



SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY | ALUMNI NEWSLETTER | NOVEMBER 2018

Director's Update

Last month, the School of Accountancy hosted the eighth annual Town Hall Event: Debate for State Treasurer. Democrat Dave Young and Republican Brian Watson engaged in a political debate and a packed crowd of students, staff, faculty and community members gathered to hear their visions for



Colorado's financial future. Sharon Lassar, director of the School of Accountancy, kicked off the evening by introducing Sheila Weinberg (BS 1979), founder and CEO of Truth in Accounting. The School of Accountancy and Truth in Accounting co-sponsored the event while Denver Auditor Timothy O'Brien moderated the debate. The one-hour debate consisted of opening remarks, questions that were compiled by the School of Accountancy, questions from the audience and closing comments. Read more about the Town Hall [here](#).

School of Accountancy faculty and alumni were panelists for two sessions at the recent Faculty Symposium sponsored by the Colorado Society of CPAs. Faculty discussed how they incorporate cases throughout the curriculum and alumni talked about tools and techniques they are using in their public accounting roles. The symposium brings together faculty from across the state to share best practices and approaches to teaching and learning.

This newsletter features several opportunities to engage with the SoA alumni and student communities. Please see the announcements below and email kristen.dimig@du.edu with any questions.

Best,

Sharon Lassar

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

Dr. Sharon Lassar, Director, School of Accountancy

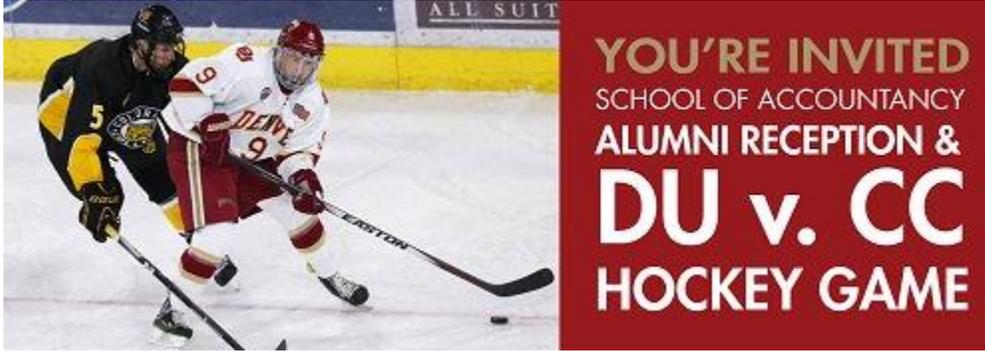
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Upcoming Events

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

Saturday, January 19, 2019

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



It's time to 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.



Daniels Snowball 2018 will feature alumni awards, a wine pull, a Kendra Scott jewelry pull and of course, lots of holiday cheer.

December 13, 2018 | 6 - 9 p.m. | The Space Gallery

\$50 per person | \$25 for recent graduates

[RSVP Today](#)

For more information, please contact advancement.events@du.edu.

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.



Save the Date: Winter Alumni Mixer January 10, 2019 | 6 - 8 p.m.

Reiman Theater, Margery Reed Hall

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. Keep an eye out for more details and registration information in the coming months

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

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Get to Know Your Network

Meet Alumnus Zachary Gasper (MAcc 2016)

The first half of Zach Gasper's life was spent in upstate New York. Shortly before he began high school, his family moved to North Carolina for better business opportunities and better weather. Gasper received his undergraduate accounting degree at Appalachian State University, nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains. When he realized a graduate degree is quasi-required for opportunities as a CPA, he began looking for universities outside of his comfort zone. After exhaustive research, he

settled on the University of Denver, applied, was accepted and flew out without ever having visited. He has been living in the Denver area since September 2015.



Gasper is a very active big brother to two younger sisters who would argue that their brother is a candidate for best-ever. “It is challenging to live far away from family and friends, so I spend many of my vacations visiting home. That never feels like a sacrifice to me though because I get to see many people I love and because Denver is such a convenient location for awesome adventures that don’t require a ‘vacation’.”

During high school, Gasper’s dad handed him a list of 10 college majors with the highest job placement rates and said, “If you pick from one of these majors, I’ll help pay for your college. Otherwise, you can pay on your own or join the military, but you can’t stay home.” The business fields were most appealing to Gasper and his online research indicated that accounting was a field you simply can’t teach yourself. “Without further ado, I began applying to colleges with accounting as my declared major.”

“It wasn’t until I first told this story many years later that I realized how beneficial my dad’s pragmatic approach was. Though I was already quite responsible, it forced me to be accountable (pun intended), disciplined, and self-sufficient. I never moved back in with my parents nor called home asking for money (except for when I ran out of lunch money during finals week of my first freshman semester...).” Gasper’s dad may have intended for these things, but it also achieved its more obvious goal—it set his son up with a highly-sought-after skill and basically guaranteed a job for life.

Gasper recalls that one of his favorite things about the School of Accountancy was being on a first-name basis with the professors. “It was very enjoyable having class with knowledgeable teachers and equally enjoyable to stop by their offices whether to ask a question or just to chat. The professors were also active in recruiting, networking, and other fun events.” The tight-knit nature of the School of Accountancy made it easy for Gasper to make friends and stay in touch. “To this day, most of the people I spend time with are friends made while at grad school. Having the mountains so close during ski season was an excellent motivator to work from sun-up to sun-down Monday through Thursday so that we could hit the slopes Friday, Saturday and Sunday!”



When asked how the School of Accountancy has benefited his career, Gasper points to three major advantages. First, “there was a strong push for students to obtain the Certified Public Accountant license prior to beginning full-time employment.” Gasper explains that students had a friendly competitiveness that pushed each other to succeed. “Other programs do not necessarily emphasize the importance of this license and how failure to obtain it will impede the ability to progress further within the public accounting industry.” Second, “the University of Denver is well-recognized on a national level, as is the superior education of the School of Accountancy.” Because of this, Gasper explains that not just public accounting firms, but Fortune 500 and other top-tier companies—whether based in Denver, Colorado, nationally, or internationally—recruit heavily. “You would basically have to try not to get a job!” Third is the phenomenal network. “The School of Accountancy and the Daniels College of Business attracts an

above-average caliber of students.” Gasper saw a great benefit to being among self-motivated and ambitious peers. “Furthermore, it is easy to keep in touch because of regular alumni gatherings and other interesting and exciting sports, events, and seminars held on-campus.”

When asked about career path, Gasper explains that his time spent in public accounting was a demanding yet fascinating line of work. “The projects-based nature exposes you to a great variety of roles and opportunities.” To him, this was rewarding because, “even as I honed my skill sets in various areas, no two jobs were identical.” He enjoyed the fast-paced nature of the work and the large degree of independence he was granted in accomplishing it. As an intern, Gasper worked on a variety of tax accounting issues, and while employed full-time, he performed IT and business process audits, corporate restructuring, and audits of government contracts, among many other tasks. “What other job can you experience so much variety in a cumulative two and a half years? Not to mention all the companies and cities I traveled to...”

Gasper recently became a financial representative with Thrivent Financial. Though his departure from public accounting occurred approximately two years earlier than anticipated, he had long foreseen himself eventually heading into a financial advisor role. In fact, he would joke with his friends, “As your future financial advisor...” followed by a suggestion totally unrelated to finances. “This opportunity called to me through Divine Intervention (ask me about it!) and was accepted after much prayerful consideration.” The goals of Thrivent to help its members “be wise with money” and “live generously” resonated with Gasper and he is eager to be a resource to help people achieve their financial goals.

Since moving to Denver, Gasper has had the opportunity to spend time in the mountains. In 2015, Arapahoe Basin held opening day on Halloween. "I had been a terrible snowboarder previously and never set foot on skis before. I wondered what I was getting myself into trying to learn how to ski on a single, skied-out run jammed-packed with avid skiers wearing crazy costumes. That was the only day of 'practice' my friends allowed me; after that, I had to keep up—and I did." Skiing has become Gasper's quintessential winter activity.

Hiking is Gasper's other primary motivator for getting up to the mountains. He has completed most of the "entry-level" fourteeners; but as of late, "I prefer more scenic hiking trails cutting through or alongside the mountains rather than standing on top of them. Another very special memory was just recently made in Rocky Mountain National Park—my girlfriend and I got engaged!"

When he's not outside or when the weather is disagreeable, Gasper enjoys reading. Generally, he reads two books concurrently—one as "play" and one as "work." "I also closely follow politics and socioeconomic events. There certainly has been no shortage of drama in the last few years!"



Alumni Notes



Christine Stopps (BSAcc 1984), along with longtime SoA friends and fellow classmates took a wonderful trip to France this summer with their husbands. Pictured, at left, is Paul Parker, **Andrea Hagan (BSAcc 1985)**, Stu Hengsteler, **Shelly Hengsteler (BS 1984)**, **Wendy Hause (BSAcc 1984)**, Jerre Hause, **Christine Stopps** and **Brian Stopps (BSBA 1984)**. Christine Stopps has also announced her retirement as CFO of Yes! Communities effective at the end of this year.

She states, "I am very excited to reach this culmination of my career and take some time for fun. My new title for the winter will be 'Chief Mid-Week Skier'!"

Thanks to **Lauren Beaver (BSBA 2017)**, **Seth Sauer (BSBA, BSAcc, MAcc 2016)** and **Gage Crispe (BSAcc, MAcc 2016)**, pictured, at right, who participated in the alumni panel at the recent COCPA faculty symposium. Panelists discussed the tools and techniques they are using in their public accounting roles.



Job Opportunities and Professional Development

Will It Fly? Explore Your Business Idea

You've got a great business idea, or maybe several ideas...but can one of them become a great business? Come to this fun, engaging workshop and learn how to test your business ideas using a simple, ten-step evaluation process. By the end of the class, you'll be better able to predict whether your business will succeed, how long it will take to reach break-even, how much you'll be able to pay yourself, and how you can improve your overall chances for success!

November 7 | 6:30 – 8 p.m. | Leo Block Alumni Center | [Registration required](#)

Yes! Communities is currently seeking a Vice-President of Accounting in Denver, CO. For more information please see the [posting](#) and contact Morez Gutierrez morez.gutierrez@yescommunities.com with inquiries.

RSM is seeking to fill three audit positions for experienced professionals in the Denver, CO office. Please contact Lauren White lauren.white@rsmus.com with inquiries.

- (1) [Audit Senior Associate](#)
- (2) [Experienced Audit Associate](#)
- (3) [Technical Accounting Consulting \(TAC\) Manager](#)

Royal Bookkeeping & Accounting Services is seeking a CPA. Please see the [job posting](#) for additional information.

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

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Faculty Updates

Associate Professor Lorenzo Patelli, PhD, Assistant Professor Adam Greiner, PhD, CPA, Assistant Professor of the Practice Suzette Loving, CPA, CISA and Assistant Professor of the Practice Tom Hall, CPA, CFA gave a presentation on "using Cases in the Classroom" at the COCPA faculty symposium that was held last month at University of Colorado-Denver. Patelli also attended the Accounting, Behavior and Organizations conference in Phoenix October 12-13, 2018.

Associate Professor Ryan Casey, PhD, CPA attended the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) conference on auditing and capital markets in Washington D.C. October 4-5, 2018.

Professor Emeritus James Sorensen, PhD, CPA, CGMA was presented with the AAA 2018 Teaching, Learning and Curriculum (TLC) Outstanding Research in Accounting Education award recognizing excellence in accounting education research, sponsored by the EY Foundation. The article recognized by the TLC was: Karen V. Pincus, David E. Stout, James E. Sorensen, Kevin D. Stock, Raef A.

Lawson, "Forces for Change in Higher Education and Implication for the Accounting Academy. *Journal of Accounting Education* 40 (1017) 1-18.

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On the Lighter Side - Humor from Hugh Grove

Warren Buffet Quotes

It's better to hang out with people better than you. Pick out associates whose behavior is better than yours and you'll drift in that direction.

In the business world, the rearview mirror is always clearer than the windshield.

Price is what you pay. Value is what you get.

The big question about how people behave is whether they've got an Inner Scorecard or an Outer Scorecard. It helps if you can be satisfied with an Inner Scorecard.

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