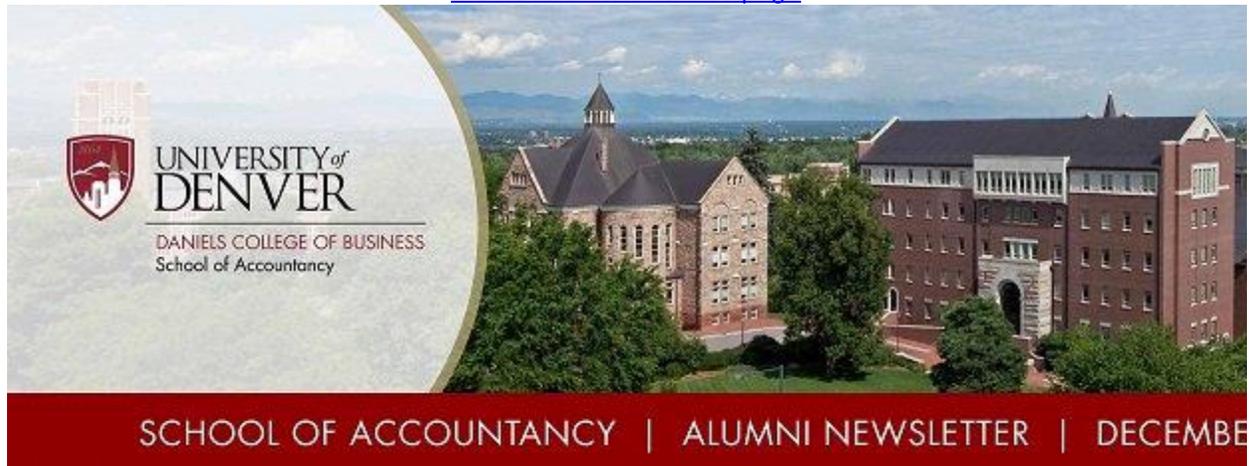


[View this email in a web page](#)



Director's Update

Associate Professor Ryan Casey, PhD, CPA, is teaching an International Accounting Topics course. The students completed pre-departure classes this fall and are now in London to further explore, from both academic and practical perspectives, issues experienced in a global economy. Travel with them by following their progress on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Pictured, at right, are SoA students who had the opportunity to meet with Deloitte professionals to discuss the complexities of international tax for foreign companies with U.S. subsidiaries.

Our alumni newsletter is getting a makeover. In 2019, the newsletter will have a different look, but still have all the updates, invites and announcements related to the SoA. We hope the new layout will continue to improve communications.

As we enter the holiday season, I am thankful for you—the dedicated SoA alumni community. I hope to connect with many of you at the winter events below. From the SoA family to yours, we wish you a happy and healthy holiday season.

Best,

Dr. Sharon Lassar, Director, School of Accountancy

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HAVE ANY EXCITING NEWS?

Promotions, marriages, new babies, major moves, job changes? Let us know! We'll share the news with your alumni family in the Alumni Notes section of our next newsletter. Contact kristen.dimig@du.edu with any updates.

UPDATE CONTACT INFO

If you have a new email address, recently moved, changed

Upcoming Events

Winter Alumni Mixer

Jan. 10, 2019 | 6 - 8 p.m.

Reiman Theater, Margery Reed Hall

Register today!

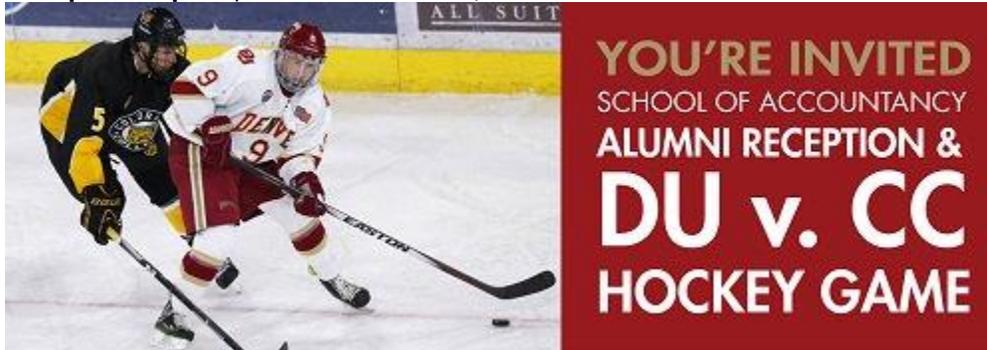
Reconnect with your classmates, beloved School of Accountancy faculty members, and our newest faculty members. Get to know your vast alumni network while enjoying presentations by featured faculty and alumni before mingling at a networking reception.



School of Accountancy Alumni Reception and DU v. CC Hockey Game

Saturday, Jan. 19, 2019

Reception: 6 p.m. | DU Ritchie Center, Studio D



Register for our January DU v. CC alumni hockey reception! Revisit your alma mater, catch up with other alums and cheer on the Pioneers as we take on our rivals. This event is expected to sell out, so [register today!](#) Tickets include a pre-game meal and drink ticket at the alumni reception and a seat on the double-attack side of the stadium.

employment, got married, or had any other information to update please do so [here](#). Our alumni are our greatest assets so please keep us updated!

ABOUT US

The School of Accountancy is one of the nation's oldest and most esteemed accounting programs combining state-of-the-art learning with the personal touch of a small, motivated community to help our students get ahead. Our mission as a part of a great private university dedicated to the public good, is to foster Enlightened Practice, Professional Achievement, Knowledge Creation and a Commitment to the Community. Our School's students, faculty and alumni work together to ensure that this mission is achieved by producing high quality, meaningful work that advances the field of accounting. As a result, our graduates are armed with the practical skills and knowledge needed to thrive in today's business world.





Calling All Mentors

We need your help! Apply today to be a mentor in the School of Accountancy's Mentorship Program. SoA mentors work one-on-one with current undergraduate accounting students throughout their first year in the program as they complete the Core, apply for jobs, and figure out what accounting, the CPA, and the "real world" is all about. Become an SoA alumni mentor and fill out your [application for the January program](#) today. Email [Kristen Dimig](#) for more information.

Check out daniels.du.edu/events for additional events.

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Get to Know Your Network

Meet Alumna Heidi O'Neil (BSAcc 1985)

Heidi O'Neil is a Colorado native, having graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in Denver. In addition to focusing on academics, she played flute in the marching band, and was a member of the girls swimming, field hockey and lacrosse teams. She explained, "skiing was also a family favorite—I think my father put a pair of 'boards' on my feet at about age five!"

A couple of pre-career highlights for O'Neil include spending a summer as an exchange student in Mexico City and traveling several times throughout England and Europe. "My parents moved to England while I was in college and my brothers and I were able to travel overseas a couple of times per year to visit them and go on family vacations." She especially enjoyed exploring Austria, where her paternal grandparents were born.



O'Neil spent her first year of college at Colorado College, intending on a pre-med degree. However, after taking the first-year general courses, she decided to try a different route. She took a break from college and worked in a bank as a teller for nine months, which pointed her in the direction of a business career. O'Neil was attracted to the University of Denver because her father

was a graduate of the esteemed DU law school, and she decided to apply to DU's business school. She began pursuing a general business degree and took her first two accounting courses with Dr. Jerome Kesselman, who advised her that a career in accounting was her true calling. "I took his advice and the rest is 'history' –I enjoyed all of my accounting courses at DU and figured that getting a job in accounting would be a definite step beyond the bank teller line."

While in the School of Accountancy, O'Neil appreciated the small class size as she was able to get to know the professors. "I really enjoyed working in teams with other students—the SoA fostered a collaborative teamwork concept, which was very innovative at the time." She was also an Honors Scholar and took several interesting and personally rewarding courses as a part of that program. "The SoA also helped me find a part-time job in accounting, working as an assistant bookkeeper for a local kitchen cabinet design and installation company while I worked towards my degree." O'Neil lived off-campus during her time at DU, but credits the SoA with providing many opportunities for students to get together and participate in various organizations and activities. "I particularly enjoyed attending the DU hockey games and socializing with my peers in the SoA as well as other programs."



Earning a degree from the SoA clearly set the trajectory for O'Neil's career. In her senior year, all of the Big 8 accounting firms were on campus recruiting DU accounting students. "I had several offers from these firms and credit DU's superior accounting program for preparing students to work for these high-performing firms. Thanks to the comprehensive accounting, auditing, tax and law courses I took at the SoA, I was able to sit for the CPA exam upon graduation and once I had the required audit hours with KPMG, I officially obtained my CPA license." O'Neil notes that when she applied for subsequent jobs, company

recruiters were always impressed with the fact that she had graduated from the SoA at DU.

O'Neil kicked off her career working for KPMG in their middle market division. "This division performed both audit and tax work in the same engagement for medium sized companies, so I was exposed to both disciplines as a staff and senior accountant." After several years at KPMG, she moved to Coopers and Lybrand as an accounting system implementation consultant, installing medium sized accounting software systems for various clients. After a few years of consulting, O'Neil decided that making the leap to industry was her next move. In the next 20 or so years, she has worked in positions such as accounting manager, director of accounting, director of SEC reporting and controller for several companies, predominantly in technical industries. These include: a manufacturer of pollution monitoring devices; a company that designed and installed production scheduling software for various private and publicly held corporations; a small boutique firm that produced computer animations,

which supported the litigation industry; a publicly held permanent and temporary employee placement firm; and finally, a company that provides web hosting services through its multiple data centers located across the U.S. “My tenure with these companies allowed me to gain invaluable business experience in accounting and finance, including SEC work as well as mergers and acquisitions.”

Most recently, O’Neil was honored to work for the City and County of Denver. For two years, she was the Director of Financial Audits, an appointed position by the Denver Auditor, Timothy O’Brien, CPA. “This amazing experience in the Auditor’s office, which included both financial and performance auditing, recently lead to her current position as the Director of Accounting for the Denver International Airport. “I would say that my degree from DU’s School of Accounting has supported my career as I have gone down many rewarding and interesting roads—everything from audit and tax in public accounting, to various roles in industry and now working in the government sector!”

Outside of work, O’Neil enjoys spending time with her husband and three sons. “We are a very active and athletic family and throughout the years I enjoyed attending many basketball, baseball and lacrosse games.” O’Neil’s husband, Steve, is a long-time educator with the Cherry Creek School District and is looking forward to retirement so that the pair can pursue long-awaited travel to some interesting bucket-list locations. “My oldest son, Sean, lives with us at home, as he has special needs. We have fantastic supports for him and he is very active with multiple pursuits including supported work, volunteering with various organizations such as the Food Bank and Goodwill, and engaging in community activities.” O’Neil’s middle son, Steven, just graduated from college and is working for a marketing firm on the east coast as a data analytics and economics specialist. Youngest son, Patrick, is currently pursuing his undergraduate and graduate degree in accounting and finance at the University of Colorado. “My hobbies include keeping track of ‘my three sons’, as well as running, biking and the occasional weight lifting or yoga class.”



O’Neil has been a long-time volunteer board member with the Colorado Society of CPAs - CPE Committee, as well as a committee member on the CPA’s in Industry Committee and most recently, the Governmental Forum. “I hope to continue contributing to the Colorado Society of CPAs as it is a very influential and important organization that has supported me throughout my career.” O’Neil is also a very active member of the SoA Alumni Engagement Council.

As for the future, O’Neil sees herself working for the Denver International Airport for

the next several years, and hopefully up to retirement. “I really like the team at DIA (or now we call it DEN) and I can see a lot of potential for me to make a meaningful contribution to the organization.” DEN is an enterprise fund of the City and County of Denver, so it feels very familiar for O’Neil as it truly operates as a business. “Plus, the view is wonderful and watching the various airplanes come and go is fascinating; not to mention being a part of the constant changes and challenges happening at DEN due to the increase in passenger traffic is inspiring.” Outside of work, O’Neil plans to continue to be active in running, biking and anything outside that Colorado offers. Of course, travel to see her sons and other family over the coming years is high on the must-do list too.

Job Opportunities and Professional Development

The Colorado State Land Board is seeking an Auditor I. For details, please see the [posting](#). Reference # 27001701165974

Chicago: Success Strategies for Young Professionals | Dec. 10

Join us for an interactive conversation on successful strategies for young professionals! Career mobility for young professionals is a personal journey, however there are numerous strategies for adding unique value and finding passion and purpose along the way. [Register now!](#)

Los Angeles Area Alumni Career Studio | Dec. 11

The Alumni Career Studio is open for business and we are traveling to the LA area! Join professional career advisors in an informal environment to receive feedback on your resume, cover letter or LinkedIn profile that you can immediately apply. Staff will be available as participants sit and work on their materials. They can also talk you through other career questions including job search, interview preparation or salary negotiation. [Register now!](#)

Please see du.edu/pioneercareers for additional job opportunities.

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Faculty Updates

John J. Gilbert Professor and Director, Sharon Lassar, PhD, CPA, was interviewed by [U.S. News](#) about the tax moves to make before 2019.

Associate Professor Lorenzo Patelli, PhD, was appointed interim Director for the Institute for Enterprise Ethics (IEE). The IEE is dedicated to the integration of ethical, socially responsible and environmentally sustainable leadership practices into the fabric of professional and corporate culture through collaborations among professionals, academic researchers and students. You can follow the IEE on Twitter @DUethics or on [Linkedin](#).

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On the Lighter Side - Humor from Hugh Grove

Rebuilding New Orleans after Katrina often caused residents to be challenged to prove home titles back hundreds of years. That is because of community history stretching back over two centuries during which houses were passed along through generations of family, sometimes making it quite difficult to establish a paper trail of ownership.

A New Orleans lawyer sought a FHA rebuilding loan for a client. He was told the loan would be granted upon submission of satisfactory proof of ownership of the parcel of property as it was being offered as collateral. It took the lawyer three months, but he was able to prove title to the property dating back to 1803. After sending the information to the FHA, he received the following reply.

(Reply from FHA):

"Upon review of your letter adjoining your client's loan application, we note that the request is supported by an Abstract of Title. While we compliment the able manner in which you have prepared and presented the application, we must point out that you have only cleared title to the proposed collateral property back to 1803. Before final approval can be accorded, it will be necessary to clear the title back to its origin."

And here is the great letter the lawyer responded with:

"Your letter regarding title in Case No.189156 has been received. I note that you wish to have proof of title extended further than the 206 years already covered in the present application. I was unaware that any educated person in this country, particularly those working with real property, would not know that Louisiana was purchased by the United States from France in 1803 , the year of origin of title identified in our application. For the edification of uninformed FHA bureaucrats, the title to the land prior to U.S. ownership was obtained from France, which had acquired it by Right of Conquest from Spain. The land came into the possession of Spain by Right of Discovery made in the year 1492 by a sea captain named Christopher Columbus, who had been granted the privilege of seeking a new route to India by the Spanish monarch, Queen Isabella. The good Queen Isabella, being a pious woman and almost as careful about titles as the FHA, took the precaution of securing the blessing of the Pope before she sold her jewels to finance Columbus 's expedition. Now the Pope, as I'm sure you may know, is the emissary of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and God, it is commonly accepted, created this world. Therefore, I believe it is safe to presume that God also made that part of the world called Louisiana. God, therefore, would be the owner of origin and His origins date back to before the beginning of time, the world as we know it, and the FHA. I hope you find God's original claim to be satisfactory. Now, may we have our damn reconstruction loan?"

The loan was immediately approved.

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