



SCHOOL OF BUSINESS DEAN'S OFFICE

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

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Excellence in learning, impact in practice. - Dr. Lisa Frank

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



DR. LISA FRANK

I am pleased to share this edition of *Business Insights*, highlighting a semester defined by achievement, engagement, and impact across the School of Business. The stories in this issue reflect the strength of our community and the meaningful ways our students, faculty, alumni, and partners contribute to our shared mission.

Our students continue to distinguish themselves through academic excellence, experiential learning, and professional engagement. From national recognition to high-impact experiences such as participation in the **Global Asset Management Education Forum**, they are translating classroom learning into real-world success.

Our faculty advance this work through impactful research and initiatives that strengthen student learning and industry connections. This semester also marked an exciting milestone with the establishment of the **New England Chapter of the National Fintech Organization**, hosted by Central, further positioning the school as a hub for innovation, industry engagement, and emerging areas of business education. Through partnerships, events, and collaborative opportunities, we continue to deepen our ties to the business community and create meaningful pathways for student success.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on expanding experiential learning, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring that every student is well prepared to succeed in today's dynamic business environment. Thank you to our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners for your continued support.

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

STUDENT SUCCESS & ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

The School of Business's **Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) Xi Omicron Chapter** is closing the academic year with expectations of earning Gold Level recognition for the third consecutive year. This distinction reflects another outstanding year of service, leadership, professional development, and community engagement. Chapter members participated in national conferences, collaborative service initiatives, and campus programming while continuing to strengthen connections between students, faculty, and the accounting profession. The year concluded with the annual initiation ceremony, welcoming new lifetime members and celebrating the chapter's continued growth and success.



ANDREA SHARP

Andrea Sharp served as Chapter President while balancing graduate studies and a public accounting internship, leading the organization through a year of significant achievement and growth. A 2026 Master of Science in Accounting candidate, Andrea represented the chapter at national Beta Alpha Psi conferences and earned national recognition through the **"Project Run With It"** competition, where her team's proposal, *BAP Pathways: Connect, Cultivate & Contribute*, sparked discussions about potential national implementation. Known for her authenticity, professionalism, and collaborative leadership style, Andrea also led local service initiatives and interchapter partnerships throughout the year. Faculty and staff praised her ability to empower others, foster meaningful engagement, and leave a lasting impact on both the chapter and the broader campus community.

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

STUDENT SUCCESS & ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

CAREER ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

The **Career Accelerator Program (CAP)** hosted 10 sessions throughout the semester, helping students strengthen career readiness skills such as resume building, interviewing, networking, and professional development. This collaborative initiative between the School of Business, the School of Engineering, Science, and Technology (SEST), and the Office of Career & Professional Development saw strong student engagement throughout the semester.

One highlight was one of the program's first student-led sessions, "Students Leading Students: How to Navigate the Career Journey," presented by junior Christopher Roth. The session provided practical advice on exploring career interests, developing professional skills, and navigating the transition from college to career.

NEW FALL 2026 TOPICS:

- Leveraging Your Strengths with Clifton Strengths Assessment
- AI in the Workplace
- Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace
- Hosting a Mock Interview Session
- Leveraging Your Transferable Skills to drive your Career
- Beat the Bots: How to Make your Resume Robot-Proof



ACCESS TO INDUSTRY MENTORSHIP (AIM) PROGRAM

Students participated in multiple corporate shadow days, including visits to **Travelers Insurance** and **LAZ Parking**, as well as **COCC**. These experiences gave students firsthand exposure to professional environments, allowed them to explore various departments, and helped them connect classroom learning to real-world business practices.



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THOUGHT LEADERSHIP & FACULTY IMPACT



**DR. C.
CHRISTOPHER LEE**



DR. SHIHUI FAN



DR. RADU VLAS



DR. PEIYAO CHEN



DR. OHJIN KWON

RECENT FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Through outstanding research, impactful scholarship, and thought leadership, our faculty continue to make meaningful contributions across a broad range of fields. Their recent publications explore topics in digital innovation, consumer behavior, technology management, and organizational leadership, contributing valuable insights to both academia and industry. Through their research and scholarship, our faculty are making meaningful contributions to conversations and practices around the world.

Dr. C. Christopher Lee and Dr. Shihui Fan

“Does Digital Innovation Matter in the Healthcare Industry?”

Journal of International Technology and Information Management (2026)

Dr. C. Christopher Lee and Dr. Peiyao Chen

“Determinants of Digital Piracy: An Integrated Model”

Journal of International Technology and Information Management (2026)

Dr. Radu Vlas

“Of Rollercoasters and Resilience: The Role of CEOs’ Biases and Heuristics for Large Firms’ Technological Innovation”

International Journal of Applied Management and Technology (2026)

Dr. Ohjin Kwon

“Do Emotional Descriptions Outperform Informational Ones? The Role of Message Length in Online Property Rental Listings.”

International Journal of Advertising (2026)

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS

JA INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2026

Recognizing our Faculty Event Coordination Team:

Chris Lee, Mike Nicastro, Diana Velasco, and Keshab Acharya

Central proudly hosted the **Junior Achievement Innovation Challenge 2026** in Alumni Hall, welcoming approximately 50 students from Terryville, Manchester, and New Britain High Schools. Centered on this year's theme, Manufacturing and Innovation, the event featured engaging workshops, faculty mentorship, and a keynote presentation by Professor Mike Nicastro. Students collaborated in teams to develop and present innovative business ideas, with New Britain High School earning first place. The event was a tremendous success and highlighted the power of partnership, creativity, and experiential learning.



NATIONAL FINTECH ORGANIZATION LUNCHEON

The School of Business proudly partnered with the National Fintech Organization to host a luncheon celebrating the launch of the **NFO's New England Chapter** at Central. This new collaboration, hosted by Central Connecticut State University and supported by Connecticut Innovations, brings together students, financial services professionals, and technology leaders to explore emerging industry trends while creating valuable opportunities for learning, networking, and innovation.



BUSINESS INSIGHTS

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS

AMERICAN SAVINGS FOUNDATION ENDOWED CHAIR NAMED



Central is pleased to announce the appointment of Michael Nicastro as the next **ASF Endowed Chair in Banking and Finance** in the School of Business. In this role, he will lead initiatives that support high-quality, industry-focused business education and oversee the **Banking Excellence Certificate** program, strengthening industry partnerships and student career readiness.



GLOBAL ASSET MANAGEMENT EDUCATION FORUM

In March, five School of Business students, accompanied by **Dean Frank** and **Dr. Yinfei “Eddie” Chen**, faculty advisor to the Finance Association, attended the **Global Asset Management Education (GAME) Forum** in New York City. The forum is the world’s largest student-run financial conference, bringing together students and industry leaders to explore topics such as portfolio strategy, risk management, and the global economic outlook. Through panels, discussions, and networking opportunities, Central students engaged directly with professionals from leading firms, gaining valuable exposure to real-world financial practices.



CONNECTICUT BUSINESS DEANS SUMMIT

In February, **Dean Frank** joined peers from across the state for the second annual **Connecticut Business Deans Summit**, hosted at the Quinnipiac University School of Business. The convening brought together business deans from institutions across Connecticut to engage in dialogue on key issues shaping business education, including accreditation standards, the evolving role of social impact, innovation in graduate programs, and emerging statewide initiatives such as artificial intelligence collaborations. The summit strengthened connections among Connecticut’s business schools and reinforced a shared commitment to advancing academic quality, relevance, and impact.

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & CURRICULUM UPDATES

CFP® BOARD REGISTERED PROGRAM

Following the launch of Central's B.S. in Finance with concentration in Personal Financial Planning, **Connecticut's first CFP® Board**

Registered Program, we are excited to highlight how it prepares students for successful careers. The program combines a strong business foundation with specialized training in tax, retirement, estate, and investment planning, along with skills in professional conduct, risk management, and financial behavior.

Graduates are eligible to sit for the CFP® Certification Exam. For more information, contact **Dr. Ying Chen** at ying.chen@ccsu.edu



CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER®



[Learn more here!](#)

NEW 1-CREDIT COURSE

BUS 200: CAREER PREP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This course supports School of Business students in developing the essential skills, competencies, and resources needed for successful career planning and professional growth. Students engage in guided activities focused on exploring career pathways, building a professional identity, and preparing for internship success and job opportunities. Topics include résumé and cover-letter development, professional communication, personal branding, networking strategies, interviewing skills, effective use of career planning platforms such as Handshake and understanding workplace expectations. The course also introduces students to applied learning expectations within the School of Business.



**ATTENTION RISING SOPHOMORES
AND JUNIORS!**

CENTRAL VENTURE DEVELOPMENT SUMMER CAMP

With support by a generous grant from the university, the School of Business will host the the **Central Venture Development Summer Camp** this July, offering incoming high school juniors and seniors an immersive introduction to entrepreneurship, business development, and startup innovation through workshops, mentorship, and hands-on learning experiences.



[Learn more here!](#)

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ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESSEGE: BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

BusinessEdge: Beyond the Classroom helps students build professional skills through experiential learning, mentorship, networking, and career development opportunities. Students interested in gaining real-world experience and expanding their professional network are encouraged to join through Club Central.



[Learn more here!](#)

WOMEN IN BUSINESS STUDENT CLUB

Central School of Business is excited to support the launch of the **Women in Business Club** beginning in **Fall 2026**. Led by students and supported by faculty advisors **Dr. Yiru Wang** and **Dr. Hyoun Sook Lim**, the organization will offer networking opportunities, professional development workshops, leadership experiences, and conversations with industry professionals. The club welcomes all students interested in building confidence, developing career-ready skills, and supporting women and underrepresented groups in business.



[Learn more here!](#)

GET INVOLVED

Students interested in joining or serving on the E-board are encouraged to complete the interest form. For more information, contact Angela Lema at a.lema@my.ccsu.edu or Rosalia Castillo at r.castillo@my.ccsu.edu.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



KATHY NANOWSKI

Central School of Business is proud to highlight alumna **Kathy Nanowski, MBA, CPSM**, who recently joined **Weston & Sampson** as Director of Client Development in the firm's Rocky Hill office. A graduate of the School of Business with both a **B.S. Marketing** and **MBA**, Nanowski brings more than 25 years of experience in marketing, communications, and business development leadership. Her expertise includes aligning growth strategy, brand development, and client experience to support organizational success. In her new role, she will help advance the firm's continued growth through strategic planning and enhanced operational systems. Nanowski also holds the Certified Professional Services Marketer (CPSM) designation through the Society for Marketing Professional Services.

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS

CAREER ACCELERATOR PROGRAM CELEBRATION

The School of Business kicked off the semester with the **CAP Celebration** on January 29th, bringing students together to recognize their progress and engagement in the Career Accelerator Program. The event highlighted the importance of career readiness while encouraging students to take full advantage of professional development opportunities offered throughout the semester.



MARKETING CAREER PANELS

Students attended Marketing Career Panels featuring sessions like “Behind the Mic: How Podcasting Builds Brands and Communities” and “Short Form Content.” These discussions highlighted current trends in digital marketing while giving students practical insights and real-world perspectives from industry professionals.



WOMEN IN BUSINESS CONFERENCE

Students attended the **Women in Business Conference** hosted by UConn, accompanied by Associate Dean **Dana Wilkie**, where they connected with industry leaders and fellow students. The conference focused on empowerment, leadership, and professional growth, leaving attendees inspired to pursue their career goals.



BUSINESS INSIGHTS

NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS

QUANTUM UP! CHALLENGE

A team of Central students earned first place in the statewide **Quantum UP! Challenge**, outperforming competitors from institutions including Yale University and University of Connecticut. Their winning project focused on addressing cybersecurity risks in the era of quantum computing through an interactive dashboard that transforms complex data into actionable insights. The team was recognized for its innovation and real-world application, earning a \$5,000 prize sponsored by **Travelers Insurance**.



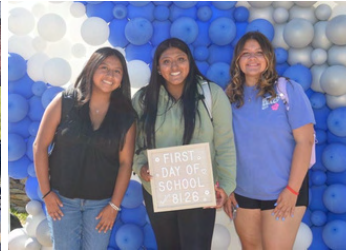
LLC END OF THE YEAR CELEBRATION

The Living Learning Communities (LLC) celebrated a successful year of student engagement, with the **Future Business Leaders LLC** receiving the **Program of the Year Award** for its “Shark Tank” event. The program welcomed more than 50 undergraduate students and featured seven business pitches presented to a panel of School of Business faculty judges, including **Dr. Jason Snyder**, **Dr. Khondoker Hussain**, and **Dr. Thomas Morgan**. Graduating senior Oscar Cotto earned the top prize for his business concept centered on creating a second billiards league in Connecticut with a unique membership model.

In addition to the program recognition, first-year student Sophia Zambrano Rios received the LLC Student Involvement Award, while Assistant Dean Cristina Conte was honored with the Academic Partner Excellence Award for her continued support and commitment to student engagement and success within the LLC community.



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