

March – April 2005

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Seidman College of Business

Undergraduate Student Services Newsletter • DeVos Center, 1st floor
616-331-7500 • go2gvbiz@gvsu.edu

*A newsletter for undergraduate
students of business.*

• H. James Williams, Dean •
• John Reifel, Interim Associate Dean • Leigh Brownley, Student Services Coordinator •
• Alexandra Schmid, Special Programs Coordinator •

New Seidman Real Estate Group Forming

With interest rates lower than they have been in years, real estate is becoming increasingly popular amongst investors: so popular that a couple of Seidman students have filed to form the new Seidman Real Estate Group. A decision on their request is expected from Student Life in March. Although the group's focus is providing investment information, it also hopes to offer networking opportunities for students interested in real estate related careers.



**Terry Westbrook, local Realtor, talks about evaluating
real estate investments.**

President and co-founder Brad Haveman says, "We have been extremely happy with the number of students who have shown an interest in the organization.

Over the past five weeks, the group has been growing exponentially, and we are starting to develop a solid base of members." The Seidman Real Estate Group has grown from two members to having almost 30 people attend their last general assembly meeting.

Activities for the group will include guest speakers from various real estate disciplines, site tours to ongoing and past developments, and discussion of market trends. The co-founder, Jack Dekker says, "We would eventually like to get a website up and running, which would post active members' resumes, list our calendar of events, and keep members informed on what we are doing."

The students recently hosted their first speaker, Terry Westbrook, a local Five Star Real Estate agent and former Grand Rapids Association of Realtors president with over 30 years experience in the real estate industry. He spoke about real estate investment decisions and staying competitive in the industry using technology.

The Seidman Real Estate Group meets on Thursday nights from 6:00-7:00. The room changes from week-to-week. To be added to the mailing list, please email SeidmanREG@gmail.com.

Fearlessly Innovative

For the local chapter of Seidman's Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization (CEO), the opportunities to apply "book smarts" to "street smart" projects seem to never end. Trevor Pawl, CEO's president says, "The skills CEO teaches extend far beyond just one area of interest, thereby offering a more unique plethora of connections and opportunities for Grand Valley's entire student body to choose from." Indeed, currently CEO has two campus-wide projects in which every Grand Valley student has the chance to be involved.

The most recent project is a twist on the conventional tour book. This idea was adopted from a conference at Columbia University that ten members, sponsored by CEO, attended in New York City. The conference was an invaluable experience where the members had the opportunity to network with ten other universities, including Harvard, Cornell, Princeton, Johns Hopkins, and Barnard. What makes CEO's tour book different is that it will only include businesses with a story; chain businesses will not be reported on at all. The driving force behind the tour book is CEO's passion to display all of what Grand Rapids and Southwest Michigan have to offer. This passion that the group displays is highly contagious; just ask Brandon or Brent Reame, the group's marketing directors. The twin brothers are often stopped by other students looking for more information on getting involved in one of the CEO projects.

"STRIVING TO INGRAIN A FEARLESSLY INNOVATIVE MINDSET INTO EVERY GRAND VALLEY STUDENT ASPIRING TO START AND GROW A BUSINESS"

- CEO MISSION STATEMENT



The second project is the joint venture between Career Services and CEO to help boost the current Job Shadow program for all Grand Valley students. Spencer Covey, the project's leader, says, "This project is one that all students will soon know and love, since it will mean students will have more reinforcement about the major they've chosen." Currently Grand Valley's IT

department is building a website that will be capable of handling the 5,000 GVSU alumni that have shown interest in a Job Shadow program. The Job Shadow website is not the only web based development for CEO. Soon they will have their own website where, among other things, members can interact via a message board to keep up with the accomplishments made by other team members.

The website is being designed by joshuaeric.com, a current CEO member's website design business, owned by Josh Odmark. Initially, Josh started his business to earn extra money while in high school, but it didn't take long before Josh realized the demand for web site design. He then conducted further research and fine-tuned his skills. Thus joshuaeric.com, a full service web design company, was born. This is not a typical full time college student's story, however, in CEO, stories like this are abundant. In the current membership of CEO, there are over ten members who have started their own business. "It is an awesome club because the newer members can learn real world lessons from the older, more seasoned members," explains Brent Hehl, a current Seidman freshman.

For more information on getting involved with CEO, regardless of your current major, contact them via email at CEO@student.gvsu.edu or attend a weekly meeting on Monday evenings at 9pm in 107D DeVos.

The Seidman College of Business newsletter is published by the business school bi-monthly during the academic year and once each summer. It is compiled by Seidman Undergraduate Student Services, 101B DeVos Center. Telephone: 616-331-7500. Fax: 616-331-7391.

Giving Back: SHRM

By Cori Blake, SHRM

All Seidman College of Business student organizations pride themselves on giving back to the community. This year, following the footsteps of IPO and CEO, the Society for Human Resource Management is teaming up with Junior Achievement (JA) and volunteering in local classrooms.

This program is known worldwide, and not only looks good on a resume, but is also fun and very rewarding. Working with Pat Wolf, JA's volunteer coordinator, each college volunteer goes to a one-time 3-hour training session and then is assigned to an elementary classroom where he or she teaches five 45-minute sessions.

Junior Achievement provides everything for the volunteer, including the themed lesson plans. Depending on the grade, the lessons can vary from learning how to be an individual in a community to how to place your business in an area with appropriate resources.

SHRM has been volunteering at Sherwood Elementary in Grand Rapids in first, third, fourth,

and fifth grades. Everyone that has been involved agrees that it is a great activity for any college student to be involved in. The 45-minute sessions are flexible, and the times and dates are determined conveniently between the classroom teacher and the volunteer.

Cori Blake, one of the volunteers this year, states, "It is so much fun to go back and give something of importance to these kids. With all of the budget cuts and problems going on in the schools, now is the time that we need to step up and help out." Six members from SHRM have been involved this semester: Cori Blake, Sarah Knaffle, Mike Johnson, Justin Hardy, Nicole Hess, and Breanne Caldwell. The organization plans to make this a regular activity each semester.

Of course you don't have to be a part of an organization to volunteer. Junior Achievement has a website with all the information you need to get started. Visit westmichigan.ja.org or e-mail Pat Wolf at pwolf@iserv.net.

Giving Back: Beta Alpha Psi By Matthew Brennan, Beta Alpha Psi

VITA – Volunteer Income Tax Assistance is a program put on by Beta Alpha Psi every year. VITA is a free service to low income individuals and families to get their tax returns prepared and filed. VITA deals with clients with income of less than \$35,000.

One specialty of VITA is that we focus on credits such as the Earned Income Credit (EIC) and the Home Heating Credit that our clients would qualify for, but would otherwise go unclaimed. Our VITA program also caters to Spanish speaking individuals, with many volunteers who are fluent in the language.

In addition to Beta Alpha Psi members participating in VITA, the program is also open to all Grand Valley students, as well as students from other area universities who may not have a VITA program. Our VITA program has done a great deal for those who use our service. In 2003, we prepared about 220 returns and refunded over \$200,000 to our clients. Much of these refunds would go unclaimed if not for the service we provide for our clients. In addition to our student volunteers, many local professionals from area CPA firms join us and serve as site leaders. They also oversee the tax preparation and are there to answer any questions.



Reception Planned for Graduating Business Students

Commencement is a highlight in the lives of many students who have dedicated years of hard work and sacrifice to earning their college degree. The Seidman College of Business is pleased to **invite all graduating business students to a special reception** immediately following the commencement ceremony on **April 30, 2005**. The reception is an opportunity for Seidman College of Business graduates to celebrate their accomplishments with fellow Seidman graduates, faculty, and staff.

In what has become a Seidman tradition, the reception will be held on the top floor of The BOB, located directly across from the Van Andel Arena, where commencement is held. Graduates are welcome to bring their commencement guests to the reception.

Coordinator's Corner: Non-Business Hours



Rumor: I can subtract the 3-credits for the upper-level economics course I take for my cognate from the non-business hours showing on my degree progress report. **Rumor buster:** It has already been subtracted from the total!

Each student needs 60 non-business credits to earn their business degree. The majority of these credits are earned through the general education program and the cognate courses. They include any course outside of the Seidman College of Business (so any course that doesn't start with ACC, BUS, ECO, FIN, MGT, or MKT). Wait a minute!! What about those ECO cognate courses? The ECO courses taken for the 200 level cognate requirements are non-business, and are counted that way. Similarly, the ECO course taken to fulfill the upper-division (300/400 level) economics cognate requirement is also non-business. Any ECO courses taken over and above these ARE counted as business courses.

The reason that the upper-division ECO cognate course has already been subtracted from the non-business requirements is that the computer can only count a course in one place. It used to be that when students took their first 300/400 level ECO course, it was automatically counted in the cognate, but it wasn't subtracted from the non-business hours. That meant that students were taking one more course than they really needed. As much as we want to make sure you fulfill your graduation requirements, we also don't want you taking any unnecessary courses. Rather than the non-business hours counting down from 60, the system is set to count down from 57. That means that before you even decided to be a business student, the credits for your upper-division economics cognate course were subtracted from your non-business hours.

Remember it this way: you need to take the number of credits shown as remaining for the non-business requirement. If you have finished all of your general education and other non-business courses, and still have non-business hours remaining, then congratulations! That means that you did a great job picking courses that fulfill more than one requirement. Rather than taking just any old class, be sure to speak to a faculty mentor about what courses might enhance your career goals.

If you have any questions about the non-business hour requirement, or want to talk about your academic progress in general, please feel free to call the Seidman Undergraduate Student Services office (616-331-7500) to set an appointment with one of the Seidman academic advisors.
