Isabelle Bajeux-Besnainou

10th Dean of the Tepper School of Business
As I begin my journey as the 10th Dean of the Tepper School of Business, I am leading on behalf of our community: students, faculty, staff, our Carnegie Mellon colleagues, and our alumni. It is difficult to walk through the doors of our impressive but sparsely populated Tepper Quad and witness how our community has been impacted by the events of the past year. From the effects of the coronavirus pandemic to our unrelenting mission to end systemic racism within our community, we are indeed living through a challenging time. How do I lead Tepper into brighter days?

One thing I know is that innovation is born of challenge, and uncertainty is a foundation from which we grow, thrive, and create monumental change that can impact the world. For the better.

As Dean, I am emboldened to take on these challenges, because I know that we will come out stronger and smarter on the other side. I am committed to the success, health, safety, and happiness of our entire Tepper community. I am confident that our powerful, collective expertise in technology, science, entrepreneurship, and leadership will continue to build a culture of excellence that will propel us to new heights.

It is my mission to help grow and strengthen the Tepper School community and show the world all that we can accomplish when we work together. I thank you for this opportunity and look forward to serving as your Dean.

With gratitude and excitement,

Isabelle Bajeux-Besnainou
Dean, Tepper School of Business

Class of 2020 Full-Time MBA Employment Highlights

- 89% Received offers by three months after graduation
- 87% Accepted offers by three months after graduation
- $136K Median salary per year

MSBA Program Names Alan Montgomery New Faculty Head

The online Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA) named Professor of Marketing Alan Montgomery as its new faculty head. He succeeds Professor Willem-Jan van Hoeve, who was recently named Senior Associate Dean of Education.

Montgomery will lead the program in bringing leading-edge techniques in data analytics into a business context, occupying a niche space on the spectrum between an MBA and a data science degree. He has been teaching the Analytical Marketing course in the MSBA program since the program launched in December 2017.
Taya Cohen Receives $4.4 Million Grant From the John Templeton Foundation

Taya Cohen, Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Theory, is serving as the science of honesty project leader on a research team that is exploring scientific and philosophical questions about honesty. The John Templeton Foundation is sponsoring this project with a $4.4 million grant.

Along with Cohen, the Honesty Project includes three psychology professors from Wake Forest University and is led by A.C. Reid Professor of Philosophy and Principal Investigator Christian B. Miller, also of Wake Forest University. The research team will use a mix of field studies, surveys, laboratory and online experiments, and coding of qualitative data to study honesty. Cohen—who conducts research on honesty, moral behavior, negotiation, and conflict, and is known in particular for her research on moral character in the workplace—will lead research on honesty in difficult conversations where people must deliver critical feedback to mentees and teammates.

The Tepper Undergraduate Business Administration program placed #7 on the U.S. News & World Report list of 2021 Best Undergraduate Business School Programs.


In a first for CMU, McKinsey & Company announced its first research sponsorship for Dokyun Lee, Assistant Professor of Business Analytics, and Ph.D. students Emeda Manzoor and Mao Chengfeng. The McKinsey & Co. sponsorship is in applying AI in marketing promotion.

Lee founded and co-directs ENABLE, a CMU Retail & Services Collaborative, which is a forum for industry leaders to share their challenges with academic experts at the forefront of new technology. ENABLE’s mission is to create more humane, efficient, and positive retail and service experiences, recently held its first roundtable to address the use of AI during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Emily Stark Joins Health Professions Program Advisory Board

V. Emily Stark, Assistant Teaching Professor of Business Communications, was invited to join the advisory board for Carnegie Mellon’s Health Professions Program (HPP).

The HPP is a university-wide advising resource that is available to all CMU students and alumni. Composed of a diverse group of colleagues from MCS, DC, CIT, SCS, Tepper, and the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion, the advisory board works with the HPP director on policy review, resource development, programmatic enhancements, and alumni engagement.

Stark has a background in biology and alumni relationships and has helped to bring greater awareness of the HPP and its valuable resource to the Tepper community.

#7

U.S. News & World Report

Research aimed at understanding the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on consumer behavior received a $50,000 grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation.

Laurence Ales, Associate Professor of Economics; Rebecca Lessaem, Associate Professor of Economics; Chris Talmer, Associate Professor of Financial Economics and Head of Economics; and Ariel Zetlin-Jones, Associate Professor of Economics, through their micro- and macro- economics research project, “Developing a Pandemic Consumption Expenditure Index,” aim to identify and categorize emerging patterns of consumer behavior.

The Richard King Mellon Foundation primarily funds projects relating to regional economic development and conservation, along with education and human services and nonprofit capacity building throughout southwestern Pennsylvania.

Emily Stark Joins Health Professions Program Advisory Board

Kathleen O. Potter, John Levinson (MSIA 1980) and Ellen Levinson, along with the Levinson family, recently made contributions to this important initiative. Led by Muller, the Tepper School Sustainability Initiative offers students an opportunity to pursue scholarship, coursework, and career opportunities in the ever-growing field of sustainability. The initiative encompasses a wide range of topics, including energy, natural resources, the environment, regional economic development and conservation, along with education and human services and nonprofit capacity building throughout southwestern Pennsylvania.

Emily Stark Joins Health Professions Program Advisory Board
The Marketing Science Institute announced its 2020 class of MSI Scholars, naming Associate Professor of Marketing Jeff Galak as a 2020 Scholar. The MSI Scholars Program was developed to recognize excellence in marketing scholarship, develop a cohort across marketing disciplines, and strengthen ties between scholar and MSI. Galak specializes in behavioral psychology, behavioral experimentation, consumer behavior, decision-making, and marketing research.

Erina Ytsma joins the World Economic Forum’s Global Future Council Fellows Program

The World Economic Forum’s Global Future Council on the Future of Work, chaired by Jeff Galak, has announced the addition of Erina Ytsma as a fellow. Ytsma specializes in economic and the economics of digitization and innovation. She is particularly interested in incentive systems and the organization of work in the digital age and in the context of knowledge work and innovation.

Brianna Agyemang awarded Executive of the Year Award

Brianna Agyemang (B.A. in Economics, Class of 2010) and Jamila Thomas of Atlantic Records, who led ‘The Show Must Be Paused’ campaign in response to the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery earlier this year, will receive the Executive of the Year Award at Billboard’s 2020 Women in Music Event.

Ilker Baybars Celebrates 50 Years at Tepper

Ilker Baybars, George Leland Bach Chair, Professor of Operations Management, and Dean and CEO Emeritus of the Qatar campus of CMU, is celebrating an impressive milestone of 50 years at Tepper.

Baybars came to CMU in late August of 1970 as a student and joined the faculty in 1978, eventually serving as Associate Dean in 1985, Deputy Dean in 1992, and Acting President of the Carnegie Bosch Institute for Applied International Studies in 1997. He was director of the Tepper School’s MBA program from 1984 to 1997, oversea the Undergraduate Business Administration program from 1990 to 1994, and served for six years as the Dean and CEO of the Qatar campus of CMU.

Ilker Baybars played a central role in growing a small, innovative master’s program to one from which, each year, hundreds of graduates assume leadership roles in prominent companies throughout the world. Having witnessed this transformation, I am still in awe of Ilker’s vision for what the school could become, and his skilful management of the transformation that realized his vision.”

Dennis Epple,
Thomas Lord Professor of Economics
the expected premature deaths due to air pollution from personal vehicle travel and electricity use are estimated to have declined by approximately 150 deaths per month, about 25 percent of the baseline of 1,500 deaths. The study also estimated that social distancing likely resulted in a loss of roughly 42 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions per month — essentially a 19 percent decline.

Further, by assuming a value of statistical life — a common measure of the value of life lost in the risk of mortality — if $9 million and a social cost of carbon of $50 per ton, the study estimated the environmental cost of stay-at-home and social distancing measures in the United States is $5.5 billion per month.

While this study offers a silver lining for the current pandemic climate, it also suggests that institutions that promote remote work and retail delivery opportunities will continue to be necessary for societal health following the pandemic. This in turn has sent researchers digging for clarity and finding a few positive results.

As companies continue to both embrace and struggle with the effects of working remotely, Anita Williams Woolley, Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Theory at the Tepper School of Business, offers suggestions to ultimately minimize stress and communication issues while still promoting successful collaboration.

In an op-ed titled “Best Practices for Working Remotely,” Woolley draws from her research to posit that remote work opens the doors for greater diversity.

T he unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has stalled and shifted priorities in every industry, and uncertainty still lingers over the future. While many of the pandemic’s direct consequences have been catastrophic, such as rising unemployment and a staggering loss of human life, other consequences — including the transition to remote work and learning — pose unexpected opportunities for growth.

A new study conducted by Professor Nicholas Muller, Lester and Judith Lawe Associate Professor of Economics, Engineering, and Public Policy — along with researchers at the University of Chicago, the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, Dartmouth College, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill — found that the unprecedented move to remote work and learning have not only reduced toxic emissions and energy use, but have likely prevented premature deaths. Using cell phone data to measure changes in mobility from February to April 2020, the researchers connected emissions from travel and electricity use to changes in ambient fine particulate matter and evaluated the associated reductions in expected adverse health effects from exposure to pollution. The results are promising: for a month of social distancing,

Yet while employers contend with where and how their employees physically work, a new workforce option continues to emerge. Automation in manufacturing has long been underway as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, also known as Industry 4.0, has continued to push for innovations in AI and smart technology in order to improve production while lessening reliance on human intervention.

In a recent study published in Social Science Research Network, Professor Steven Tayor, Ford Distinguished Research Chair; University Professor of Management, Operations, along with researchers from West Virginia University, University of Iowa, and Johns Hopkins University’s Carey Business School, analyzed how COVID-19 is improving the case for an AI-inspired digital transformation in manufacturing and supply networks.

The researchers observed that even as some strapped organizations are abandoning “non-essential” plans to implement AI technology in an effort to concentrate all efforts on responding to the immediate impact of the pandemic in the short term, there is evidence that embracing AI could help manufacturers combat uncertainty and become more resilient to disasters.

The team recognized that since job losses in the U.S. exceeded 33.5 million by early May 2020, it’s understandable that many are concerned with the implications of a “jobless future” and are therefore hesitant to further reduce sectors by adopting AI technology. However, the study determined that the vast majority of COVID-related job losses have been concentrated in sectors with low AI, which suggests that an AI-inspired digital transformation might have actually helped to mitigate job losses.

Throughout the study, the researchers observe where and how AI technology is implemented, finding that AI-driven transformation can address problems like issues such as design, manufacturing, sustainability, and resilience. In turn, the adoption of such technologies has actually resulted in increased connectivity, transparency, and visibility across digital supply networks, and this ultimately increases the adaptability and strength of digital supply networks.

“In the short term, basic AI technologies can aid in the transition in the factories, enable remote control of the shop floor activities despite potentially large numbers of sick or quarantined employees and required social distancing measured,” concludes the study.

In the paper, the authors explain that in the context of high uncertainty, consumers are more likely to seek control either by digging into the hobbies and interests where they feel most like experts or, by adapting a changed mindset and exploring new territories. In either case, firms will benefit by remaining consistent in messaging and

“DRAWING PARALLELS BETWEEN THE NOVEL OFFERING AND MORE FAMILIAR PRODUCTS.”

The authors warn that brands should also expect customers to appear less satisfied with their purchases since uncertainty blunts our ability to consider the consequences of our actions. For this, the authors suggest that brands adopt more flexible return policies to restore loyalty and trust. Additionally, since consumers are inundated with information these days, they are more likely to view a brand favorably if said brand can offer a simple and clear purchasing process. And finally, all firms can benefit by leveraging any social benefits gained by using their products during this time of isolation. Ultimately, any brand that addresses some of these factors among a consumer base is likely build a more solid foundation post-pandemic.

While no study or theory may completely grasp the entirety of the pandemic dynamics, it’s clear that the crisis will eventually end and that organizations that make thoughtful decisions today may come out ahead in a different, and possibly better, future. —
Winds of Change

Isabelle Bajeux-Besnainou
Dean, Tepper School of Business

It was not exactly a warm welcome. Isabelle Bajeux-Besnainou was on the long drive from Montreal to Pittsburgh, to become the 11th Dean of the Tepper School of Business, when she was struck by a visual reminder of what would become the toughest test of her tenure to date. The closed border between Canada and the U.S. underscores the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic and resulting economic fallout.

However, Bajeux-Besnainou, an academic lifer, relishes the trials to come. She joined the Tepper School from McGill University’s Desautels Faculty of Management on Oct. 15 (taking over from Robert Dammon) and believes the business school is strategically positioned to succeed in the current age of upheaval.

“The timing is not ideal; I was not actively on the job market, but I was chased by a very persistent headhunter,” recalls Bajeux-Besnainou, 56. “And the more I learnt about the Tepper School, the more I could see that it has all of the right ingredients to be a very top business school. It was an amazing opportunity that I could not pass up.”

She highlights the close collaboration between world-leading faculty across Carnegie Mellon, from the School of Computer Science to the College of Fine Arts. Bajeux-Besnainou says cross-disciplinary learning is fertile ground for innovation and creativity that will be crucial for companies as they emerge from the pandemic.

She believes a wide array of perspectives also enriches the learning experience of students through group discussion. And fresh infrastructure at the Tepper School is the conduit through which this diverse academic knowledge flows, embodied by the new $201 million David A. Tepper Quadrangle (Dammon’s legacy). The state-of-the-art new facility connects all seven campus colleges and reimagines the purpose of a business school.

“I don’t think of business as a siloed discipline,” says Bajeux-Besnainou. “To solve problems, you need to build bridges between academic disciplines. Because otherwise business just doesn’t work. There is no other way to reinvent business in a post-COVID-19 world.”

She spotlights data analytics as being of special importance to this dynamic environment; business leaders need to analyze information in real time and use the insight gleaned to make quick and effective decisions. And recruiters find such abilities to be invaluable.

“Tepper is a top business school already, but I think it can become greater still because it’s at the center of a world-leading university that focuses on technology, data, and analytics,” says Bajeux-Besnainou. “This is the DNA of CMU.”

And when it comes to cultivating data literacy and many other specialist abilities, the experiential, skills-based learning that is the Tepper School’s hallmark is the gold standard. What’s more, cross-campus collaboration is at the heart of this approach. “Practical learning forces us to think about the future, not only what happened in the past,” Bajeux-Besnainou says. “It pioneers a new way of teaching and addressing business problems.”

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Those who were involved in hiring Bajeux-Besnainou recall being endeared by her balance of confidence and humility. Her inclusive style of “servant leadership” made her an instant favorite with the faculty, who praise her empathy, listening, persuasion, and foresight.

“She recognizes that — alone — she is not going to make anything happen,” says Anita Williams Woolley, Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Theory, and co-chair of the search committee. “She is committed to the idea of building a vision for the future together with the faculty. That quickly made her the frontrunner.”

Evelyn Pierce, Teaching Professor of Business Management Communication and a member of the hiring committee, says Bajeux-Besnainou was distinctive because she did not submit a strategic plan in the interview process; she wanted to speak to the key stakeholders first.

“It wasn’t that she hadn’t done her research; she wanted to lead by relationship-building — that was refreshing,” says Pierce. “It made her the unanimous first choice of all the deans at other CMU schools. They saw her as someone who will be their partner, not a competitor.”

This perspective of Bajeux-Besnainou is echoed by Gunjan Kedia, who serves on the Tepper School’s Business Board of Advisors. "Isabelle is likable, relatable, empathetic, very easy to talk to," says Kedia, who met the new dean for the first time after her appointment. “She asked me about the role of the Business Board, what the other CMU schools needed, and what I think should be on her priority list.”

Because
"We need to ensure the professors are teaching about why diversity matters and how you improve businesses and society when you bring diverse points of view to problem-solving," says Bajeux-Besnainou. "Not just about diversity, justice. Yes, that is crucial, but diversity is better for both society and business."

Looking ahead, one priority and challenge will be to continue to draw international students to the Tepper School amid a clampdown on immigration in the U.S., as well as travel restrictions around the world and the temporary closure of embassies that disrupted opportunities for decades. “I would not say the case method is not useful, but we need to support them to be successful. It’s about intentionality.”

Change is required in the curriculum itself, she adds, noting that relatively few case studies feature a black or other minority ethnic protagonist — a problem that is not unique to the Tepper School.

"There is a huge effort we have to make in communicating to the business world and to prospective students everywhere that we have the right positioning and strength and want the world to know that Tepper is the business school of the future."
“I WANT THE COUNTRY THAT ELIMINATED POLIO AND MAPPED THE HUMAN GENOME TO LEAD A NEW ERA OF MEDICINE ... TO BRING THE COUNTRY CLOSER TO CURING DISEASES LIKE CANCER AND DIABETES,” PROCLAIMED PRESIDENT OBAMA IN HIS 2015 STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS.

As Obama announced the launch of a new precision medicine initiative, the Capitol building erupted in applause. 27-year-old cystic fibrosis patient Bill Elder, a guest that night of First Lady Michelle Obama, listened live as the president explained the catalyst: “In some patients with cystic fibrosis,” a rare, life-threatening genetic lung disease, “this approach has reversed a disease once thought unstoppable.”

That approach is Kalydeco, a breakthrough treatment developed by Vertex Pharmaceuticals that targets the genetic roots of the disease, earning it the distinction from Forbes as “The Most Important New Drug Of 2012” and winning the First Annual Forbes Breakthrough Drug Award for “dramatically improving the lives of patients and conquering a scientific challenge that had vexed researchers for decades.”

“I’m so lucky to be a living, breathing example of how precision medicine can work,” Elder told the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation shortly after the State of the Union. “I started taking a breakthrough treatment for cystic fibrosis a few years ago, and it has changed my life. This new treatment is allowing me to pursue my dreams. Without Kalydeco, I know I would get sick a lot more often, but since taking the drug, I haven’t had a flare-up.”

For Tepper alumnus and current Vertex EVP and Chief Patient Officer Amit Sachdev, the State of the Union represented a highlight of nearly a decade of tireless work. Having helped shepherd the Boston-based company to multiple breakthrough medical treatments, ten-fold growth, and R&D sites and offices across four continents, the presidential mention further validated his decision to join Vertex when the company had just one office, no commercial operations, and no profit.

“Precision medicine,” also known as “personalized medicine,” targets a disease’s genetic roots to modify the course of a disease or even prevent it. “That’s what Vertex does,” says Sachdev. “We use different approaches — small molecules, cell therapies, gene therapies — to create innovative, transformative medicine for serious diseases.”

But the journey from research to market can be decades-long, laden with setbacks, and require serial rounds of massive financial investment. Sachdev’s odyssey from finance and data analysis classes at Carnegie Mellon to helping bring hepatitis C, cystic fibrosis, and hopefully Type 1 diabetes and sickle cell disease treatments to the world was similarly winding, carrying him over a million miles across numerous international borders with stopovers at law school, Wall Street, and Capitol Hill. Over the last two years, this has led to the creation of a new MBA track in health care at the Tepper School of Business.

”I REALIZED PRETTY QUICKLY I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING THAT I FELT MORE PURPOSEFUL ABOUT – SOMETHING LESS ABOUT INVESTING AND MORE ABOUT PUBLIC POLICY AND HELPING IN OTHER WAYS.”
As a child, Sachdev spent countless hours inside the science labs at Louisiana State University, where his parents conducted research as chemistry and botany professors. His genetic predisposition to science, he says, was nurtured through his fascination with computers, which he nurtured in his teens when he began programming in Basic, Cobalt, and FORTRAN.

Drawn to Carnegie Mellon for its prowess in technology, he had two predominant career goals in mind as he chose his major: pursuing a career in computer science or going into public policy. He decided to major in business: “Tepper’s curriculum gave me skills and capabilities that I’ve used throughout my whole career,” says Sachdev.

After graduating, he became an investment advisor for a large Wall Street brokerage house. It was short-lived: “I realized pretty early that public policy would be a bigger part of who I am.” But Sachdev says the business negotiation skills he learned in his undergraduate career goals that pushed him to study public policy, which he nurtured in his teens when he began programming in Basic, Cobalt, and FORTRAN.

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ASHA BANKS (MBA 2020)
FOUNDER AND CEO, CHEERNOTES
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Asha Banks (MBA 2020) has considered herself an entrepreneur since grade school, identifying gaps in the marketplace and creating her first products — hair and skincare products made of natural ingredients and formulated specifically to address black people’s beauty needs — while still in junior high. Curious as to how products were made at scale, she drew on this experience to pursue a career in chemical engineering. While earning her MBA, she felt the entrepreneurial spirit strike again, leading her to create CheerNotes, a greeting card company that is making the simple and kind act of sending a card to a loved one a more inclusive experience.

Q: What is your elevator pitch?
A: CheerNotes is a marketplace that makes it easy to discover and share intentionally inclusive greeting cards. We do this through our own collection and partnerships with diverse artists who are inspired by their culture, experiences, and love of self-expression.

Q: Why CMU?
A: I wanted an environment that supported entrepreneurial thinking and entrepreneurs. Before even stepping on campus, I spoke with five current students and alumni who built businesses while at Tepper and even had an exchange with Dave Maehlme, Executive Director, Swartz Center for Entrepreneurship. I could see the evidence of the environment that I could both grow within and give back to right away.

Q: Why is it important to fund business ideas with passion?
A: Why is it important to fund business ideas with passion?

BRENDEN VAN BUREN (MBA 2017)
FOUNDER AND OPERATOR-IN-RESIDENCE, GTE
WASHINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA

Before earning his MBA and founding his own company, Brenden Van Buren (MBA 2017) spent his summers during and after undergrad working at his family’s highway construction and materials business, New Enterprise Stone and Lime Company. He then continued to innovate in the industry, working with his father’s acquired company, PennStress, a pre-cast concrete manufacturing facility. From creating new markets for commercial construction materials to managing his own search fund platform, Brenden has continued to put family first while connecting businesses in the industry, large and small, with business pros ready to take on and manage the companies’ future successes.

Q: What is your elevator pitch?
A: Generational Transfer Entrepreneurs (GTE) is a search fund platform for MBAs. We help MBAs that have an operational or management background search for and connect with retiring business owners who do not have a succession plan. Once the match is made, we then help to acquire the business as efficiently as possible and connect the MBAs with the capital to acquire that business.

Q: Why CMU?
A: I am a math guy, and I grew up a couple hours outside Pittsburgh. I applied to CMU hoping that with their program, I would fit in well with the culture. I applied to CMU hoping that with their program, I would fit in well with the culture. I wanted to be an entrepreneur, and everyone that I talked to about entrepreneurship, including on my visit to CMU, seemed excited about the program at Tepper.

Q: How do you create your own success?
A: How do you create your own success?
Her family moved frequently due to her father’s work — she experienced living in six different Midwestern cities before age 12 — and she funded her own high school summer exchange program in Germany. Through these experiences, Green learned a powerful lesson: Travel is the best teacher, especially when you have to put yourself in others’ shoes.

Green won a prestigious civil leadership award when graduating among the top of her class from high school in Decatur, Illinois, and was elected by the student body to speak at graduation. She then earned a degree in economics from the University of Illinois. While studying at university, the same passion for service leadership that she had growing up continued to inspire her. She was her sorority’s president, learning early in her career how to build a strong ecosystem of networks that included trusted colleagues and advisors across the campus. And she became a student ambassador, helping international students wrangle visa issues and adjust to Illinois’ famously crisp winters.
“That these students took themselves out of their own world, their own groove, was inspiring,” she said. “I admired their courage and learned as much from them as they learned from me.”

A POWERFUL PIVOT

After graduating from college, Green enjoyed working for companies that invested in scientific research and were committed to applying technology in new, useful ways. She held several roles within Bayer and throughout her career, and enjoyed launching new products that helped solve problems and grow the economy.

Restless to continue learning, Tepper School alumnus Green realized that her business program might complement her background and experience thus far. She learned that the Tepper School’s strong foundation in STEM offered ways to explore and develop her own brand of technical expertise. Green earned her MBA from the Tepper School in 2004.

Her studies and the partnerships she developed at the Tepper School inspired her to look for new roles in strengthening economies and ecosystems. “That was how I realized I wanted to make my mark,” Green said.

The Tepper School did more than complement Green’s growing tapestry of skills. She gained credibility working alongside renowned scientists, innovators, and investors. Green learned how to leverage her networks, identify her strengths and tackle complex problems in a disciplined but collaborative way through organizational behaviors and core values that models a learning culture through exploration and experimentation.

Alongside her role (and within the spirit of the MBA curriculum), Green volunteered as a board member and mentor for several events on the topics of innovation, strategy, entrepreneurship, and develop her own brand of technical expertise.

A PERFECTLY-ALIGNED ROLE

While Green found something to love in all of her roles, her current role as Chief Innovation Officer for Sheetz, a leading $7.2 billion customer-focused convenience chain with 600-plus locations across six states, is perfectly aligned with her goals.

“Time and again, I sought out assignments that aligned with my strengths, my values, and that would allow me to make a difference in peoples’ daily lives. She and her team study the environment around them and explore ways to improve it. Together, they analyze disruption strategies, new market segmentation, product differentiation, and how Sheetz might shape and serve lifestyles of the future.

Technology and new customer growth is a core theme for Green as she looks to transform Sheetz over the next ten years.”

For Green, success means having a process that builds ideas into working business concepts and having a team that models a learning culture through exploration and experimentation.

Alongside her role (and within the spirit of continued learning and service leadership), Green also speaks at conferences and events on the topics of innovation, strategy, technology, culture, ecosystems, and product management. She serves as an advisor and judge for innovation events, including the National Science Foundation’s Innovation Corps program, the McGinness Venture Competition, and the Founder Institute. To remain true to her commitment to serving others, Green volunteers as a board member of 412 Food Rescue, an organization that directly transfers food to nonprofit partners who serve those who need it. She is also a founding board member of ProductCamp Pittsburgh.

COMBINING A LOVE OF TEACHING WITH SERVICE LEADERSHIP

Green enjoys how her job at Sheetz combines her business experience with her love of teaching. For three years, Green has educated students as an adjunct professor in the MSPM program, a joint graduate degree program offered by the Tepper School of Business and the School of Computer Science.

She enriches the student experience by bringing real business challenges and problems to the classroom. “It becomes a valuable way of gaining a fresh perspective,” she said.

One of the first steps Green took in her role at Sheetz was to sponsor a capstone course project with the MSPM program. Green hears from former students, like Ashwin Rao (MSPM 2019) that the capstone experience became a “game-changer” that challenged students to think differently and to think at a higher level.

“As a leader in your organization, you can give back and learn through the capstone courses, too,” Green said.

Engaging with the university becomes a great way to add to the overall ecosystem of innovation, in her experience. One of the key ways for innovation is being connected to vibrant networks of entrepreneurs and established, related corporations that have been innovating for years. “A lot of magic can happen when all of these forces come together and interact,” she said.

REAL MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES WITH REAL COMPANIES

Green finds partnering with the MSPM program through her role at Sheetz as a capstone course project sponsor to be a win-win. A globally and professionally diverse student body from scientific, technical, and financial backgrounds brings rich, outside perspectives to collaboration. Sheetz gains fresh insights into broader ways to define convenient service from their student project engagement.

“I find that so many of our students bring to the classroom the entrepreneurial spirt and drive to navigate and seize opportunity. They are creative and tenacious. “That is what makes them so compelling as partners to business leaders in robust organizations.”

Indeed. Entering her second year as Chief Innovation Officer, Green leads a fast-paced, forward-thinking team on a mission to make a difference in peoples’ daily lives.

To ensure the team is a culture of innovation, in her experience. One of the key ways for innovation is being connected to vibrant networks of entrepreneurs and established, related corporations that have been innovating for years. “A lot of magic can happen when all of these forces come together and interact,” she said.

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“We're exploring what convenience means for you,” Green said.

Green, on behalf of Sheetz, also is exploring additional capstone sponsorship opportunities with other disciplines and departments, including the Department of Statistics and Data Science at the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences; the Corporate Startup Lab, a Swartz Center for Entrepreneurship initiative; and the Master of Integrated Innovation for Products and Services program.

With her second year underway at Sheetz, Green feels optimistic for the future (even while the coronavirus pandemic continued). “Uncertainty and chaos drive innovation,” she said.

Green continues to have a glass-half-full approach to business and innovation by following her long-ago developed Innovation Framework, which spotlights the latest spectrum of innovative thinking and her Innovation Compass. Both accelerate the innovation function. Here’s a framework for your discovery, defines customer targets, and creates and value propositions to fill clear market need.

To turn ideas into actions, Green and her team must understand the lifestyles of current and future customers — to understand their perspective and why. This understanding — standing in another’s shoes — is how Green leads her team to develop and experiment with solutions that customers become part of Sheetz’s product pipeline. That’s one of Green’s mission as Chief Innovation Officer: to shape the lifestyles of the future.
dward “Ted” Decker (MSIA 1993) had never set foot inside The Home Depot before a recruiter called him about a job at the home improvement retailer’s headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, in early 2000. But Decker found the company to be a great fit for him, given that it had an entrepreneurial, problem-solving culture similar to the one he loved as a graduate student at the Tepper School of Business. Twenty years later, he’s forging connections between his employer and his alma mater, looking for ways The Home Depot can benefit from the expertise and collaborative spirit of Tepper School students, alumni, and faculty.

Decker, an Erie, Pennsylvania native, began his career in finance, working for PNC Bank in the United States and abroad before he moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Instead of looking elsewhere to start business school, he applied to the Tepper School and was impressed by how rigorous the education was. He appreciated the small class sizes, close relationships with professors, and the intensity of the course load.

BY TRICIA MILLER KLAPHEKE
Decker and his colleagues at The Home Depot faced a unique challenge as the spread of COVID-19 closed down communities and businesses across North America this spring. Seemed essential early on, The Home Depot was one of the few retailers that never closed its doors. Staff at The Home Depot’s headquarters shifted to working from home and the executive team began daily meetings planning out how to comply with existing regulations and protocols in more than 2,500 state and local jurisdictions where The Home Depot has stores.

In keeping with its values, The Home Depot first instituted price freezes on anything to do with safety or sanitation to avoid price gouging local communities and donated all N95 masks it had in stock to first responders and hospitals. Decker recalled. It added benefits for its employees, including more paid time off and weekly bonuses and double overtime pay. It cut back on store hours to allow more time for cleaning and stocking shelves, and it canceled promotional events that would have been intended to drive traffic to the stores.

Decker said the experience has fed a business that was already agile to become even more so very quickly. The Home Depot did not have cut inside backup before the pandemic, for example, but within a few weeks began to offer the service as Decker and his colleagues recognized that customers wanted a safer, contactless shopping experience.

As the pandemic wore on, Decker said he faced the constant challenge of maintaining the supply chain, as a factory would close unexpectedly in one country or there would be an outbreak domestically. He said in stock levels were still lower than the previous year over the summer, but that his goal was to provide a close alternative if a certain product is not in stock.

Decker said that the students who work with The Home Depot exemplify the culture that both the school and the company embrace. They’re open-minded people who are interested in partnering with those from other disciplines, such as computer science, in order to solve big problems.

“The world today is a cross-functional interdisciplinary project world,” he said. “You can’t get anything done without people from all different facets of the organization.”

Decker has also hosted — on several occasions — a summer reception at his home for Tepper School students who are interning in Atlanta, Georgia, and local alumni. He likes hosting the gathering in order to hear what students are learning and working on and to reminisce about the challenges of graduate school with fellow alumni. Decker extends an open invitation to interns to join him for lunch at The Home Depot headquarters and talk about their careers. When they ask for advice, he recommends they look for work they want to do at a company they like working with for with people they want to work alongside.

TO ME THAT IS THE BASIS FOR A CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY EDUCATION. NO PROBLEM SEEMS TOO BIG, BECAUSE YOU KNOW YOU TACKLED THOSE ENORMOUS PROBLEMS AT CARNEGIE MELLON.”

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CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Effective Oct. 5, 2020, Ted Decker was named President and Chief Operating Officer of The Home Depot. He assumes additional responsibility for global store operations, global supply chain, and outside sales and service in his new role.

It’s one of the best things that ever happened to me because it’s such an incredibly good school,” he said.

He also loved the way the school emphasizes interdisciplinary work: pushing business students to learn from and partner with students from other programs, and not jetting down and schools against each other in competing fiefdoms. He said that that collaborative, entrepreneurial culture has a lot in common with the culture at The Home Depot.

The Home Depot uses two symbols to illustrate how it makes decisions as a company: a values wheel showing eight guiding principles, and an inverted pyramid showing its CEO at the smallest bottom layer, supporting frontline workers and customers at the biggest top layer. Decker said there’s a lot of overlap between those values, especially entrepreneurial spirit, and the ones he learned in graduate school.

Decker has advanced at The Home Depot multiple times since he started in 2000. Six years ago, when Craig Menear took over as CEO, Decker was promoted to his role as Executive Vice President of Merchandising. He oversees all online merchandising and marketing in the United States. It’s a complicated job that involves finding and stocking items that are as diverse as lumber, washing machines, tractors, and tiny screws, across nearly 2,000 stores in the United States. Decker said he uses the problem-solving skills he learned at Georgia Tech.

The Home Depot was founded in 1979 and has not historically done huge projects, every day.

To the Home Depot’s headquarters shifted to working from home and the executive team began daily meetings planning out how to comply with existing regulations and protocols in more than 2,500 state and local jurisdictions where The Home Depot has stores.

The Home Depot implemented the group’s recommendations. The Home Depot team scored the highest ranking during the portion of the course in which company executives judge the class participants on analysis, presentation style, and innovative ideas. More importantly, The Home Depot implemented the group’s recommendations.

The company’s second course partnership is with the Master of Science in Product Management (MSPM) program. The degree — which was offered for the first time in 2018, the year that The Home Depot first sponsored an MSPM project — is a joint degree program offered through the Tepper School and the School of Computer Science. One group analyzed the shopping experience on The Home Depot’s website and provided staff with 89 ideas to help customers find what they want to buy. The company renewed sponsorship for a third time in 2020.

Ted Decker (MSIA 1993)
President and Chief Operating Officer
The Home Depot
The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical role social distancing must play to avoid contagion and deaths. Yet, as people have adopted social distancing measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, new technologies that allow replacing in-person for at-distance activities have blurred the mapping between social and economic distancing.

In "Social and Economic Distancing," Selman Erol, Assistant Professor of Economics, and co-author Guillaume Olivier-Doré of the University of Pennsylvania model how individuals react to social distancing guidelines by changing their network of economic relations. Specifically, they look at how individuals changing their network of economic relations affects total output, wealth inequality, and long-term growth.

Historical and recent data have shown that social distancing practices, both voluntary and mandated, prevent disease transmission by reducing contact rates between infected and susceptible individuals, minimizing the extent of the epidemic. However, social distancing implies economic distancing since these safety measures prevent workers from working side-by-side and limit contact between clients and providers. While new safety measures have allowed some in-person activities to be substituted with at-distance activities, the network reaction to this behavior is unclear.

In this model, three conceptual insights become apparent. First, economic distancing and economic networking reactions to social distancing practices may have an important role in buffering their economic impact. Second, individuals not only react to social distancing guidelines by rearranging their economic activities by moving to-in-distance operations, but also by cutting some operations and who they interact with. Third, the shock induced by social distancing restrictions may speed up the adoption of superior technologies, leading to a positive long-term effect on economic activity after the shock has passed.

There has been stark differences in the ability of low-income and high-income individuals to protect themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the paper "Income Inequality, Debt Burden, and COVID-19," Deeksha Gupta, Assistant Professor of Finance, and co-author Tetiana Davydik, Assistant Professor of Finance, demonstrate that debt burdens contribute to this inequity by disproportionately increasing the cost of reducing mobility during pandemics to low-income individuals, particularly African-American individuals.

Across the United States, wealthier individuals have been able to cut their mobility more than the low-income population because they benefit from more flexibility to stay at home. Thus, poorer communities have experienced higher rates of infection and death from the coronavirus. For example, some low-income neighborhoods in Los Angeles have experienced mortality rates four times higher than the national rate.

The data visualizer forecasting tool draws from a variety of sources, including surveys run by Google and Facebook, feeds from diagnostic equipment, data on doctor’s visits and hospital admissions, and official reports pertaining to cases and deaths. The data also helps to analyze and demonstrate how government’s mitigation measures have affected their population’s mobility and distancing behavior.

For the project Time-to-event Modeling, Lipton and co-authors analyze issues surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic by tackling a complication that sometimes arises from the contagious pneumonia. For this study, the team developed a risk score based on viral pneumonia patients for survival analysis. The overall goal is to provide scores for different modes of decompenstation in respiratory illness, including both needing ventilator support and mortality.
Your Tepper Experience has prepared you to create the solutions needed to address the increasingly complex challenges within your organization.

Executive Education at the Tepper School of Business partners with our alumni to create programming that leverages the dynamic classroom learning and experiences for their teams and greater organizations.

Blending faculty and content from the Tepper School of Business and the greater Carnegie Mellon community, we welcome an opportunity to discuss your team’s and/or organization’s training and development needs.

Alumni may participate in any of our Open Enrollment programs using their discounted rate, or they can send three or more members of their team for a group rate. Our Open Enrollment programs address topics in strategic leadership, innovation, emerging technology, and advanced analytics, immersing participants in the case studies, exercises, and tools to develop skills vital to success — today and in the future.

Leadership and Negotiation Academy for Women
Jan. 25–Feb. 25, 2021 | online | 6 TEUs
You’re a proven and successful leader — hard-working, goal-oriented, effective. That’s just the beginning.

Executive Presence: Communicating With Impact
Jan. 28–29, 2021 | online | 2 TEUs
Elevate your executive presence and perform effectively at the highest levels.

Leading With Emotional Intelligence
March 18–19, 2021 | online | 2 TEUs
Leverage your emotional intelligence advantage to lead through challenging times.

Leading Innovation: Creating a Dynamic Organization
March 23–25, 2021 | online | 4 TEUs
Acquire a deeper understanding of the processes, methods, and tools of lean innovative thinking and deal with the challenges of creating an innovation culture.

Communicating Complexity
April 15–16, 2021 | online | 2 TEUs
Learn strategies to communicate technical information in a way that is clear, compelling, and actionable. Drive decision-making by bringing technical information to life.

Custom Programs
Tepper Executive Education seamlessly and effectively delivers complex programs to address your business need(s).
We work hand-in-hand to reach your team’s desired development goals — through program development in a variety of modalities (in-person, online, hybrid/blended), dynamic application and experiential experiences, and implementation to realize continuous improvement.

For more information or to discuss your training needs, please contact:

Nicholas Hamilton-Archer
Executive Director for Executive Education
Tepper School of Business
nhamilt2@andrew.cmu.edu
+1 (412) 268-5178

Register online at tepper.cmu.edu/ExecutiveEducation
Thank you to our alumni, faculty, staff, and friends who contributed this past year to the Tepper School. It has been an extraordinary time, and we are incredibly appreciative of those who have invest in the school. Not only are your gifts hard at work, supporting the academic enterprise and faculty research, but they have also been instrumental in helping the school to pivot to new modes of educational delivery. More than ever, your generosity is essential to Tepper remaining at the forefront of innovation in business education.

We also want to thank our hundreds of volunteers who help shape extraordinary time, and we are incredibly appreciative of those who have invested in the school. Not only are your gifts hard at work, supporting the academic enterprise and faculty research, but they have also been instrumental in helping the school to pivot to new modes of educational delivery. More than ever, your generosity is essential to Tepper remaining at the forefront of innovation in business education.

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Butler highlights a few memorable individuals from his Tepper School years, such as then-professor Srikant Datar, whose class was his first eye-opening experience. Then there was Edward Mosier, the encouraging placement director who begged Butler to “please take that interview” with Union Pacific Railroad’s finance department — in Omaha. Butler reluctantly agreed, despite his 10 job offers and very firm decision to return to 1) the East Coast, 2) a manufacturing or operations company, and 3) definitely not in finance.

The alumnus interviewer’s first question: “Why do you want to work for Union Pacific?” The unfailingly honest Butler answered, “I’m not sure I do … but I’d like to hear more.” After a surprisingly enlightening back and forth, his mind was made up.

Following 32 illustrious years at Union Pacific Railroad, Butler retired in 2018 as Executive Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer, and Corporate Secretary, responsible for six major business units producing nearly $20 billion in annual revenue. But he never forgot how he got there, giving back with both his time and support. “I’m such a strong supporter because Tepper opened a world to me that I would have never understood, through the classes and training, but also through the students and networks,” he says.

“I consider Carnegie Mellon a large part of my success in business. I credit Tepper with many things I learned, including problem-solving techniques; analytical approaches; a balanced, holistic way of dealing with leadership; the culture; and the value of just getting the job done with understatement.”

In addition to their generous scholarship, Butler and his wife are regular Annual Fund donors, named the dean’s conference room in the new Tepper School building, and contributed to the CMU Black Alumni Association Endowment. Butler serves on the Tepper Business Board of Advisors, as well as returning to speak (most recently at the MBA graduation ceremony), recruit, and mentor. He was honored with the 2019 CMU Alumni Achievement Award.

Hardly “retired,” Butler sits on the boards of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City – Omaha Branch, the Omaha Airport Authority, and NSource; serves as his church’s senior pastor; provides capital for startups and community micro-loans; and established local scholarships for disadvantaged youth — among numerous other activities. His greatest joy, however, remains family, including his newest delight — spoiling his four grandchildren.

Butler never stops striving to leave this world a better place. “I encourage international travel,” he says, “because it really helps build your perspective that we are one world, that people are much the same, that people want the same things everywhere. We can make the world better.”

“I’ve seen students with large financial burdens get forced into specific, high-income-yielding careers,” he says. “Thanks to the Butler Fellowship, I was freed from those concerns and could explore everything available at Tepper. I’m able to choose. I’m able to choose a position that will be most rewarding and where I can make the most positive impact.”

Ronald Stradford (MBA 2021) was eager to attend the Tepper School — a highly-ranked institution with cutting-edge technologies, and one that was “figuring it out as I went along,” he explains. “I knew that gaining more leadership skills and one-on-one coaching would be invaluable to me.” He was also excited to return to Pittsburgh, where he’d coincidentally had his first eye-opening experience. Then there was Edward Mosier, the truly impactful professor who opened a world to him that made it possible to succeed.

Looking to round out his skill set with greater finance knowledge, Stradford turned to Tepper, drawn by the school’s quantitative focus and challenging, and rewarding” experience, where he could also lead and mentor other engineers.

“Carnegie Mellon and Tepper are known for being leading technology institutions, and going into the future, I feel that will be even more important,” he explains, adding, “I was blown away by how friendly everyone was and how smart; and I loved the campus and new building.” But what made all the difference was the Butler Fellowship. “It’s a big reason I was able to attend,” he says; “I would have been very difficult otherwise.”

He successfully served as a business analyst, systems engineer, and technology product manager. At General Dynamics, Stradford was named operations team lead during a particularly high-stakes year. His team earned the customer’s highest-satisfaction rating and, consequently, the renewal of a five-year, $150 million contract.

Looking for more well-rounded business process knowledge and hoping to explore different sectors, Stradford enrolled at Tepper. “It may sound cliché,” he says, “but there are honestly so many memorable experiences, it’s hard to pinpoint one.” But he describes the excitement of leading the team that scored Tepper’s first win at Deloitte’s Technology Innovation Challenge 2019 (from a field of 66). Along with clubs and activities, Stradford has particularly enjoyed his classes. “Just listening to classmates from different industries, functions, walks of life, there’s always more learning from them than the classroom,” he notes.

He hopes to ultimately combine his technology experience with finance and is grateful for the freedom to choose.

“T epper opened a world to me that I didn’t realize existed. And it was scholarship opportunities that allowed me to go to school. Cynthia and I said that if we have the resources at our disposal, we’ve got to pay that forward.”
While we collectively search for our “new normal,” I take comfort in knowing that students have resumed their studies, professors are teaching classes, and alumni are as active as ever. While 2020 will be remembered as the year of COVID-19, I will remember this as a year of resilience and growth. Companies are successfully adapting while showing compassion and grace for challenges in a WFH environment. Individuals are developing techniques to remain productive and social, despite the battles for bandwidth and uninterrupted home office space. This may be the new normal, but I know that there is no better business school to prepare students for these future challenges than the Tepper School. We continue to build up our library of relevant faculty and alumni webinars. Tepper alumnus DR. AMESH ADALJA (BSIM 1995) shared lessons learned from COVID-19 and future impacts to our health systems, Professor Chris Telmer hosted an alumni panel on reopening the U.S. economy, and Professors Denise Rosseau and Brandy Aven discussed how society and businesses are adapting to the pandemic. If you missed any of these sessions, visit the Tepper website to access the entire library of webinars.

The Tepper School Alumni Board has spent the last several months discussing inequality issues affecting faculty, students and staff, especially concerning Black and Hispanic representation. We are in the early stages of developing and implementing a core set of initiatives that are meaningful, impactful, and will help put our community on a better path as we move forward. For those who want to get involved, please email tepper-alumni@andrew.cmu.edu. Finally, a special welcome to Dr. Isabelle Bajeux-Besnainou as she joins our community as the 10th Dean of the Tepper School of Business. Her focus on fostering collaborative academic and research opportunities across the university will help to bolster the knowledge our students will need as they enter the workforce in this new normal.

On behalf of the Tepper Alumni Board, we encourage you to stay safe and stay connected with our Tepper family.

Rob Rice (MSIA 2000)
President, Tepper School Alumni Board

Simple Strategies to MAXIMIZE Your Giving

1. ESTABLISH A GIFT that pays you income, some of which might be tax-free.

2. GIVE GIFTS OF STOCK, MARKETABLE SECURITIES, REAL ESTATE, or other appreciated assets to maximize the impact and tax benefits of your gift.

3. MAKE A GIFT TODAY to make a difference in 2020 and beyond. If you are 70 1/2 or older, a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA may be the best way to support innovation and ingenuity at the Tepper School, while also reducing your tax obligation.

4. EVALUATE DONOR-ADVISED FUND OPTIONS as you may be able to name the Tepper School as the remainder beneficiary of your fund.

5. REVIEW YOUR IRA & 401(k) ACCOUNTS to ensure your family, the Tepper School of Business, and your other favorite charities are appropriately noted as beneficiaries.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
Mick Koster | mkoster@andrew.cmu.edu | 412-268-3047
Jonathan Stern | jstern@andrew.cmu.edu | 412-268-2942

Dear Alumni,

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For more information, contact
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Jonathan Stern | jstern@andrew.cmu.edu | 412-268-2942

Immunogenesis Names Jim Barlow as CEO

JIM BARLOW (MBA 2005) was named CEO of Immunogenesis in April 2020. Prior to joining Immunogenesis, Jim was Vice President of Operations and Business Development for Genos Therapeutics. Jim played an integral role in the company formation of Genos, a personalized mesoantigen-targeting cancer vaccine company that is a spinoff from Inovio Pharmaceuticals.

Before joining Genos, Jim drove the development of Inovio’s Immunooncology (IO) product strategy. Prior to Inovio, Jim was at Bristol-Myers Squibb, where he was the Payer Marketing Lead for YERVOY®, the pioneering cancer immunotherapy whose approval set off the current wave of immunotherapy development in Oncology. While at BMS, Jim also worked on the overall IO franchise commercial strategy, including the development of communication planning for the groundbreaking immunotherapy OPC302. Prior to BMS, Jim spent 8 years at Merck working in commercial leadership roles with increasing responsibility for the oncology franchise. —
**NEW ALUMNI BOARD MEMBERS**

**SCOTT JURBEC** (MBA 2008, BSBA 2003) serves as the Vice President of Product at TeleTracking, a health care technology company with a mission to ensure that patients never wait for the health care they need. He has more than 15 years of experience in product development, product management, and marketing. At TeleTracking, Scott is responsible for growing the existing product portfolio and accelerating growth in new product development.

Before joining TeleTracking, Scott served in various leadership roles at LegatSull, Industrial Scientific, Thermo Fisher Scientific, and Deloitte.

Scott is a proud dual Tepper School alum, having earned his MBA in 2008 with concentrations in Marketing, Communications, and Strategy and a BS in 2003 with a focus in Manufacturing, Management, and Consulting. As an undergrad student, he fought for the glory of Carnegie as a member of the football and track and field teams.

Scott and his wife Julie reside in Pittsburgh and are raising their three children (ages 8, 6, and 4) to be proud Tartans one day.

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**PRADEEP U. N.** (MBA 2003) is Director at Microsoft Corporation and runs Microsoft’s Services Executive Board, a high-touch program that brings together a global group of CEOs and CIOs for collaborative exploration of critical business challenges. Over an 11-year career with Microsoft spread over two stints, he has held a number of leadership roles for first generation innovations in collaborative, data, analytics, entertainment, and AI technologies.

Outside Microsoft, Pradeep had a career of more than 10 years founding startups and innovating on transformative experiences like the first dual screen phone (yota), first apps for Tizen (Samsung), Gear Watch, first luxury smartphone (Vertu), and smart car experiences for Mercedes & Jaguar. He also has several war stories to share from founding startups to bring cinematic storytelling to business, creating movies with AI under 90 seconds. His corporate adventures have also traversed names like Urunx and Computer Associates.

In addition to earning an MBA, Pradeep holds a Bachelor of Engineering in electrical and electronic engineering from the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

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**BRITTANY WILLIAMS MITHRA** (MBA 2013) is a Sr. Manager of Supply Chain and Operations for Amazon. Brittany joined Amazon as part of the Retail Leadership Development program after graduating from Tepper. In her seven years at Amazon, she held several roles throughout Amazon’s retail business and is currently working to support and grow the physical stores for Amazon.

In addition to her MBA, Brittany holds a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering and after graduation worked in engineering and operations for Williams-Sonoma before expanding her expertise at Tepper with a concentration in operations management. Brittany has been an active member of the Seattle alumni community for the last seven years, where she has been involved in chapter events, alumni engagement, and corporate recruiting. Brittany also served as co-president from 2015 to 2019 of the Seattle Tepper Alumni Board.

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**CYANNE DEMCHAK** (MBA 2009, MSCHP 2009) is a member of Cigna Medical Group’s leadership team and has over 15 years of experience in the health services industry, with a focus on Medicare and Medicaid, from both a business and policy perspective.

She currently leads the Innovation Hub for Cigna Medical Group (CMG), a multi-specialty group serving over 100k patients in Maricopa County, Arizona. She and her team are responsible for ideating, piloting, and executing innovations in the Arizona market and developing a pathway to scalability to other markets. Additionally, Cynanne leads strategic planning for CMG, developing the vision of the future of health care delivery, in collaboration with her clinical and operational partners.

Most recently, Cynanne led Strategic Planning and Business Development for Cigna Seniors, within Cigna’s Government Business segment. In this role, she led a team responsible for strategic planning and business development, including new market and product expansion. In her time at Cigna, Cynanne also held Medicare leader ship positions in the Chicago and Midwest/Atlantic Pennsylvania markets.

Cynanne splits her time between Nashville and Phoenix, and is enjoying cooking, hiking, and biking in both warm weather locations. She is an avid Cubs fan and enjoys spending her down-time reading, cooking, and traveling. Cynanne is an active member of Obesse Violee, an international running team that supports women’s rights, equality and girls staying involved in sports.

Cynanne is a graduate of Rhodes College, with a B.A. in Political Science. She also earned an MBA from the Tepper School of Business, and a Master of Science in Health Care Policy and Management from Hebrew College, at Carnegie Mellon University.

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**STEPHANIE SAPP RIDEAU** leads Comcast in the Mountain West Region as Senior Director, Business Development

**STEPHANIE SAPP RIDEAU** (MBA 2010) is the Sr. Director, Business Development for Comcast in the Mountain West Region. She leads the newly formed Business Development organization, which is the integration of the Residential and Comcast Business Market and Business Development teams. In her role, she focuses on accelerating growth opportunities for Comcast Business and Residential Sales by driving effectiveness in network expansion and external partnerships.

In her previous role, Stephanie was the Director, Business Operations for the Keystone Region. In this role, she managed Sales Operations, Sales Support, and Sales Engineering. She created the Sales Support team for the Comcast Business SMB sales channel, launched FranchiseIt; which contributed to the Keystone Region reaching number one in the North East Division; and developed the first-in-class regional Keystone Technology Center, which supports ActiveCore and CB product demos.

Prior to joining Comcast, Stephanie was Director, Risk Capital Adequacy at BNY Mellon, where she was responsible for overseeing the governance, CCAR/GHAST disclosures, and the CAR Industrialization Project for the organization’s stress testing program. She also led the Cultural Agility Team for IMPACT, BNY Mellon’s multicultural business resource group. Previously, Stephanie served as an Industry Director at Thermo Fisher Scientific where she led commercial operations and channel delivery. Stephanie also spent eight years at pharma giant Merck, where she progressed from a representative to district sales manager, launching two novel blockbuster diabetes products and six new indications.

Stephanie holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering with a minor in BioEngineering from the University of Pittsburgh, an MBA from Carnegie Mellon University’s Tepper School of Business, and a Master of Science in Leadership from Duquesne University. Stephanie is also a graduate of the Coro Pittsburgh’s Women in Leadership program.

An active community member, Stephanie volunteers with Junior Achievement and Strong Women, Strong Girls, and she is an Executive Member of the United Way of Pittsburgh’s Women’s Leadership Council. She is a Board Member for Allegheny Youth Development and the Pittsburgh Women’s Alliance, and the midst of relocating to Denver with her husband and daughter. In her spare time, she loves to visit wineries, scout new places to travel, and visit cupcake stores around the nation.
Rimmo was formerly Cit’s Regional Head of ETF and Index Sales and Business Development, Asia Pacific & Japan. He has also served as Senior Relationship Manager for the Markets business, focusing on Cit’s strategic partners including hedge fund and traditional asset managers, across all products. In addition, Rimmo had previously held senior positions at Cit’s Prime Finance Group in Hong Kong and San Francisco. Prior to that, he worked for Deutsche Bank’s Equity Structured Products Group, where he was involved in the delivery of solutions for hedge funds, pensions, and endowments. Rimmo is also a Tepper School Alumni Board Ambassador and received the 2016 Tepper Alumni Service Award.

Blackrock named RIMMO JOLLY (MBA 1995) as their Head of iShares Asia Pacific.

Blackrock was named iShares Asia Pacific. Based in Hong Kong, he is responsible for growing iShares ETF share and driving ETF adoption among investors in the region. He will work closely with their regional and global teams. He is a key innovator in the region, delivering innovative local product offerings and facilitate ETF ecosystem enhancements across the region.

Plymouth Rock Assurance has named JEFF BRIGLIA as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Plymouth Rock Management Company.

Plymouth Rock Assurance is a property and casualty insurance company headquartered in Des Moines, Iowa. It is a member of the Liberty Mutual Insurance Group. The company was founded in 1889 and is one of the oldest insurance companies in the United States.

Jeff Briglia has over 25 years of experience in the insurance industry, including roles in underwriting, sales, and management.

Jeff Briglia joined Plymouth Rock in 2007 as Vice President of Marketing and was later promoted to Executive Vice President. In 2015, he was named President of the company.

Jeff Briglia has been recognized for his leadership and contributions to the insurance industry, including being named to the Insurance Journal's Top 25 Power Players list in 2017.

Jeff Briglia is a graduate of the University of Missouri, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

He is a member of the Insurance Institute of America and the American College of Insurance.

Jeff Briglia is married with three children.

Blackrock names RIMMO JOLLY as their Head of iShares Asia Pacific.
ED MOTT (BSIM 1977) is a member of the Saratoga Springs consortium which owns the racecourse Ty The Law. After winning the Belmont Stakes back in the spring, Ty The Law finished second in the rescheduled Kentucky Derby on Sept. 5. Raccohorses are highly risky investments, but the second-place purse at Churchill Downs was a tidy $600,000.

CLASS OF 1979


CLASS OF 1980

KEITH CORNELL (MSIA 1980) entered lockdown in the UK on March 25. On the personal side, all is well. His wine consumption has been up, but his weight has been able to go down slightly. On the professional side, he just re-committed his search for another turnaround/ transformational CEO job. In the meantime, Keith remains working with BySide in Portugal as Chairman.

CLASS OF 1982

SHANTHA MOHAN (Ph.D. 1985, MSIA 1982) was chosen as a Distinguished Alumna 2020 by the alumni association of her undergraduate alma mater, College of Engineering, Guindy, India. This year, she also became a Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM). This required 40+ speeches and leadership activities. She continues to be involved in CMU through the Integrated Innovation Institute’s Silicon Valley campus as a mentor and project guide.

CLASS OF 1984

After calculating a Net Present Value, LOUISA WUNDER (BSIM 1984) and her husband moved to Oxford, Maryland, from New York. Travel costs to the kids awayed the decision beyond taxes and utilities. They are comfortable.

CLASS OF 1986

PAUL WELLNER (MSIA 1986) was elected to the Deloitte Foundation Board of Directors. The primary role of a Foundation Director is to provide input and make decisions regarding the Foundation’s investments in education in alignment with Foundation strategy as well as serve as an advocate for the Foundation’s mission. Additionally, Paul was appointed to the Manufacturers Alliance for Productivity and Innovation (MAPI) Foundation’s Advisory Board.


CLASS OF 1987

GARY SENDER (BSIM 1987) joined the Board of Directors of Schrodinger (NASDAQ:SDGR) and Harmony BioSciences (NASDAQ:HBM). He chairs both company’s audit committees and Schrodinger’s compensation committee.

CLASS OF 1988

DAVID BYRD (MSIA 1988) has published a raw book. “Get Your Truth Back” is an interactive digital workbook designed to help you create a system for change. It is written in an illustrative, conversation style utilizing challenging, engaging, and compelling questions to understand your story, position the problem in the foreground, and then show you how to overcome it.

CLASS OF 1991

Peter Papapanikakis (BSIM 1991), a business transactions attorney, represented Benefit Concepts Systems, Inc. in connection with its acquisition by a private equity-owned portfolio company, Blue Ridge ESOP Associates.

CLASS OF 1992

RICHARD MCEINTYRE (MSIA 1992) recently formed a group to buy operating businesses out of bankruptcy. They just acquired home health and durable medical equipment companies and are looking for new opportunities.

This summer JEN SHERRER JANSEN (BSIM 1973) moved to trade the rush-rush of Silicon Valley for the slower pace of a small mountain town, but between being evacuated for a major forest fire and temporarily closing the small shop she opened with her mom due to shelter-in-place, it’s been anything but relaxing. She’s hoping others are finding ways to thrive in spite of the pandemic and all the other tumultuous things going on in the world.

CLASS OF 1993

RAHIL ROSNER (MSIA 1993) created a startup company, Pandemic Analytics, LLC, with her son to help schools across the country and abroad figure out safe physical distancing in any size room.

JUSTIN WANG (BSIM 1993) joined Schrodinger, Inc. as a member of the Schrodinger’s compensation committee.

CLASS OF 1994

KEVIN BOYLE (BSIM 1994) has been promoted to Chief Executive Officer of Kuur Therapeutics. Kuur is a clinical-stage immuno-oncology company researching novel cancer cures.

CAPRICE THORSEN (MSIA 1994) recently published a book, “Instead of Schooling: Educating for Creativity, Resilience, & Happiness.” The book invites parents and educators to create a living educational network that works with human consciousness and unleashes the wisdom and creativity of young people to innovate in an increasingly complex world.

CLASS OF 1997

KUSHAGRA NAVKAR (BSIM 1997) has become an expert in the field of Tepper alumni and 21 years of marriage to Vasavadatta. His 13-year-old son, Vishwarupe, has been selected to play on local national horse riding polo. His 18-year-old daughter, Anandamayi, is applying to universities in the U.S. to pursue economics and mathematics for undergraduate. His elder son, Yogaidit, is 16 and will be following in his father’s footsteps soon.

CLASS OF 1999

RENO THEM DIE AVERGAIN -FILHO’s (BSIM 1999) twins, Titus and Casi, were born in February 2020, doubling the size of the Renato family.

FULL CLASS NOTES
AMIT JANJUA (BSM 1999) launched his startup Postcard — Travel Bucket List. You can collect postcards from travel experts and build bucket lists.

Benjamin March Wong was born to ANDREW WONG (MSIA 1999) and Sharon Wong on August 12, 2020. He joins twin siblings Sabrina May and Daniel August, who offer him daily hugs and kisses.

HIDENORI “HARRY” HAYASHI (MBA 2001) is still working for Itochu, a Japanese international trading company. HIDENORI “HARRY” HAYASHI (MBA 2001) is now a Partner at Anthill Ventures and founding member at Lumos Health Advisory. He invests in and helps develop companies to combat the spread and contraction of COVID-19. He also published “Hello, Health — Navigating and Winning Better Cognitive and Immune Function: A Guidebook for Searcing 21st Century Families,” now available on Audible.

JOSEPH ARMAH’S (MBA 2000) will be continuing at Marriott International as Senior Director on the data strategy and management team, with a focus on customer, loyalty, marketing, co-brand, and partner data. He looks forward to continuing to execute their data strategy, build out their Modern Data Platform, and explore opportunities for data sharing and improved customer experience.

GREG SHUMAVON (MBA 2001) and family relocated to Erlangen, Germany, in search of new trails.

Erich Strefel (MSIA 2000) launched SUMMi7, an app that enables companies to reach higher peaks while increasing work-life harmony. ERIC STRAFEL CLASS OF 2000 recently returned to PNC Bank as Senior Vice President, Institutional Banking – Treasury Management. Eric will release his first book, tentatively named “The Frontline CEO,” detailing how collaborative leadership enables companies to reach higher peaks while increasing work-life harmony.

PAMELA BARNHILL (MBA 2001) joined United States Safe Guard LLC. as principal to provide FDA applications and educational tools. The release of Gene’s second book, “The Missing Second Semester,” will accompany the launch of Troutwood’s flagship Financial Planning application.

LOURDES GARCIA-CALDERON (BSBA 2005) and her husband, Brian Quinn, welcomed their baby boy, Callen Marcus Quinn, on June 5, 2020.

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CLASS OF 2010

DR. CANAN GUNES CORLU (Ph.D. 2010, MBA 2008) has been promoted to Associate Professor at Metropolitan College, Boston University. Her research focuses on the development of business system simulations to support data-driven decision-making under uncertainty with applications in operations management.

STUTI SUREKA (MBA 2010) was promoted to operations management at Microsoft under uncertainty with applications in support data-driven decision-making development of business system simulations. Her research focuses on the advanced and innovative technological solutions serving electric distribution utilities worldwide.

Sally Sj Berners (MBA 2011) has been named Fellow Tepper 2012 alumni who came to make a difference in the lives of others. Berners got married at Aspinwall Marina on Sept. 5 with a few friends and family and many others on Zoom.

CLASS OF 2012

Michael Morgan (MBA 2012) recently transitioned from an individual contributor role to a people manager role within Amazon. This is his first position as a people manager, and he is excited to pursue this as the next step in his career progression. In three years at Amazon, he has had the opportunity to work in Canada Retail, AWS, and Amazon Business. He looks forward to returning to AWS for this new role.

Gemma and Stefano Griselli (MBA 2012) got married in AspenWald Marina on Sept. 5 with a few friends and family and many others on Zoom.

As Chief Marketing Officer, Keith Chaney (MBA 2012) is excited to announce the launch of Quartz Water Source, a company committed to expanding global access to clean water. Founded by natives of Fire, Michigan, and inspired by the ongoing water crisis, they are committed to ensuring that clean water is a right, not a privilege. Through their partnership with WaterGen, Quartz offers the most advanced water generation technology on the market, generating unprecedented, high quality water for those who need it most.

Sameer Karim (MBA 2012) and Mahewsh Harang were married in San Diego, California. Fellow Tepper 2012 alum who came to celebrate are Shaun Ali (MBA 2012), Umar Chaudhary (MBA 2012), Jenny Minott (MBA 2012), Aline Douherty (MBA 2012), Barak Bafadhen (MBA 2012), Bonnie Rajagopal (MBA 2012), Michelle Mueller (MBA 2012), Jim Hodgson (MBA 2012), Anoop Shain (MBA 2012), Adam Scharinke (MBA 2012), and Jesse Alten (MBA 2012). Saineer and Mahewsh currently reside in San Francisco and are expecting baby girl Karin in early 2021.

Classification of 2013

Amy K. (Jandcsik) Boyle (MBA 2013) was promoted to Manager of Nuclear Financial Planning & Analysis at Exelon, with a focus on valuation of Exelon’s nuclear plants and strategic initiatives. Amy relocated to Exelon’s Nuclear Headquarters outside of Chicago, Illinois, for the role and now resides with her husband, Brian, in Naperville, Illinois.

Ross Wodworth (MOP 2013) is head of play at Studio Kio, a Stealth startup in the telepresence space. He is also still working at Apptio, a software studio, in Prague, Czech Republic.

Som Sreedhar (MBA 2013) joined Amazon in June and is excited to lead the launch of a new delivery station (C111) in Round Rock, Texas.

Classification of 2014

Madison Warner (BSBA 2014) accepted a role as Manager of Energy Solutions at Lucido Group, a specialist solution provider, serving capital markets and energy participants, primarily using Allegro’s ETRM trading system and Openlink Fndtr.

After five years in the Delivering Deal Value (MBA) team at PrinewaterhouseCoopers, Prashanth Katara (MBA 2015) joined Facebook’s corporate strategy team and moved to the Bay Area. At Facebook, Prashanth works on the broader go-to-market strategy with a special focus on Emerging Markets, such as India.

Classification of 2015

Chitra Rajagopal (MBA 2015) started a new job as a senior brand manager on Columbus Craft Beers with Hormel.

Classification of 2016

In August 2020, Joel Sueen (MBA 2016) founded Allegheny Direct Logistics, a final-mile package delivery company for Amazon.

Classification of 2017

Yang Liang (MBA 2017) recently switched roles at Google and is now a product marketing manager for cloud artificial intelligence and machine learning solutions. Yang’s new job is to build world-class marketing that inspires customers and drives awareness of Google Cloud’s AI/ML solutions.

Classification of 2018

Tom Garney (MBA 2010) and Dana Haymon (MBA 2010) got engaged in New York City on March 7, 2020. They are planning for their wedding to be held in Washington, D.C.
CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS, AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

As of Aug. 27, 2020, KeelBoat Capital acquired JDXpert by HRTMS. JDXpert is a SaaS platform uniquely aimed at helping healthcare organizations to strategically transform, operate, and scale with IT. The acquisition further solidifies the importance of HRTMS in the market.

ANDREW ELLERHORST (BBA 2019) is humbled, honored, and excited to take on the role of President & CEO of the business and looks forward to the company's continued growth and success.

CLASS OF 2019

ANDREW WOODWARD (MBA 2019) started a new role as a Principal Financial Analyst at Wipro this August. He was a core team member of the Tepper/Jefferies IB pipeline. He is excited to have a new role as a Principal Financial Analyst at Wipro.

ERIC POGUE (MBA 2020) is excited to have begun working at Jefferies as an investment banking associate. He hopes to continue to build the Tepper/Jefferies IB pipeline. This summer, Michelle Madamuray, a CMU alumna from Dietrich, and HARSHNI MALLI (ISBA 2020) launched PassionNet, an organization that they hope will grow to become a network of virtual clubs that can help young students discover their passions and motivations to learn. By offering a variety of clubs to explore, they hope that students can learn more about academic and career opportunities.

REMI POPOOLA (MBA 2016) celebrated the birth of a son, Bipin Okubanjo, on July 7, 2020, weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces. He has been working with various organizations throughout his career — most notably, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Cisco, Seriex, GeoOne, and Litmus Global. He was a devoted husband, son, father, and brother who will be dearly remembered by his family and friends for his extraordinary intelligence, diligence, generosity, and steadfast loyalty.

APURVA BIRALA (MSPM 2020) is interning with Acronis as a product management intern this summer.Apurva is grateful to have the Tepper community experiences and learnings to carry on this new journey. Heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2020 at Tepper.

CLASS OF 2020

KARTIN JOSHI (MBA 2020) joined Amazon Pathways as an Operations Manager. She graduated from Virginia Tech (Bachelor of Science in Business/ Psychology) before attending the Tepper School, where she was a passionate student leader. Angel excelled in her career in Digital Marketing Consulting at Deloitte for 22 years, achieving the rank of partner. She also served as a board member for Kid Power, where she promoted the importance of youth education.

ANGEL HOLLIS VACCARO (MBA 2004) Angel Hollis Vaccaro passed away on Oct. 9, 2020, after a short illness surrounded by family at home. Angel was 44 and is survived by husband and classmate Damon. She graduated from Virginia Tech (Bachelor of Science in Business/ Psychology) before attending the Tepper School, where she was a passionate student leader. Angel excelled in her career in Digital Marketing Consulting at Deloitte for 22 years, achieving the rank of partner. She also served as a board member for Kid Power, where she promoted the importance of youth education.

Angel embraced every challenge with resilience, creativity, collaboration, and joy while never missing an opportunity to celebrate. She will forever be remembered by her family, friends, and clients for her intensity in everything that she set out to accomplish.

IN MEMORIAM

KENNETH LAMBERT (MBA 1983) Kenneth Lambert, of Apex, North Carolina, and formerly of Miami, Florida, died Thursday, Sept. 24 in Durham, North Carolina. He was 50.

Kenneth was born July 3, 1961 in Miami, Florida. He was a graduate of LaSalle High School in Miami, Florida; received a Master of Science in Industrial Administration from Carnegie Mellon; and continued his studies, receiving degrees from the California Institute of Technology and Pepperdine University.

He was a recognized leader of technology in the field of software development, working with various organizations throughout his career — most notably, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Cisco, Seriex, GeoOne, and Litmus Global. Kenneth was a devoted husband, son, father, and brother who will be dearly remembered by his family and friends for his extraordinary intelligence, diligence, generosity, and steadfast loyalty.

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Maximize your impact by requesting a matching gift from an eligible employer! Not sure if your employer has a matching gift program? Find out at giving.cmu.edu/matchinggifts.