotion.”

Of course, the students aren’t the only ones who benefited. The project gave General Motors a valuable in-road to its target demographic. “We are thrilled to have Eller student brain-power and creativity on our business,” Cobalt marketing manager Marsha Bedford says of the project.

“Successful marketing is all about getting as close as possible to the target audience, and this partnership allows us to do just that.”

A New Model for Marketing

Getting “as close as possible to the target audience” is one way to describe the idea behind the new marketing course, Hearing the Voice of the Customer.

“In the old model of marketing, you sit in your office and plan a car, make the car in the factory, and then figure out how to go out and sell it,” Lusch explains. “A firm might do research, but it designs the surveys and may be asking the wrong questions. Hearing the Voice of the Customer puts forward a radically different approach in which the customer drives all aspects of marketing, which thereby becomes, in effect, a dialog with the market.

“It’s much more qualitative in nature, and you get a much deeper understanding of the customer,” Lusch explains. “The traditional paradigm of marketing is all about using your mouth: talk it up, advertise, promote. Marketers really need to understand that you can close more deals with your ears than with your mouth. If that sounds old hat, consider a very current scenario: On average, people who buy pick-up trucks add $2,200 in aftermarket accessories within 12 months of their purchase. Why is Ford missing out on that $2,200? For Lusch, the answer is obvious. ‘Somebody’s not listening to the customer.’

Thought Leadership

“The concept behind Hearing the Voice of the Customer can be summed up in six words: The customer is always a coproducer. That maxim is one of the fundamental premises of theory put forth in ‘Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing,’ a paper co-authored by Lusch and Stephen Vargo (University of Maryland). The article won the American Marketing Association’s Maynard Award for the ‘Most Significant Theoretical Contribution in Marketing’ during 2004. The accomplishment speaks volumes for the department ranked #18 nationwide by U.S. News & World Report. Namely, Eller marketing excels not only in practical, real-world training, but in progressive marketing theory, as well.

This spring, marketing combined those two elements—theory and practice—in Thinking Forward: Leadership and Innovation in Marketing, a full-day symposium for the department’s rising stars.

“One of my goals is to work within a public university to create a private college experience for top students,” Lusch notes. That experience included an A-list of guest speakers like Paul Root, current chair of the American Marketing Association, a networking luncheon, and presentation of the College’s first “Thinking Forward Awards,” given in recognition of “the potential to think forward and lead the next generation of responsible citizens and marketing professionals.”

Forty-two students applied for the awards, a group that department faculty narrowed to 13. A jury then selected six winners who later in the semester spent a day shadowing leaders such as Robert Eckert, chairman and CEO of Mattel, Inc. in El Segundo, Calif., and Elizabeth Hauer, a senior vice president at Mary’s West in San Francisco, Calif.

Already in the planning phase for next year, the event added one more feather to the cap of one of Eller’s centers of excellence.

“All of our students are important, but some students really shine in terms of self-motivation and dedication, and we wanted to do something special for them,” Lusch notes, “This is just one more way of keeping in step with leading-edge marketing theory and practice.”

Top to bottom—

Students in the spring semester Advertising and Promotion Management course developed a marketing campaign for the Chevy Cobalt.

Marketing seniors Benjamin Shiman and Allison Friedrichs shadowed Robert Eckert, chairman and CEO of Mattel, Inc. (left), as 2005 winners of the Thinking Forward Award.

Finalists for the 2005 Thinking Forward Award (left to right)—award winners noted with “(w)” Tara Montereone, Hong Tran, Sandra Schmitzman, Nicholas Campagna (w), Grovanna Ibarra (w), Gregory Rostashow (w), Missy Sutterley, Rebecca Blaney, Jessica Kirkland, Lorenz Wild (w), Sanjay Kan, Allison Friedrichs (w), Benjamin Shiman (w).
Ann Fudge Named 2005 UA Executive of the Year

Pioneering a new vision for a global giant, the chair and CEO of Young & Rubicam Brands shares thoughts on leading from “a core of integrity.”

Early in 2005, Lester Wonderman, widely credited as the creator of direct marketing, told a colleague, “You know what Ann’s doing? She’s erasing the lines.” He was speaking of Ann Fudge, and it’s a compliment she says she relishes, describing her initial actions as the Chair and CEO of Young & Rubicam Brands, one of the world’s widest-reaching marketing communications firms.

“I’m erasing lines about how people think about advertising or PR or the Web,” Fudge told the crowd of some 400 that gathered March 29 to honor her as the 2005 UA Executive of the Year. “The world is erasing them—why is this an industry where we’re so slow to see that?”

Fudge wove this theme of innovation—in her words, writing the story of a different future—throughout her talk at the award luncheon. Upon assuming leadership of Young & Rubicam, she effected major changes, erasing lines not only between how people think about advertising, but also between traditionally defined work functions, reorganizing fundamental operations. “Driving change—understanding the risks and benefits of that, living with skepticism, surmounting obstacles—has been the story of my life,” Fudge noted, “not just in this role as Chairman and CEO of Young & Rubicam Brands but in my life as an African American in this country.”

The story Fudge is writing for the future of Young & Rubicam Brands is one grounded in personal wisdom and beliefs. Acknowledging that “being a leader is a lot about listening well and ferreting out the truth,” she maintained that “the most important thing that any leader can do is to lead from a core of integrity and authenticity—being who you are, knowing what’s important to you—because the decisions that you have to make cannot be made by the feint of heart. When waves of people are coming to you and telling you that you’re all wrong, you get back to that core of integrity that you need to sustain yourself, doing it all from the knowledge of what you believe is the right thing to do.”

Capturing Executive Opportunities

The 2005 Executive of the Year award luncheon marked the debut of a new event organized by Eller College Undergraduate Programs, the Capturing Executive Opportunities (CEO) Forum. More than 100 undergraduate students participated, interacting with leaders from a broad range of industries throughout the morning.

Speaking with students in a more intimate and personal setting as part of the forum, Ann Fudge stressed the importance of knowing oneself and being unwaveringly authentic. She quoted a favorite Rudyard Kipling poem that promises success, “If you can meet with trial, and triumph and disaster / And treat those two imposters just the same.”

Finance senior Lauren Foote was one of the students inspired at the forum. “Ann Fudge was one of the most captivating speakers I’ve ever heard,” Foote says. “I was engrossed in what she was saying, and I thought balancing work with life was a great subject for students.”

Later, her talk during the award luncheon reinforced a key message shared with students: “We’re all human beings. Some of us, in our lives, will, for reasons that we don’t always understand, have the spotlight on us. But the one thing I want all of you to know—every single one of you in this room—is that there is a light in you, that you are all leaders, and you just have to decide how and when you’re going to demonstrate that leadership.”

An Evening with Karl Eller

Some 300 alumni, students, and friends of the Eller College crowded into Berger Auditorium on February 22 to hear Karl Eller share his stories and experiences.

The standing-room-only event was the second stop on a tour in which Eller engaged with students, alumni, and friends, sharing stories and wisdom from his newly published book, Integrity is All You’ve Got—and Seven Other Lessons of an Entrepreneurial Life. The itinerary touched down in Phoenix, Boston, New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, with Kansas City still to come on June 7.

After interim dean Ken Smith introduced Karl as the man “whose integrity has become a key ingredient of our brand,” Eller’s longtime friend and associate, Dr. Mort Feinberg kicked off the evening’s talk—telling with a pointed question: “How did you get to be such a cock-eyed optimist?” A renowned psychologist, leadership guru, and adviser to many CEOs, Feinberg is author of Why Smart People Do Dumb Things and an upcoming book on leadership.

Answering the question, Eller recalled how he’s always been driven to business success, beginning with the paper route he took as a kid to help support his family, when he discovered, “I wanted to be the best paper guy I could.”

Eller launched his first entrepreneurial venture in college, when he noticed a classmates taking copious notes and approached her with the idea of mimeographing her work, selling it, and splitting the profits. Business was slow, he recalled, until professors learned of the notes and issued an edict that anyone caught with them would be failed unconditionally. After that, the notes sold like hotcakes.

Eller shared also the challenging times in his career, pointing out, “You only learn by your mistakes, you don’t learn from your successes.” Through it all, Eller cited integrity as both his compass and life raft: “My integrity was never compromised through my whole career,” Eller said to the audience. “That’s what got me through it. Integrity makes your life straighten out and feel like you’re going in the right direction.”

To Purchase

Karl Eller’s book, Integrity is All You’ve Got, can be purchased online through The University of Arizona Bookstores at www.uofabookstores.com or at Amazon.com. Proceeds from book sales benefit the Eller College.

A Word of Advice

An evening with Karl Eller is a crash course in success. Asked what advice he had for students in business school today, he replied:

“Listen to what the other person wants. Listen intently. Tune in, and he’ll tell you what’s going to make the deal happen. There is more opportunity today than when I went to school. The world is your oyster. Everybody can’t be an entrepreneur, but you’ve got to go after what you want tooth and toenail. Learn to fail. Be creative. Persevere.”

Last Word on Leadership

See page 24 for more on leadership from 2005 UA Executive of the Year Ann Fudge.
In Memoriam

Bryna Zehngut ’74
died in February at the age of 74, having lived with ovarian cancer for nearly six years. Bryna was the first student and first Jewish woman elected ASUA president, the second woman to hold the position in UA history. Throughout her life, Bryna built a legacy of community activism, volunteerism, and leadership.

1980s

Shari Terry ’80 serves as vice president of marketing and business administration for Physicians for a softball signup in Stillwater, Oklahoma, CA. shariterry@yahoo.com

Craig Davis ’83 is a senior member of the IT application development staff at Goodrich, which runs SAF, the aerospace company that recently landed a billion-dollar satellite contract for Boeing 767 and Airbus A350 aircraft. c landslide@cox.net

Tracy Davis ’84 is an investment executive for the iM Financial Group and Crowed Wealth. She recently accepted the position of co-president in the firm’s San Diego office. tracidadeanis@cme.net

Frank Laruepene ’86 is director of IT business applications for ON Semiconductor in Phoenix, AZ, a company which spun off from Motorola Semiconductor Products Sector in 1995. m_laurepene@on.com

Anthony Leong ’86 is working as the commanding officer of the 527th Medical Support Battalion at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City Beach, FL, and was recently selected for promotion to the rank of colonel. along9092@cox.net

Phil Baren ’83 MBA was recently promoted to assistant vice president of quality assurance at ABC, a non-profit healthcare organization in Washington, D.C., remy@abc.edu

Yenmaki Tominori ’83 MS is an information systems manager for Nicosia Municipality, an information systems company in Nicosia, Cyprus. hepi@cytanet.com.cy

Christina Krywucki ’88 PhD is an information systems manager for Nicosia Municipality in St. Paul, MN. luis02@email.arizona.edu

Ken Goyer ’99 MBA recently returned to Raytheon as a senior program manager in Tucson, AZ. He will be responsible for tracking teams of planners on various military programs, providing schedule development and maintenance functions to program managers. kgoyen@raytheon.com

Jared Rebol ’99 is a financial representative with Northwestern Mutual Financial Network in New York, NY.

2000s

John Bennett ’09 MBA earned his CFA charter in 2002 and plans on continuing a career in investment management after completing his MBA (1st) at Yale School of Management in New Haven, CT.

Shaheed Fax ’10 is a staff writer at Salon Daily and SFG, the largest daily newspaper in the Southeast, writing and editing in journalism, living, murder, and promotions in Elena, AZ. shaheed Fax@salon.com

Correction: Martin Guerrero ’01 is an army captain who recently returned to the program he says gave him the tools to launch TriSports.com and the faculty he still credited for his success. “You could make a million dollars in the program,” he said. “I’ve bought the program, and so you think about everything.” It was in one of those lonely training sessions—biking down a road on his own—that he first sketched out the idea for his online retail business.

Francisco Pedraza ’02 MBA is manager of academia programs for his firm’s offices in the UA College of Social and Behavioral Sciences in Tucson, AZ, responsible for the overall administration of academic affairs in the large UA college. fpedraza@arizona.edu

Lindsey Sullivan ’03 MBA is a senior management analyst in the US Department of Defense (ABC), a consulting firm named after his UA college. lindsey.sullivan@abc.net

Air Levy ’10 is operations manager for two small companies in Los Angeles, CA. As Star Officer, which sells software officer supplies, and Ancho Calif. Culture, main- dist of Las Vegas; “It’s the #1 Coffee” for the West Coast. alevy32@hotmail.com

Scott Sorensen ’00 MBA is assistant to the city manager for the City of White Bear Lake, MN, where he assists the city manager with general operations of the city and conducts research and analysis on various topics in the context of local government, writing reports and proposals, updating ordi- nances, and writing and submitting grants.” My brother was in karate, and they sold these Chinese stars,” Seton recalls, sharing how they charged neighborhood kids 25¢ to throw the stars at a board for a chance to win a prize. “But the thing is, the Chinese stars weren’t sharp enough, so they’d never stick. We made about $50 off that venture.”

After his dip into gaming, Seton dabbled in food and beverage, selling shaved ice from his Snopy Sno-Cone Cart—“that was a niche in home improvement,” recruiting his brothers as “slave labor” in a short-lived landscaping business. All of these were mere tasters compared to the pie Seton is baking today. His TriSports.com, an all-under-one-roof retailer for triathletes, projects sales of $5–10 million in 2005. Not bad for a company launched in true garage fashion, with Seton docking out of classes to scribble down orders when his cell phone rang, deep in the heart of the Harshaw Building, where Seton put in a great race and returned to Tucson on cloud nine. Though just starting his master’s and teaching engineering classes, TriSports.com held his attention. Energized, and with an extra 20 hours a week that had been devoted to training, he dove into launching the online retailer with his wife, Debbie, and gave it his Ironman all. So much so, in fact, that in just over a year, when that cell phone rang in Harshaw and a disappointing associ- ate didn’t answer, “Seton, have you made your first million dollars yet? Seton could lock him in the eye, grin, and answer, “Almost!” Revenues had already climbed to $800,000. It wasn’t easy. Start-up capital eluded him. SBA loan programs said the company would never fly, and TriSports.com was literally built on credit cards. But by focusing on personal- ized customer service—handwritten thank you notes with every order, for example—and keeping their website updated practically on the hour, the couple made the company that would never fly actually soar.


Today Seton’s a frequent guest speaker in Eller’s entrepreneurship classes, giving back to the program he says gave him the tools to launch TriSports.com and the faculty he still turns to for advice. “It’s nice to have other entrepreneurs to bounce ideas off of,” even today, Seton says. “The students and faculty are totally unbiased, and they’re really in your court.”

Visitors to the Eller College McGuire Entrepreneurship Program’s office see, embazoned on the wall in big blue letters, a quote: “When you enter the entrepreneurship program, you want a piece of the pie. When you leave the program, you want to make the pie.”

The quote is attributed to Seton Claggett, who graduated from the program in 1998. But anecdotal evidence suggests that Seton’s pie-making ambitions surfaced much earlier in life.

“Mr. brother was in karate, and they sold these Chinese stars,” Seton recalls, sharing how they charged neighborhood kids 25¢ to throw the stars at a board for a chance to win a dollar. “But the thing is, the Chinese stars weren’t sharp enough, so they’d never stick. We made about $50 off that venture.”

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Serving Future Generations

Mike Hein, MPA ’91

In early April, Mike Hein took on the biggest responsibility of his career to date and immediately got to work on issues facing the City of Tucson as its new city manager. Among those issues: the ever-looming challenge of swelling regional transportation demands. Pima County recently created a regional transportation authority that for the first time has leaders from all members of the Pima Associations of Governments—municipalities from Oro Valley to Sahuarita, including the Tohono O’odham nation and Pascua Yaqui tribe—sitting down together to create a regional approach to infrastructure and capacity solutions. Not surprisingly, Mike is well prepared for the challenge. Since graduating from the School of Public Administration and Policy at the Eller College after earning an undergraduate degree in his home state of Wisconsin, Mike’s career has included some of the toughest assignments a public administrator could face. As the director of community and economic development for the City of South Tucson, Mike dealt with everything from public safety issues to challenging the results of the 1990 decennial census, which had significantly underestimated South Tucson’s Hispanic population and thereby impacted funding. “Having the opportunity to work for the City of South Tucson meant really learning about the wide variety of issues facing local governments,” Mike recalls, noting that “sometimes your first job is the toughest. There were a lot of challenges and issues facing the community, and a lot of fiscal constraints, but it gave me a great opportunity. You needed help in a lot of areas, and I gained exposure that I might not have had at a larger organization.” From a job like that, where do you go, except to something even more complex? Mike headed to Nogales to become planning and zoning director, dealing with border issues on the heels of approval of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Having reached the equivalent of city manager there, he moved on. As town manager of the City of Marana, he oversaw a $62 million dollar budget in what was then the fastest-growing community in the state. Now that budget responsibility has jumped from $62 million to $1 billion as Hein becomes the youngest person to head the leadership of Tucson’s 6,000+ employees.

Through it all, Mike has maintained a disarming humility. In fact, he recalls that one of the biggest challenges of his career has been overcoming the self-doubt that often comes from growing up in a lower socio-economic strata, as he did. “I lacked confidence,” Mike says. “I remember sitting in classes at the Eller College with MBAs and feeling daunted by the differences between my background and some of my peers.” But it’s the “tremendous amount of support” from those peers, as well as advisors and professors at the Eller College, which Mike credits for much of his success, in addition to an education that’s helped him “identify systems and better understand the synergies between federal, state, and local governments.” Understanding those synergies has helped make a positive impact in every position Mike has held, and this is the reward that drives him. “There’s a real satisfaction in the notion that you’re imprinting on the future,” Mike shares. “I’ve been offered positions in the private sector for a lot more money, but it’s not money alone that matters. It’s the ability to actually work with communities and hopefully make them better for future generations.”

A New Breed of Leadership

Vicki Panhuise, MBA ’99

Vicki Panhuise became a certified black belt in 2004, but you won’t find her practicing Tang Soo Do on weekends. Vicki is a black belt in Six Sigma, a quality assurance program pioneered by Motorola in the mid-1980s and since adopted by manufacturing giants around the world. Black belt certification means mastery of principles and techniques aimed at keeping the likelihood of product defects below six standard deviations in a normal bell curve. Translation for the rest of us: fewer than 3.4 manufacturing defects per million.

Seem overly rigorous? Not when you consider the projects Vicki works on as vice president of program management for Honeywell’s Aerospace Electronic Systems (AES) business in Phoenix. Current projects include developing avionics for the Boeing 787 Dreamliner, a mid-size plane with big-jet range and unmatched fuel efficiency, and the largest civil airliner ever built, the double-deck A380, officially unveiled by Airbus in January. In addition, Vicki works on a number of smaller aviation applications and several military and space applications—all in a day’s work for the woman responsible for driving world-class program management performance and positioning Honeywell’s AES for future growth.

Vicki joined Honeywell in 1980 and spent 15 years in engineering management for its Engines, Systems & Services division. She then served as site general manager for the company’s Tucson operation, going on to hold vice president positions in three company divisions prior to her current position. In fact, Vicki was already working as a Honeywell manager when she decided to dive into the MBA degree that she credits with providing key learning opportunities in finance and marketing. Though she was no stranger to academics (she holds a master’s and doctorate in nuclear engineering from the University of Missouri-Columbia), Vicki knew that balancing work and family (she had a son in junior high) would be difficult. She opted for the weekend Eller MBA program. “Juggling the responsibilities at work and home with school was challenging,” Vicki recalls. “I had to be very disciplined. But I was also fortunate to have a very supportive husband and my son liked that I had homework, too!”

Throughout her career, that discipline has brought its rewards. In 2004, Vicki received the Society of Women Engineers’ Upward Mobility Award and the Eller College’s Distinguished Alumnus Award. She has also earned numerous Honeywell Technical Awards for development in nondestructive testing—testing carried out in a way that doesn’t disturb structural or surface integrity—leading teams working on the automated eddy current inspection system, the dual-alloy turbine wheel inspection system, and the computerized ultrasonic inspection system.

While forging the future of aviation at Honeywell, Vicki still finds time to give back. She has served on the Greater Tucson Economic Council executive committee, and since 1999 has been a member of the Eller College MBA Advisory Council. As a leader in a company that thrives on technology, Vicki is an outstanding example of that vital new breed of leaders who combine business acumen with science and engineering expertise. “I think it is critical for business leaders to understand both the business and technical aspects of their business,” Vicki notes. “They do not have to be the next Einstein, but they need technical aptitude to lead the integrated, cross-functional teams required for a business to be successful.”

Vicki certainly has that aptitude, and does lead those successful teams, meeting every day her career goal of being “a business leader making a difference.”
Last Word on Leadership: Ann Fudge

You mentioned the importance of joie de vivre. How do you maintain that, facing the huge demands you face in your role as a leader for a global company?

It goes back to knowing yourself and being authentic. I don’t think you should shut the door between who you are as a person and what you do in your job. That’s where people trip up. When you try to live from that point of authenticity, integrity, and who you are at the core, you’re going to bring that to how you lead your organization. That’s how I choose to lead.

Earlier you said, “There are no celebrities, we’re all human beings.” Yet the corporate world tends to have very solid hierarchies. How do you balance those two philosophies?

I can’t speak for others, but I always refer to everybody who I work with as my colleague. Yes, people technically report to me, but we’re all colleagues. I don’t care what level you’re at—if you’re contributing to our doing work that helps our client partners, we’re all colleagues in that.

You’ve been a leader in this industry for a long time—what are some of the challenges that leaders face today but didn’t face five or 10 years ago?

Things are definitely more complex. Five years ago, if there was a problem somewhere, you had time to digest it. Now, sometimes somebody in the press will know before you do. I was just telling someone—the CEO job today is like extreme sport. It really is. You either sign up for it, or you don’t.

Sort of an offbeat question: To what extent does positioning, building brand, play into your leadership? People say that, and at first I didn’t like it. But you’re right in asking the question.

Several years ago Fast Company magazine had a great cover story, “The Brand Called You.” In essence, that’s what you are. It’s your reputation, what you are, what you do. Students need to think about their life, what their contribution is going to be, what they value. You made a decision to take some time off, and then to come back. Obviously work gives you something. How does it enrich your life?

You mentioned the importance of knowing yourself. How do you respond to other causes as they arise.

“Assistance wristbands” offered a simple way to participate in tsunami relief, raising funds and simultaneously displaying the value of social responsibility that helps drive many of the College’s programs.

In conjunction with Undergraduate Programs, the Public Administration Student Society launched sales of the wristbands to students, faculty, and staff. Imprinted with the simple message “Eller College Cares,” the blue and red silicone bands are generating funds for tsunami relief now, but can also be used to respond to other causes as they arise.

“We looked at a lot of options for answering the need of this crisis,” says Kristen Culliney, undergraduate programs coordinator for leadership and student enrichment. “These wristbands are popular for a reason—they’re a simple way to show support and a gentle reminder of what others are going through.”

How globally aware are you?
Answers to questions from page 10:

1. U.S. expansionary fiscal policies help to cause all but which of the following?
   A) The Southern Ocean
   B) The Atlantic Ocean
   C) The fall of the Berlin Wall

2. What 1989 event is widely considered to symbolize the spread of free elections and democracy that characterizes current global economy?
   A) Increased savings worldwide
   B) The fall of the Berlin Wall
   C) The fall of the Iron Curtain

3. How globally aware are you?
   A) The Southern Ocean
   B) The Atlantic Ocean
   C) The fall of the Berlin Wall
   D) The rise of the middle class in Asia
   E) Increased savings worldwide

Caring is Always in Fashion
For centuries, people have shown support for a cause in what they wear.

During the Civil War, American women wore ribbons in their hair to honor soldiers called to duty. A decade ago, the Lance Armstrong Foundation sold metal bracelets to raise funds for AIDS/HIV programs, and in 1997 the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF) began selling the now famous LIVESTRONG™ silicone bracelets, colored yellow to match Armstrong’s cycling jersey, to raise funds for people diagnosed with cancer.

The yellow wristbands’ popularity soared after Armstrong won his sixth consecutive Tour de France in July 2004. Today, LAF has sold more than 40 million LIVESTRONG™ wristbands.

You can purchase “Eller College Cares” wristbands by sending your request to:

Kristen Culliney c/o Undergraduate Programs
UA Eller College of Management
P.O. Box 210108
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