

Cox *today*

SMU COX SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

SUMMER 2025



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The Legacy of Dean Matthew B. Myers

Reflecting on the remarkable achievements of his eight-year tenure.

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DEAN MYERS' PARTING
WORDS TO COX
GRADUATES

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A Message From New Dean Todd Milbourn

On June 1, the first day of SMU's 2025–26 fiscal year, corporate finance expert Todd Milbourn, formerly of Washington University's Olin Business School in St. Louis, officially became the 10th dean of the Cox School of Business. In addition to his deanship, he holds the Tolleson Chair in Business Leadership and the Andrew H. Chen Endowed Chair in Financial Investments. Dean Milbourn is spending his summer working toward the future of his new academic home. He shares this message.

FIRST THINGS FIRST. It is my deepest honor to have been selected to lead the Cox School. I am grateful to SMU President Jay Hartzell, University leadership and you for trusting in me.

Passion permeates SMU and the Cox community. I saw it and felt it when I first visited the campus in January as a candidate for the dean's position. Now that I'm part of SMU Cox, I've found that passion here is infectious—and with good reason.

This is a special moment for the University and the Cox School. With a new president, provost and a slate of new leaders across campus working with longtime leaders and the people of the Cox community, we have a unique opportunity to build upon past successes to create new ones. Our location in the economic powerhouse that is Dallas—the epicenter of Texas' economic dynamism and one of the fastest-growing corporate hubs in the world—puts us and our students at a great advantage. The uniqueness of our school and our city positions us in ways few schools elsewhere can replicate.

I've had the pleasure of meeting with people from all parts of the University and the Cox community. All

are enthusiastic about the future of the Cox School, with lofty expectations. My goal is for all of us to work together to put Cox at the center of anything and everything that is stimulating and driving the economic engine and entrepreneurial ecosystem of Dallas and beyond. To that end, I have spent part of the summer collaborating with stakeholders across the spectrum of the Cox community to begin developing a five-year strategic plan that will guide the pace and trajectory of

our path. By the publication of the next *Coxtoday*, we'll have more to share.

In the meantime, I invite you to read this issue, which focuses on the achievements of my predecessor, Matt Myers, currently on sabbatical with plans to return to the Cox faculty in Fall 2026. We owe him a debt of thanks for the consequential eight years he devoted to leading SMU Cox, and I am particularly thankful for his support through my transition.

I hope to meet you on the Boulevard this fall

or at one of the many events the Cox School will host through the year. Let's work together to build Mustang Momentum.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Todd Milbourn".

TODD MILBOURN

Dean & Tolleson Chair of Business Leadership
Andrew H. Chen Endowed Chair in Financial Investments

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Matthew Myers challenges graduates to use their business positions for good in his final commencement speech as dean.



DEAN
Todd Milbourn

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Program News

Updates and events from the Cox School's degrees and programs.

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Undergraduate News



Cox Undergraduate Real Estate Club members (L–R) Carl Firch (B.B.A. '26), Sean Meares (B.B.A. '25), Daryl Eng (B.B.A. '25), Amaré Leslie (B.B.A. '26), Braden Schlimme (B.B.A. '25) and Lexie Howell (B.B.A. '26) won second place in the Cornell International Real Estate Case Competition in New York.

Real Estate Students Compete Across the U.S.

Students in the Cox Undergraduate Real Estate Club team competed in one of the world's premier case competitions for undergraduate students. The Cox team was among 20 elite teams from universities across the United States, Canada, Asia and Australia at the Cornell International Real Estate Case Competition in New York. Cox Real Estate Club members presented an investment analysis to a judging panel of real estate industry leaders, showcasing skills in analyzing market trends, financial projections and investment risks in a fast-paced, high-stakes environment.

Another B.B.A. student team represented Cox at the Villanova Mulroy Real Estate Challenge. A Cox graduate student team competed against 15 elite teams in the invitation-only UNC Kenan-Flager Real Estate Development Challenge, providing hands-on experience in real estate development, financial analysis, feasibility and design, as well as real-time feedback from industry leaders.



Undergrads Win Seed Money at Big iDeas

Josh Baier, B.B.A. '24 (left), **Justus Woods**, B.B.A. '25 and **Abbie Ellermeier**, B.B.A. '25, creators of TIMIO News, a news app that uses AI to spot bias and find opposing viewpoints, were among the five winning teams awarded seed money prizes in the Big iDeas Business Plan Competition. Held in February by the SMU Office of Engaged Learning, undergraduate teams pitched their business plans to Texas-based tech sector executives. The team was also selected to pitch the TIMIO News app at the ACC InVenture Prize Competition in April. They joined 15 teams of undergraduate entrepreneurs from Atlantic Coast Conference universities and presented in front of a live audience to a panel of judges. The team is now part of the inaugural Spears Launch Accelerator, a 12-week program designed to accelerate student- and alumni-led startup growth.

B.B.A. Marketing Students Shine

Six outstanding Class of '25 undergraduates were honored at the annual B.B.A. Marketing Awards during an April ceremony hosted by Cox Marketing Department Chair Ed Fox and marketing faculty. The JCPenney Center for Retail Excellence sponsors the awards, which are determined by a committee of marketing faculty members. Guest speaker Sana Khan, FT MBA '24, senior product management associate at JPMorganChase, shared advice and insights from her career journey.



Cox marketing students (L-R) Mary Hegi, Brynne Kelley, Avery Zolfaghari, Madeline McGrew, Julia Niccoli and Jordan Lindquist were recognized for outstanding performance by the JCPenney Center for Retail Excellence.



B.B.A. Students Study Southwest Airlines' Customer Experience

Undergraduates in Professor of Practice Marci Armstrong's customer engagement and experience course traveled to Denver in March as part of a class project sponsored by Southwest Airlines. Denver International Airport, the airline's busiest

hub with more than 250 daily flights, provided all 16 students with an insider's view of everything that must go right for customers to have an exceptional end-to-end travel experience. Students observed key travel experience touchpoints, including personal

airport and flight experiences, operations from the tarmac, discussions with dispatchers, and tours of the airport's 1.3-mile-long underground baggage transfer system. The insights and data they gathered informed their final presentations.



BROOKE LEVY



JUDE LUGO

Poets&Quants' Best and Brightest B.B.A.s

Brooke Levy, B.B.A. '25 and **Jude Lugo**, B.B.A. '25 are among the nation's "100 Best & Brightest Undergraduate Business Majors of 2025" announced in April by *Poets&Quants* for Undergrads.

A Don Jackson Fellow and COO of the Boulevard Investment Group, Levy also served as a junior board member of ibRecruit—a nonprofit that supports undergraduate women preparing for investment banking careers—and as a Cox B.B.A. Admissions office ambassador. She completed three internships at firms in Dallas and New York while at Cox and accepted a post-graduation position as an investment banking analyst at Centerview Partners in New York.

Lugo, who was elected as an SMU Student Senator, was appointed to be the 2024–25 student member of the SMU Board of Trustees. He amassed many student accolades, including winning the Texas Business Hall of Fame Robert Dedman Future Business Legend Award, taking first-place in the Cox Graduate Entrepreneurship Club Business Accelerator Program and being a seven-time winner of the SMU Big iDeas Pitch Contest for his technology startup LectureLogger. In 2023, *Poets&Quants* named LectureLogger among the country's "Most Disruptive Undergraduate Business School Startups." Post-graduation, Lugo plans to explore his entrepreneurial calling or pursue corporate job offers.

Professor Bill Maxwell elicits career advice and finance industry wisdom from Goldman Sachs President John Waldron (right).



Goldman Sachs President Visits Alts Students

Students in the Cox School Alternative Asset Management (Alts) program gleaned in-person wisdom from Goldman Sachs President and COO John Waldron in February, when about 130 undergraduate and graduate students attended a fireside chat moderated by Professor Bill Maxwell, the Mary Jo Vaughn Rauscher Chair in Financial Investments and the academic director of the EnCap Investments & LCM

Group Alternative Asset Management Center. Waldron appreciated the students' "infectious energy" and noted their curiosity, a trait he views as critical. "It's important to be observant and absorb everything, especially at the start of your career," he said. "Learning is a lifelong endeavor."



Undergrads Honor Adjunct Professor

Lilliana Hickman-Riggs, Cox adjunct professor of accounting, received the HOPE Undergraduate Professor of the Year Award "for making learning a transformative experience where students feel supported and inspired to reach their full potential." The Honoring Our Professors' Excellence (HOPE) awards—supported by SMU Student Affairs Residence Life & Student Housing—honor faculty members who have been nominated by students for their above-and-beyond impact in and out of the classroom. *(Maribeth Kuenzi received the HOPE Graduate Professor Award. Read more on page 11.)*

Beta Gamma Sigma Honors Top Students

SMU Cox welcomed 116 undergraduate and graduate inductees into the Class of 2025 Beta Gamma Sigma international business society at an April luncheon. These high achievers represent the top 20% of graduate students and the top 10% of undergraduate students. Induction into the prestigious honor society for AACSB-accredited schools—the top 5% of business programs around the world—is the highest national honor a business student can achieve.



2025 Cox School Beta Gamma Sigma inductees



2025 Cox School Alpha Iota Delta inductees

ITOM Inducts Top Students Into Alpha Iota Delta

The Information Technology and Operations Management (ITOM) department honored its top-performing students during an annual awards luncheon in April. Forty-five undergraduate and graduate students and one faculty member—Assistant Professor Savannah Tang—were inducted into Alpha Iota Delta. The international scholastic honor society recognizes academic achievement in the fields of decision sciences and information systems. Eight undergraduates and eight graduate students who achieved academic distinction in their ITOM courses this year were also recognized at the luncheon.

Graduate News



Poets&Quants' Best and Brightest MBAs

Jack Reagor, FT MBA '25, has been selected by *Poets&Quants* as one of the “100 Best and Brightest MBAs: Class of 2025,” which honors top Full-Time MBA graduates from U.S. business schools. Reagor was one of two nominees submitted by Cox.

Before being accepted into the Cox FT MBA program, Reagor worked as a technical program manager at Amazon.

Post-MBA, he joined the global management consulting firm Kearney as an associate. In the first semester of his two-year program, the Cox Distinguished Scholar joined MBA colleagues to compete in the National Energy Finance Challenge, hosted by the University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business. Despite limited finance backgrounds, Reagor and his teammates bested 16 teams from the country's top MBA programs to win first place.

“At the time, I was actively recruiting for strategy consulting roles,” Reagor said. “I felt this competition mirrored the challenges of a real consulting engagement—rapidly understanding an unfamiliar industry, conducting meaningful analysis and delivering actionable insights. The experience not only reaffirmed my interest in consulting but also helped prepare me for my summer internship with Kearney.”



Graduate Students Honor Associate Professor

Associate Professor in Management, Strategy, and Entrepreneurship **Maribeth Kuenzi**, the Merriman Family Foundation Endowed Professor in Economic Growth and Leadership Development, received the HOPE Graduate Professor of the Year Award this spring. The Honoring Our Professors' Excellence (HOPE) awards—supported by SMU Student Affairs Residence Life & Student Housing—honor faculty members who have been nominated by students for their above-and-beyond impact in and out of the classroom. Kuenzi was recognized for fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that promotes genuine understanding and application. (*Liliana Hickman-Riggs received the HOPE Undergraduate Professor Award. Read more on page 9.*)

War Games Test Students' Business Skills

MBA students from Cox and IPADE Business School faced off in a thrilling “war games” exercise in Mexico City in January. Eighteen Cox MBA students teamed up with 18 IPADE students, forming six mixed teams to compete for control of the Mexican banking sector. The teams were challenged to gather competitive intelligence and develop strategies to navigate market shifts and predict competitor actions. These strategies were then tested in dynamic, high-pressure scenarios, ultimately determining which team could outsmart the competition and rise to the top.



➔ Dallas Federal Reserve Bank Exec Visits Cox

Robert Triplett, III, first vice president and chief operating officer of the Dallas Federal Reserve Bank, visited with a select group of graduate students from the Cox Graduate Energy Club and the Cox Graduate Finance Association at the invitation of Tamara Paz Alborta, MBA '26. Alborta worked with Evan Hudgins, MBA '25, president of the Cox Graduate Finance Association, and Brent Farley, MBA '25, president of the SMU Graduate Energy Club, to plan the event and select the venue. “My key takeaway was the size and complexity of the Fed,” Hudgins said. “I think we are sometimes fixated on monetary policy and forget the other roles the organization plays and the extent of its reach.”



MBA Students Win NTT Data Case Competition

For the third consecutive year, information technology firm NTT Data challenged students in Clinical Professor of Marketing Radhika Zaveri's new product development class with a case study competition. The company shared real-world use cases, benefits and examples of how AI is transforming the development process of building new products.

Louis Baresh (MBA '24, second from right); Alex Canto (MBA '25, fourth from right); Beth Clem (MBA '25, third from right); and Travis Reincke (MBA '25, fourth from left) made up the winning team who received an exclusive visit to NTT Data's innovation lab.

Graduate Marketing Club Hosts Target Leaders

Target Corporation leadership team members met with the Cox Graduate Marketing Club at the Miller Business Quadrangle in February. The discussions focused on the evolving role of retail brands and the services and experiences they provide for consumers. To organize the visit, SMU alumna Victoria Hillman, B.A. '04, MBA '10, portfolio management director for the retail giant, worked with the Graduate Marketing Club student leadership team; the club's faculty advisor, Ed Fox; Megan Murphy, director of graduate school enrollment; and Senior Director of Marketing Jessica Jones, a former colleague of Hillman's.



Cultural Festival Celebrates Cox School's Global Community

Graduate students, faculty and staff celebrated the cuisines and traditions of the regions they call home at the Cox Cultural Festival in January. The promise of sampling foods from around the world drew about 300 participants to the annual gathering at the Collins Center atrium. Fourteen booths and engaging activities showcased everything from African dance to Texas barbecue.



The Cultural Festival encourages guests to get on the dance floor.



Students, faculty and staff dress to represent their countries of origin.

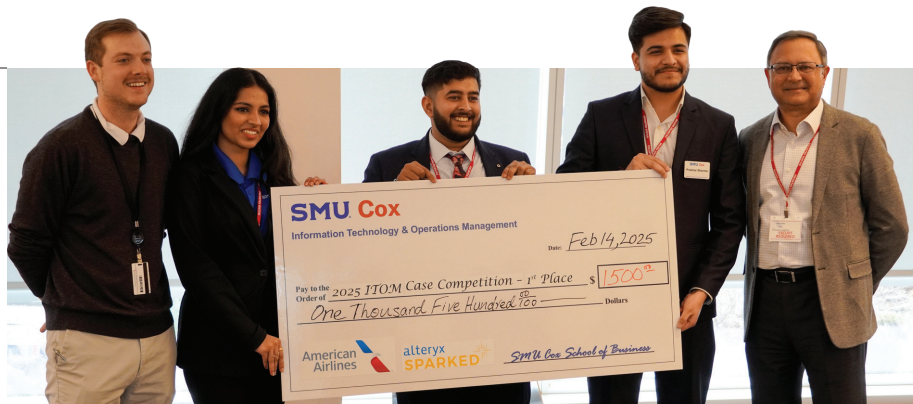


Kwanghyun Kim, MBA '26 and Taezja Phelan, MBA/JD '27 won first place in the Unbridled Venture Project for Popkle personalized skincare.

Unbridled Venture Project Announces Winners

In February, Cox Full-Time MBA students gathered for the culmination of the Unbridled Venture Project, a multimodule course simulating the entrepreneurial journey. Students create a business plan and develop prototypes before presenting their work to a panel of experienced entrepreneurs and venture capitalists to vie for seed money.

The judges included Emily Choi, Cox professor of practice and executive director of the Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship; Bhavna Kumar, head of the Startup Accelerator at the William S. Spears Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership; Cecilia Rios Murrieta, co-founder and CEO of JAS Drinks; Kyle Waldrep, director of product management at JLL Technologies; and Demetrius Washington, senior installation manager at Jack Henry & Associates and president of the National Black MBA Association – DFW Chapter.



M.S.B.A.s Dominate ITOM Case Competition

The 2025 ITOM Case Competition, sponsored by American Airlines and Alteryx SparkED, hosted 19 teams in an annual showcase of participants' skills in solving complex, real-world business problems. At a kick-off event in February, the American Airlines finance team lead presented a business case focusing on supply chain optimization to improve the company's repair order process. Cox graduate student

Nick Rosen, team lead finance transformation, American Airlines, with 2025 ITOM Case Competition first-place winners (L-R) Shreya Tiwari, M.S.B.A. '25; Ishaan Chaturvedi, M.S.B.A. '25; Prakhar Sharma, M.S.B.A. '25; and Cox Professor Amit Basu, Carr P. Collins Chair in Management Information Sciences and ITOM department chair.

teams analyzed four years of actual company data and developed proposals. One week later, six finalist teams presented their findings at American Airlines headquarters in Fort Worth to a panel of judges that included executives from the airline and Alteryx. The winning teams received cash prizes sponsored by Alteryx SparkED. All finalists received gifts from American Airlines.



(L-R) M.S.B.A. '25 students Bree Slay, Ace Chanda and Chandler Kaudy with Kaleb Buck, a work associate of Chanda's, prepare a delivery.

M.S.B.A.s Donate to Students in Need

The leadership team of the Cox Master of Science in Business Analytics degree program (M.S.B.A.) worked with fellow students to gather food and essential supplies to donate to The Shop. They delivered bags of nonperishable groceries to the Dean of Students' office in Hughes-Trigg as a resource for current SMU students

experiencing food insecurity. The food pantry is available to any current SMU student in need. The Shop is a partnership of SMU Parent and Family Programs, Student Advocacy and Support, and SMU Libraries. The Shop grew out of a donation to the University and is sustained by the SMU community.

Centers of Excellence

BRIDWELL INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Whole Foods Market's John Mackey Leads Standout Engagements



John Mackey (front row, third from right) spoke at the Flourishing and a Free Society Public Lecture Series.

In February, John Mackey, visionary co-founder of Whole Foods Market, was a featured speaker at the Bridwell Institute's Flourishing and a Free Society Public Lecture Series. "A business' purpose is not to create money but to create value for its customers," Mackey said. "A business must make money, or it will die. But that is not its purpose."

The next day, Mackey met with Cox faculty and undergraduate students as part of the Armentrout Scholars Reading Group Spring Summit.

In addition to the event with Mackey, the Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom hosted several engagements throughout the 2024–25 academic year:

Scott McCartney, former Wall Street Journal

"Middle Seat" columnist, and **Gary Leff**, *View from the Wing* blogger, discussed the aviation industry.

Matt and Terry Kibbe, co-founders of Free the People Foundation, discussed how the arts suffer under repressive regimes.

Nicole Nosek, founder and chair of Texans for Reasonable Solutions, discussed the current housing market with **W. Michael Cox**, Bridwell Institute executive in residence, and Cullum Clark, director of the Bush Institute-SMU Economic Growth Initiative at the George W. Bush Institute.

Marshall Stocker, economist and investor, discussed how he has used the *Economic Freedom of the World* index to inform his investment decisions.



Celebrating a 25-Year Partnership With Disney

In January, the Business Leadership Center (BLC) celebrated 25 years of partnership with the Disney Institute and its program “Creating and Sustaining a Service Culture.” During the BLC’s annual trip to Disney World, graduate students experience for themselves the strategic and practical work that goes into making “The Most Magical Place on Earth” in workshops that cover Disney’s five keys to leadership and company values, and the power of storytelling in reaching both consumers and employees. About 30 students attended the 2025 program.



MIKE MCGUIRE



KIRK RIMER

BLC Hosts Executive Speaker Series

In February, Cox Executive Board member **Mike McGuire**, EMBA '05 presented a real-life case study on value creation strategy based on work by the North Texas-based Andrews Distributing Company, where he is the president and COO. McGuire’s session with Cox graduate students was among the more than 30 Executive Speaker seminars offered this term to help students develop

effective leadership skills and practical business-world applications.

Kirk Rimer, MBA '89, co-founder of CH Investment Partners and Cox Executive Board member, visited the BLC in March. During a conversation guided by student questions and commentary, Rimer offered perspectives shaped by his own varied

experiences that range from being a U.S. Navy pilot to serving as managing director of Goldman Sachs. Rimer cautioned students to remember that pedigree does not define them or predict their futures. He also emphasized that purpose matters in business and in life, advising them to be “ruthlessly proactive” by refining their strengths and networking skills.

BLC Honors Leadership Skill Development

The BLC and outgoing Dean Matthew Myers enjoyed an April celebration with about 80 guests, including students, BLC instructors and executive speakers for the Cox Business Leadership Center Recognition Luncheon. Forty-seven MBA and M.S. students were honored with the Dean’s Circle Award, and 54 BLC instructors received Teaching Excellence Awards based on student feedback. The BLC enhances classroom experiences by developing students’ leadership skills through seminars, executive speaker series and experiential learning programs.

CAREER MANAGEMENT CENTER



Students snap a group selfie at the Spring Real Estate Roundtable networking event (above). Class of 2025 Two-Year and One-Year Full-Time MBAs enjoy a pre-commencement gathering hosted by CMC.

CMC Prepares Students for Professional Goals

The Cox Career Management Center (CMC) helps students explore career paths and facilitates connections with top employers in the business community. Three hundred undergraduate and graduate students attended the Spring Career Connections fair in February to engage with more than

40 businesses, including Affinius Capital, Evergreen Residential, Lennar, Oracle, Sun Holdings and more, to explore internships and dive into post-grad career possibilities.

More than 100 undergraduate and graduate students attended the biannual Spring Real Estate Roundtable, also in February.



At the speed networking event, hosted by the CMC with the Folsom Institute for Real Estate, students met with representatives from about 20 leading real estate companies, including Montgomery Street Partners, Newmark and Northmarq.

At the annual Accounting Exploration Panel in March, more than 100 first-year B.B.A. students learned about career paths such as audit, tax, advisory, forensic and financial reporting. Professionals from several firms—including American Airlines, EY, Forvis Mazars, KPMG and PwC—shared insights about their career journeys.

The CMC partnered with the Cox Spears Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership in April to host the Careers in Entrepreneurship Panel featuring entrepreneurs Valecia Harris, OMBA '23, founder and CEO of Black Book Agency; Jordan Miller, B.B.A. '14, M.S.M. '15, founder and CEO of Yendo; Cecilia Rios Murrieta, CEO and co-founder of JAS Drinks; and Kyle Waldrep, B.A. '16, founder of Dottid.

As the academic year drew to a close, the CMC organized a pre-finals/pre-commencement celebration in the EY Gallery for Class of 2025 Two-Year and One-Year Full-Time MBAs, who were joined by faculty and staff. Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and Executive Education Shane Goodwin offered a poetic toast to the soon-to-be graduates. “To the Class of 2025, we are so proud of you. With pride in your cup—to the future, the friendships, and always, Pony Up!”

CARUTH INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

HART INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WILLIAM S. SPEARS INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP



New Leadership for the Caruth Institute

Professor of Practice Emily Choi now leads the Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship as its executive director. Learn more about Choi's entrepreneurial path on page 32.

Dallas 100™ Celebrates 35 Years

2025 marks the 35th anniversary of the SMU Cox Dallas 100™ Entrepreneur Awards. The annual gala will be held on November 20 in a new location this year: Renaissance Dallas Addison Hotel. The event, founded by the Cox School's Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship in 1990, celebrates the innovative spirit of the fastest-growing startups in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Get more information at smu.edu/dallas100.

Spotlighting Women in Venture Capital

The Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship hosted the Southwest Venture Forum (SWVF), "Women in Venture Capital: Trailblazing Women Shaping the Future of VC," in March. More than 160 attendees, which included students, founders and funders, gathered in the Collins Center to hear featured speakers Brenda Stoner, CEO and co-founder of ByteTrail; Kimmy Scotti, founding and managing partner of Neon; Lyndsey Harper, M.D., founder and CEO of Rosy Wellness; and Pialy Aditya, entrepreneur and investor of Republic. They shared candid insights on leadership, fundraising and the evolving role of women in VC.

SWVF brings together entrepreneurs, investors, and business leaders for high-impact conversations on innovation and capital. This event was curated by Jen O'Neal, senior director of EPIQ Capital Group, and Laura Baldwin, executive vice president of WBR partners.

Innovation Awards Celebrate Entrepreneurial Excellence



(L–R) Outgoing SMU President R. Gerald Turner and Gail Turner; Megha and Nirav Tolia; Clark K. Hunt; Ross Perot, Jr.; Candye and William S. Spears.

The William S. Spears Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership honored two business icons at its inaugural Leadership Innovation Awards event in April. The Living Legend Awards went to SMU Board Trustee and Cox Executive Board member **Clark K. Hunt**, B.B.A. '87, who serves as chair and CEO of the NFL Kansas City Chiefs and MLS FC Dallas teams, and **Ross Perot, Jr.**, chair of The Perot Companies and Hillwood.

The event, hosted by Spears Institute co-founding directors Megha and Nirav Tolia at their home, celebrated North Texas entrepreneurial excellence. Visionary area leaders honored the enterprising spirit of Hunt and Perot, who have made indelible impacts on their respective industries and the continued growth of the DFW region.

Hunt has been instrumental in bringing the 2026 FIFA World Cup to North America, which will feature nine matches

in Dallas, including the first semifinal. Perot, a U.S. Air Force veteran who led the 14-year effort to build the United States Air Force Memorial in Washington, D.C., is a renowned entrepreneur who co-founded the Perot Systems Corporation and developed the country's first industrial airport in Fort Worth, which anchors AllianceTexas, a 27,000-acre, master-planned, mixed-use community.



First place and \$10,000 was awarded to Amar Khoja, B.B.A. '25 (second from left) and Jonathan Zanzuri, B.B.A. '26 (third from left) for Dorm Room Cleans, Inc. (now known as Campus Cleans).

Entrepreneurs Shine at Hilltop Founders Pitch Competition

At the Spears Institute Hilltop Founders Pitch Competition in April, student innovators presented bold business ideas for a chance to win cash prizes to fuel their ventures. The pitches were judged by entrepreneurial leaders John Buchwald, vice president of customer research

and strategy, Market-Partners Inc.; Valecia Harris, OMBA '23, CEO at Black Book Agency; Tanya Ragan, owner and president of Wildcat Management; Gowrishankar Sundararajan, senior partner at Value Innovation Group; and Cox Adjunct Professor Yoram Solomon.

Student Innovators Connect and Collaborate

The Hart Institute for Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (HI-TIE) hosted its inaugural open mic night in April. The intimate forum featured nearly two dozen student entrepreneurs, who took the mic to share their ideas and ventures or talk about their skills in coding, engineering and management. Students not only boosted their networks but also discovered a depth and variety of ready-to-tap expertise available on campus.

"They asked for specific help and made real connections," said Helmuth Ludwig, executive director of HI-TIE, which is a co-venture with the Lyle School of Engineering.

MAGUIRE ENERGY INSTITUTE



Spindletop Students Build a Living Classroom

More than 30 Cox B.B.A. students with the Spindletop Energy Investment Fund went to Dallas ISD's Garcia West Dallas STEM school in April to help prepare a learning garden. Wielding shovels, wheelbarrows and other tools, they spent the day pulling weeds, building fences and prepping garden beds to lay the groundwork for a planting garden that will serve as a living classroom, where school children will learn about sustainability, nutrition and the joys of nurturing life.

"This initiative was set up by the students for the students," said Xavier Tison, director of energy innovation for the Maguire Energy Institute. "It was a great opportunity for them to bond and give back to the community."



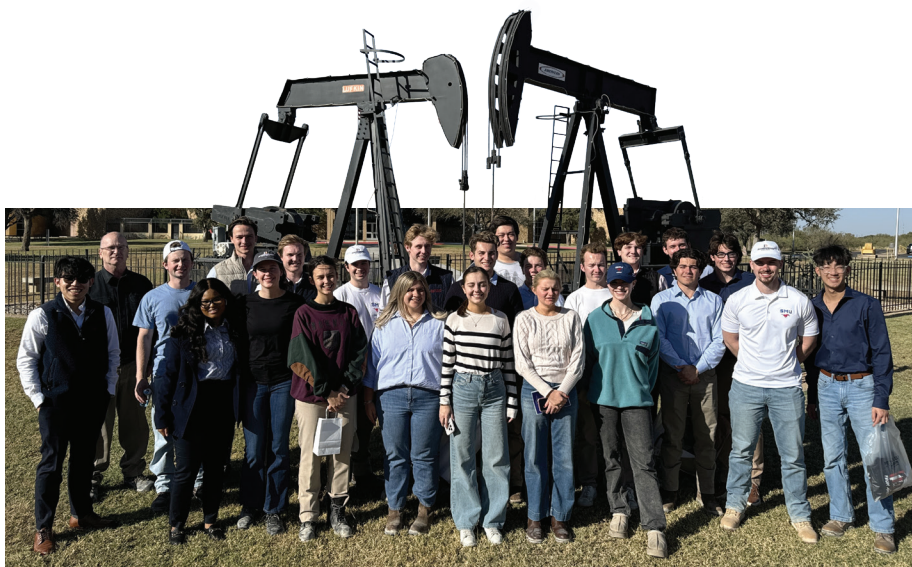
(L-R) SMU Trustee Bobby Lyle; Erle Nye, 2025 Pioneer Award Honoree; Travis Stice, 2025 Pitts Award honoree; outgoing SMU President R. Gerald Turner.

Honoring Industry Leaders at L. Frank Pitts Award Luncheon

The Maguire Energy Institute honored energy industry excellence at its annual L. Frank Pitts Leadership Award Luncheon held in May. SMU Trustee Bobby Lyle presented the Pioneer Award to **Erle Nye**, honoring him as an industry trailblazer and innovator. Nye is retired from the Texas Utilities System of Companies as chairman emeritus of TXU, where he served in several leadership positions during his 45-year tenure. Under his leadership, TXU transformed from a North Texas-focused utility to an international energy leader.

Maguire Energy Institute Advisory

Board Chairman-elect Tim Perry presented the L. Frank Pitts Award for energy leadership and innovation to **Travis Stice**, chairman and CEO of Diamondback. The annual award honors an energy or related industry leader who reflects Texas oilman Frank Pitts' legacy of entrepreneurship, ethical leadership and innovation. Two energy students, Sarah Katherine Harris, B.B.A. '25 and Hayley Ray, Full-Time MBA '25, received L. Frank Pitts Scholarships, which were presented by Kumar Venkataraman, Cox professor and Maguire Chair in Energy Management.



Members of the Cox Energy Club visit the pumpjacks at the Permian Basin Petroleum Museum (above). Students visited Iceland and Norway for an energy immersion (inset).

Energy Treks Domestic and Abroad

Trading their business suits for steel toes, 25 SMU undergraduates traveled to Midland, Texas, to explore the Permian Basin—one of the world’s most important energy regions. They visited a drilling site with Diamond Energy and a fracking site with Exxon. They also attended the renowned Daniel Energy Partners Permian Basin BBQ Cook-off—an annual networking event where oil and gas companies compete for the title of “best cooking team in the industry.”

Cox graduate students traveled to Houston for a full day of company visits, including Exxon Treasury, Phoenix Directional Drilling, Weatherford and more. That trip wrapped up with a networking mixer at Rice Energy Club and an exclusive tour of the Shell Trading Floor.

The Maguire Energy Institute took 14 B.B.A. students and one MBA student on a three-and-a-half-day energy immersion

in January. They visited Reykjavik, Iceland, and Oslo, Norway. In Reykjavik, the group walked the city, explored the Geothermal Exhibition and visited the Blue Lagoon. Students also met with leaders from two of the largest electricity producers in Iceland, Landsvirkjun and HS Orka, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In Oslo, the group visited with energy powerhouses Statnett—manager of the Norwegian power grid—the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Energy and industry

technology provider TechnipFMC. They also met with DNB, Norway’s largest financial services group active in the sustainable bond market, and Cognite, an AI company delivering industrial software to improve

efficiency at energy-related companies. The Oslo visit also included a tour of the storage caverns of Circle K and a meeting with research and consultancy groups at the University of South-Eastern Norway, NUPI and McKinsey & Company.



Strong Cox Showing at NAPE

For the first time, the Maguire Energy Institute hosted the annual North American Prospect Expo (NAPE) Energy Case Competition, which took place in February in Houston. NAPE Expo has become the largest exhibition of its kind in the world, providing unmatched venues for energy professionals to meet, network, connect and do business.

Two student teams—one undergraduate and one MBA—participated in a case competition in which the top four teams won \$40,000 in prizes from the AAPL Educational Fund. Cox was the only school with students who placed in the top three categories. Teams divided prize winnings among their respective members.

Members of the Maguire Energy Institute Board of Advisors and Cox Executive Board donated their expertise and time, including Allen Custard, Bob Dudley, David Howard, Nancy McCaskell, Chris Paulsen, Bryan Sheffield, Eric Stevens, Dirk Vander Ploeg and Jim Wicklund.

FOLSOM INSTITUTE FOR REAL ESTATE

Breaking Into CRE Master Class

The Folsom Institute concluded its monthly Breaking Into CRE master class series in May. The series provides students with a better understanding of the various careers available in commercial real estate. Throughout the academic year, Folsom Associate Board members shared their insight about various industry sectors and career paths.

2024–25 monthly master classes included presentations by the following Folsom Institute Associate Board members and alumni:

Matt Murphy, CBRE (Picking Your Path 101)

Gordon Kellerman and Jack O'Neill, Skybox Datacenters (Data Centers 101)

Richard Putnam, 3650 Capital (Debt and Credit 101)

Andrew Pieper, Hillwood (Single Family Development/Investments 101)

Blair Butler and Faust Higgins, Crow Holdings (Retail Asset Management/Acquisitions 101)

Augie Sherman, Catalyst RE (Healthcare Real Estate 101)

Lauren Dow and Ben Esterer, JLL (Capital Markets)



Spring Board Meeting Notes

Folsom Institute hosted its annual spring board meeting in April at the SMU Indoor Performance Center, welcoming more than 190 board members, guests, students, and faculty and staff. After the reception, attendees enjoyed dinner and an update, including the presentation of four student scholarships. The meeting concluded with two insightful panel discussions

focusing on private credit and data center markets. “State of Private Credit Markets” panelists included **Maria Stamolis**, moderator, SMU clinical professor; **Matt Salem**, partner and head of real estate credit, KKR; **Kyle Kendall**, managing director and head of structured capital and credit, Koch Real Estate; and **Brian Abbott**, managing director and head of asset management, ACORE Capital.

“Datacenter Market Forecast” panelists included **Haynes Strader**, moderator, chief development officer, Skybox Datacenters; **Miguel Sequera**, head of business development – co-location Americas, AWS; and **John Callahan**, chief investment officer, Edged U.S.

A Bolstered Advisory Board

This spring, the Folsom Institute bolstered its advisory board with two new corporate members—**CBRE** and **Stream Realty Partners**—and 21 industry professionals:

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE MEMBERS

Sandeep Shah, Vitae Capital
Brooke Armstrong, CBRE
Scott Riddles, CBRE
Mark Fluent, CBRE

ADVISORY MEMBERS

Caroline Shaddock, Capital Title
Jack Marshall, Sentre
Robert Timmons, Ardens Logistics Park
William Shannon, Bridge Logistics Properties
Peter Stone, Fortress Investment Group
Scott Tolbert, Fortress Investment Group
Jimmy Little, Fortress Investment Group

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Andrea Morales, CBRE
Cameron Purse, IPA
Deon Green, Northmarq
Elizabeth Crowell, RecNation RV & Boat Storage
Glen Lanier, Provident Realty
Jack Farmer, Trammell Crow Residential
Max Lerner, ICONIQ Capital
Rene Jaubert, Walker & Dunlop
Robert Westerfield, JLL
Erin Lazarus, JLL



Real Estate Students Take on L.A.

Cox B.B.A. and graduate real estate students experienced an intensive, one-and-a-half-day corporate trek across Los Angeles this spring, visiting 11 top firms spanning retail, office and mixed-use development sectors to glimpse the fast-paced and multifaceted world of commercial real estate from some of the most influential players in the field. The companies visited included Bellwether, Lincoln Property Company, Hackman Capital Partners, The Culver Studios, Affinius Capital, Hines, CBRE, Fortress Investment Group, JLL, AllianceBernstein and Anderson Real Estate. The trip included an alumni networking reception where students engaged with SMU alumni actively shaping the L.A. real estate market.



SMU Cox real estate students at Hines/Affinius Capital's West Edge mixed-use development in Los Angeles.



CHUCK DANNIS

Adjunct Professor Receives Commercial Real Estate Award

Cox Adjunct Professor of Real Estate **Chuck Dannis** was recognized with the Excellence in Community Service Award at the 2025 D CEO Commercial Real Estate Awards. Dannis, who serves as senior managing director of National Valuation Consultants Inc., was recognized for “his steady and quiet

support to many different nonprofits that are working to make North Texas better” and his 37-year teaching career at Cox, “[providing] guidance and inspiration to countless students who have pursued careers in real estate.”

SOUTHWESTERN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BANKING

SWGSB Gets New Board Leadership

In March, the Southwestern Graduate School of Banking announced new leadership and added three new trustees to its board. **T. Gary Hudson**, former president and CEO and current board member of Farmers & Merchant's Bank, is the new SWGSB board chairman; **R. Scott Heitkamp**, president and CEO of ValueBank Texas, is the new SWGSB vice chairman. New trustees include **Sanford M. Brown**, partner and co-chair of the Financial Services Group at Alson & Bird; **Greg Massey**, chairman and CEO of First United Bank & Trust; and **Jan Mills**, president and chairman of First National Bank of Winnsboro, Texas.

Executive Education



Executive Education Launches 3 New Programs

SMU Cox Executive Education introduced three dynamic leadership programs in the spring semester. The new offerings—**Cox Executive Leadership**, **Leading Strategically** and **Aspiring Manager**—are tailored to professionals at different stages of their careers and help leaders navigate today's evolving business landscape with agility and foresight.

In April, Executive Education welcomed seasoned leaders from across a range of industries for the inaugural cohort of the reimagined **Cox Executive Leadership** program, formerly known as the Cox Leadership Academy. The program's new name reflects a sharpened focus on the complex realities faced by senior executives. Designed for high-impact learning, the program meets two days per month over five of six consecutive months. Participants engage with Cox faculty and expert instructors on forward-thinking topics such as navigating turbulence, leading strategically and with innovation, and strengthening business intelligence. The experience culminates in an intensive, day-long simulation where executives apply what they've learned and

lead a virtual company through real-world challenges.

"This is a transformative learning experience meticulously designed for seasoned executives," says Program Director Sally Siegel. "Participants elevate their leadership capabilities and drive tangible results for their organizations through cutting-edge content, individualized coaching and deep peer-to-peer connection." The next cohort starts in April 2026.

The **Leading Strategically** program bridges strategic thinking with real-world leadership execution. Led by Retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jason Galui (front row, second from left, in photo), this immersive two-day experience equips professionals with the tools to navigate complex workplace challenges through a strategic lens. Designed for leaders across industries and career levels, the program explores powerful decision-making frameworks—such as principal-agent dynamics and brinkmanship and bargaining—to help participants reframe and solve pressing challenges with greater clarity and precision. The April session brought together a diverse group of professionals eager to hone their strategic mindset in high-stakes environments. The next session is scheduled for October 21–22, 2025.

The **Aspiring Manager** program is for emerging leaders stepping into management for the first time or preparing to take that next career step. The two-day, on-campus experience helps participants build the skills and confidence needed to effectively lead from day one. This spring, participants explored key areas essential to early leadership success, such as authentic leadership, five behaviors of a cohesive team, and AI literacy and strategy. In the final unit, leadership in action, they gained tangible tools for relationship-building and streamlining processes and turned their new insights into immediate impact at work. The next session is scheduled for September 10–11, 2025.

For information about these and other SMU Cox Executive Education programs, go to smu.edu/cox/executive-education.

LLI Partnership Supports Student Success



In January, Executive Education's LLI Program inspired young people through a partnership with The Compelling Why, a nonprofit that equips underserved students with the motivation and mindset to access academic and life-skill enrichment resources in their schools and communities. Local executives shared personal stories and offered guidance about how to set and achieve goals with more than 300 promising middle and high school students from Uplift Education and Richardson ISD.

Cox in the Community

Leaders on Leadership Season 3 Highlights

SMU's Leaders on Leadership Series: A Fireside Chat Speaker Series completed its third season this spring. Facilitated by Associate Dean of Executive Education and Graduate Programs Shane Goodwin, the series allows guests to share their leadership journeys to inspire current and future leaders. Here are some memorable speaker quotes from the spring lineup.



"I remember deep down in my gut thinking it wasn't the right decision. You just feel it sometimes. But I didn't listen to my gut. I was like, yeah, the data's saying this, and our leaders are saying this, and the vision is this, so let's go. But there's always something deep inside that tells you to go a certain way. Listen to it."

— **Marissa Solis**

SVP of Global Brand and Consumer Marketing, NFL



"When someone tells you who they are, listen. I can tell by someone's behavior whether they are a 'me' person, whether they don't care about the team. There's an ethical issue, they have one foot out the door, they don't care about me or whatever. But you convince yourself you want it to be something else. The do-over moment I would always have is act, listen to it, get on with it. They're not going to change."

— **Aaron Powell**

CEO, Pizza Hut



"For young people, I think the key thing is to make yourself indispensable to whoever you're working for, but don't act like you think you're indispensable. If [your boss] thinks you're indispensable, it'll give you more responsibility, and you'll get up the ladder. Similarly, I've benefited from having some mentors, and mentoring, I think, is a ... very important thing to a young person's career."

— **Wilbur Ross**

Former U.S. Secretary of Commerce



"I had the fortune of having mentors and serving teams that pushed me to make uncomfortable pivots versus staying where I already had anchored competency—pushing me to step out of my comfort zone and not let comfort become the enemy of growth."

— **Thaddeus Arroyo**

MBA '89, Chief Strategy and Development Officer, AT&T

The Leaders on Leadership fall lineup includes Anne Chow, lead director, Franklin Covey Board of Directors, former CEO of AT&T Business, on September 3; Steve Jones, global chairman and CEO, Allied Universal, on September 23; Merrilee Kick, CEO, GourmetLand Foods, founder and strategic advisor, Buzzballz, LLC, on October 21; and Roland Dickey, Jr., CEO, Dickey's Capital Group, on November 5. Scan to learn more about the series and register:



In Memoriam

During the spring semester, the SMU Cox community mourned the loss of a graduate student, as well as several past and present colleagues. Cox School students, faculty and staff offer condolences to the families and friends of these cherished members of our community.

Mofiyinfoluwa Agboola, a graduate student from Ontario, Canada, passed away in January. Agboola, who was known as “Mofi” to her friends and classmates, was in the M.S. in Business Analytics degree program. She was working toward graduating from the nine-month program in May 2025.

Ray Balestri, an attorney and Cox adjunct professor for almost 30 years, passed away on January 4. He taught entrepreneurial transactions to Cox graduate students. A partner at Bell Nunnally, Balestri’s background included experience as both a successful private equity investor and in-house general counsel and CFO, enabling him to offer students unique insight into a wide array of legal and business implications.

Andrew H. Chen, SMU Cox professor emeritus of finance, passed away on March 7. Chen served Cox for 29 years as an endowed distinguished professor of finance until his retirement in 2012. As part of the *SMU Ignited* campaign, he and his wife, Elaine, established the Andrew H. Chen Endowed Chair in Financial Investments Fund, a generous donation reflecting their commitment to continuing faculty excellence, financial research and student learning experiences at Cox. Dean Todd Milbourn now holds the endowed chair the Chens established.

Alan Brouse Coleman, the fifth dean of the Cox School, passed away on January 31 at the age of 96 in Greenbrae, California. He joined the Cox School in 1974 as the Caruth Professor of Financial Management and became dean of the school the following year. Coleman served as dean until 1981; afterward, he continued as the Caruth Professor and as president of the Southwestern Graduate School of Banking

Foundation until 1988. During his deanship, Coleman helped establish, with the Meadows School of the Arts, the interdisciplinary Master of Arts/MBA degree (M.A./MBA). His long and varied academic career included time as a Harvard faculty member. From 1962 to 1966, he was the founding dean of South America’s first graduate school of business, Escuela de Administración de Negocios in Lima, Peru, now a full university.

Bill Custard, B.B.A. ’57 and Cox Executive Board member, passed away on March 4. Custard was the longtime CEO of Dallas Production and a dedicated member of the Maguire Energy Institute Advisory Board. He was with loved ones celebrating the birthday of his wife, Linda Pitts Custard, EMBA ’99 and SMU Trustee Emerita, just hours before he died. His son, Cox Executive Board member and Pitts Oil President William Allen Custard, III, better known as Allen, credits his father for being an integral part of the success of Pitts Oil and its affiliated enterprises. “Bill Custard was gracious, thoughtful and dignified to the end,” Allen said. “His association with SMU, the Cox School and the Maguire Energy Institute was a source of great pride to him.”

Amy Schmid, wife of Jeff Schmid, Cox Executive Board member and president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, passed away on May 3 after a long illness. In addition to Jeff, Amy is survived by her daughter, Abbie (Schmid) Cuenca (Alex Cuenca); son, Bobby Schmid (Jordan Lambesis); three grandsons and countless friends. Schmid was active in Dallas, SMU and the Cox community before her husband stepped down as president of the Southwest Graduate School of Banking to join the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City in August 2023.

Mary Chotas Zotos, a former SMU Cox staff member for 11 years, passed away on January 31. As an executive assistant in the Cox School’s Folsom Institute for Real Estate, she supported the department chair and faculty. She began working at the Cox School in 1996 and retired from SMU in 2007.



MOFIYINFOLUWA AGBOOLA



RAY BALESTRI



ANDREW CHEN



ALAN COLEMAN



BILL CUSTARD




AMY SCHMID



MARY ZOTOS

Faculty News



RUIDI HUANG
Associate Professor
of Finance



EMILY CHOI
Executive Director
of the Caruth
Institute for
Entrepreneurship



Q&A

Cox Professor Explores Supply Chain Risk-Mitigation Strategies

Through his research, Ruidi Huang aims to help companies adapt and thrive in an increasingly volatile world.

RUIDI HUANG, RECENTLY APPOINTED associate professor of finance at SMU's Cox School of Business, focuses his research on entrepreneurship and household and empirical corporate finance. He received his doctorate in finance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2019 and his bachelor's degree in economics from Brigham Young University in 2013.

Huang studies the ways firms in complex production networks respond to risk—particularly supply chain disruptions.

What motivated you to become a finance professor?

Ruidi Huang: Growing up, I never envisioned becoming a finance professor, or any kind of professor at all. When I was in college, I was captivated by the dynamic nature of economics and how it impacted everyday lives, which sparked my passion for studying its underlying mechanisms. I found myself drawn to research that could not only influence policy but also improve the financial well-being of individuals and firms. The opportunity to teach and share this knowledge with the next generation of thinkers and practitioners solidified my decision to pursue a career in academia.

What kind of finance research interests you most?

RH: My research spans two core areas: household finance and corporate finance, with a deep focus on the interconnectedness between financial systems, firm decision-making and supply chains. In household finance, I study how institutional and labor market dynamics influence access to financial services, particularly for those who need it most. In corporate finance, I've been actively pursuing research focused on the ways firms handle risk, especially supply chain disruptions, and how those disruptions influence firms' decisions, which could lead to broader economic consequences.

What led you down that research path originally?

RH: I was wondering how firms manage the risks they face in complex production networks. Events such as the Sino-American trade war, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Suez Canal accident highlighted the vulnerabilities in global supply chains, which led me to explore how these disruptions impact firms' investment decisions, operations and relationships.

I ended up publishing two papers—one in the *Journal of Financial Economics* and one in the *Journal of International Economics*—to quantify supply chain risks, investigate the strategies firms adopt to mitigate these risks and study the effect of trade credit in maintaining supply chain stability.



What do you find compelling about this area of research?

RH: I'm most compelled by the real-world relevance of supply chain disruptions and the financial systems that support global production. Supply chains are the backbone of modern production, and disruptions can have cascading effects on firms' operations. As the old saying goes, the chain is only as strong as the weakest link. By studying how firms assess and manage supply chain risks, I can contribute to a more robust understanding of supply chain interdependencies and how firms can better navigate these risks. Additionally, I find exploring the role of trade credit as a stabilizing force within these networks fascinating because it reveals how financial relationships can buffer firms against disruptions, allowing them to maintain operational continuity.

What kind of outcomes would you like to affect with your research findings?

RH: I hope my research will provide actionable insights that help firms build more resilient and adaptable supply chains. By quantifying the risks associated with global supply chains and showing how firms manage these risks through strategic financial decisions, my work could help firms strengthen their supplier networks and mitigate the impact of supply chain disruptions. My work on trade credit, in particular, highlights how financial tools can be used to stabilize production networks during disruptions. I also want my research to inform policymakers about the broader economic implications of supply chain vulnerabilities and the importance of facilitating policies that enable firms to manage these risks effectively.

What are the key takeaways from your research?

RH: One of the key takeaways from my research on trade credit is that this particular

financial tool could serve as a "glue" that helps firms maintain relationships within production networks during disruptions. Also, having a measure that quantifies the risks firms face in global supply chains is crucial, especially in today's interconnected and volatile global economy. My research highlights the importance of firms managing supply chain risk by diversifying suppliers and establishing closer, more reliable relationships with domestic suppliers. This is critical to ensuring firms can adapt quickly to external shocks and continue their operations without significant losses.

What's next for your research efforts?

RH: Moving forward, I plan to expand my research on supply chain resilience, focusing on how firms can better anticipate and prepare for future disruptions, such as those caused by tariffs and geopolitical events. Tariffs especially have introduced new complexities into global supply chains, as firms must navigate the shifting costs of imports and exports and adapt their sourcing and pricing strategies accordingly.

I aim to investigate how firms, depending on their product types and supply chain structures, respond to these challenges. This includes exploring how firms adjust their sourcing decisions, evaluating the trade-offs between cost optimization and resilience, and understanding the importance of product innovation. Ultimately, my goal is to provide insights on how to adapt and thrive in a world of growing trade barriers and supply chain volatility. ■



“
My work could help firms strengthen their supplier networks and mitigate the impact of supply chain disruptions.

Elevating Entrepreneurship

With her deep background in academic research and startup leadership, Emily Choi brings a wealth of experience to her new role as executive director of the Caruth Institute.

By TYLER HICKS



EMILY CHOI DIDN'T SET OUT TO WORK in higher education. But when she started at SMU Cox in 2025, she knew it was meant to be and that joining SMU would be the "cherry on top" of her career.

Choi first honed her entrepreneurial bonafides leading her own startups. Then, while working at Apple, she started thinking about going back to school so she could dig deep and refine the research and creative problem-solving skills she realized were central to success in business.

But even then, she thought it'd be a relatively short stint before returning to Silicon Valley. "Then I fell in love with research and the fact that research itself is entrepreneurial," she says.

Now, after earning a Ph.D. in management at the University of California, Berkeley, and being a faculty member for more than a decade at The University of Texas at Dallas, the highly experienced researcher, instructor and entrepreneur has taken the helm at the Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship.

As executive director, Choi will help budding business owners sharpen their skills through a cutting-edge curriculum while connecting them to the resourceful entrepreneurship ecosystem on and off campus, including potential investors. Plus, she'll help

students navigate their careers by sharing the knowledge she's picked up in her years in both academia and industry.

To get to know one of the newest leaders on campus, we sat down with Choi and asked her some questions about her career, her plans for the Caruth Institute and what she does to unwind.

What brought you to SMU Cox?

Emily Choi: I saw the Cox School would be the cherry on top of my career. I wanted to pivot and level up in the world of entrepreneurship education. This was an opportunity for me to do so as part of the Caruth Institute.

Caruth already has a very strong, very respected foundation in entrepreneurship education. I wanted to build upon its legacy by collaborating with a world-class faculty team and my counterparts at the Spears Institute and Hart Institute for Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship. We have a significant opportunity to expand and deepen the scope of entrepreneurship education, making connections between students and real-world startup experiences and strengthening thought leadership in entrepreneurship research.

You worked in industry before moving to academia. Tell us about that journey.

EC: I never thought I'd end up in academia. I went to school, got an MBA and expected to work in business internationally. My adolescence was spent overseas at an international school, so I always enjoyed new experiences. Along my journey, I was always looking to learn. My mother is a big influence on my love of learning.

I worked in industry for about seven years—half of that time in the startup world. I was part of a founding team in Silicon Valley, and I realized there was a lot I didn't know and needed to learn. Later, when I was at Apple, I thought a lot about what separated Apple from the other startups, so that was the impetus. I thought, "Let me go back to school and really dig deep."

I didn't expect to stay in academia; I



Choi “fell in love with research” as another path to learning.

thought I’d go back out into the world and start something else with all this new knowledge. But I fell in love with research and the fact that it’s about creating and asking deep, big questions. Research is discovering something new by identifying a gap or problem or challenge, then coming up with a solution, just as entrepreneurs do. It’s exciting!

I also love that the more I research, the more I learn, and then I get to share it. In my view, if you boil down academia to what it’s really about, it’s generating and disseminating new knowledge. I’m so thankful for my journey and my mentors who guided me along the way.

What are the biggest challenges facing entrepreneurs today, and how is the Cox School addressing them?

EC: Competition will always be a challenge,

but I think the biggest challenge right now is change—how it happens exponentially. AI is quickly reshaping industries, innovations build faster on top of the last innovations, founders are in spaces where there are often no legal or institutional structures. In the middle of this whirlwind, entrepreneurs are expected to gain legitimacy for their product or service.

That’s why our curriculum aims to prepare students to lead through these complexities and unknowns. We are teaching entrepreneurial thinking: Ask questions to validate your assumptions about problems, and then use interdisciplinary knowledge to solve those problems.

What will success in this role look like for you and the Caruth Institute?

EC: The Caruth Institute has a strong

“**Our curriculum aims to prepare students to lead through these complexities and unknowns. We are teaching entrepreneurial thinking.**”

reputation for being a leader in entrepreneurship education, so for me, success is continuing that leadership and building upon it in a forward-looking way. It’s continuously increasing academic excellence, which means strengthening the curriculum and the pathways and collaborations with other courses or programs in entrepreneurship across campus.

Entrepreneurship is one of the newer disciplines in academia, and it touches almost every discipline in a university. We know scientists and engineers who want to commercialize their inventions. They’re entrepreneurs! So I’d love to see the curriculum strengthened within Cox and linked to or intersecting with the entrepreneurship programs across the campus. Success will be when SMU students—current and prospective—see this and say, “Aha, here’s my pathway. Here’s where I can start or grow my passion project.”

What do you like to do for fun?

EC: I like to be active, whether that’s running or going on walks with friends. And when I have time, I love going to see live music. The local music scene here in Dallas is amazing and very diverse. The community the musicians have built is so vibrant and supportive. I’ve always loved music. My father’s side of the family is full of beautiful singers and musicians, so coming to Dallas and discovering all this live music has been like therapy for my soul. ■

Research Spotlight

By JENNIFER WARREN

How Do Asset Management Firms Use AI?

New research from SMU Cox **examines machine learning's use in trading.**

OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the asset management industry has grown. But to what effect?

That's the question SMU Cox Assistant Professor of Finance Xiaowen Hu sets out to answer in her new research, which documents "an increasing trend of mutual funds and the asset management industry using advanced technologies in forming their portfolios and improving their performance for competitive advantage."

In their working paper, "Active Machine Learning Based Trading and Mutual Fund Performance," Hu and her co-authors find that effectively employing AI and machine learning in the industry requires both sophistication and trading skill—human and physical capital.

The extent to which the industry integrates machine learning into trading strategies remains mostly unknown. Hu and the other researchers developed an empirical method to detect which funds genuinely use AI in their investment processes, regardless of marketing claims.

"We systematically study how asset management firms adopt AI technologies and skills, how that happens over time, and how it affects performance," Hu says.

The paper specifically examines the AI subset of machine learning synonymous with algorithmic trading. In simple terms, machine learning involves training

18,803

THE NUMBER OF STOCKS OF PUBLICLY LISTED FIRMS ON NYSE, AMEX AND NASDAQ FROM 1987 TO 2022 ANALYZED IN THE STUDY

computers to process information like the human brain.

A PRACTICAL APPROACH

Rather than focusing on the most cutting-edge or complex AI or machine-learning models, Hu and the other researchers examine practical applications that funds could feasibly implement.

"We developed an average model that realistically could have been used in the past two decades," Hu says.

The study analyzes the massive universe—18,803 stocks—of publicly listed firms on NYSE, AMEX and NASDAQ from 1987 to 2022. The researchers focus on mutual funds, which offer a competitive advantage over hedge funds in that they are more regulated and give firms fewer incentives to disclose their trading methods. The researchers' model analyzes how mutual fund firm-level holdings aligned with trading signals that demonstrate AI use.

"We show that it's the rich information input that really helps drive performance,"



About the Researcher:

Xiaowen Hu received her Ph.D. in finance from the Leeds School at the University of Colorado Boulder in 2022.



Hu says. “It requires manager skills to decide what to trade based on machine output.”

HIRING FOR AI

Hu says a firm’s decision to hire AI-skilled talent should be relevant to trading and performance.

“Funds that effectively combine machine-learning capabilities with human expertise are positioned to outperform,” Hu says. “Our measure is empirically trade-based and holding-based, thus differentiating performance.

“Many funds hire AI-skilled people for marketing or to improve their customer platform rather than for trading,” she says. “We’re not seeing as many people with those AI skills.”

The paper notes that AI-skilled talent with asset management expertise was less than 1% in the early 2000s, while it’s now just under 2%.

“You don’t need a lot of employees working on AI,” Hu says.

USING AI EFFECTIVELY

Smaller funds can focus AI applications in areas where they have specific domain or investment expertise.

“Our paper is not saying that large funds aren’t using AI,” Hu says. “It shows that, on the aggregate level, we see a stronger effect with relatively smaller funds.”

Simply following machine-learning signals without human intervention can lead to high-turnover strategies and prohibitive trading costs. The most successful approaches combine AI capabilities with human expertise. ■

“Active Machine Learning Based Trading and Mutual Fund Performance” by Xiaowen Hu, SMU Cox School of Business; Maximilian Rohre, Norwegian School of Economics; and Hanjiang Zhang, Washington State University, is a working paper currently under review.

How Mobile Technology Reshaped the Banking Sector

New research from SMU Cox shows community banks still excel at small business lending and relationship banking. **But it’s not enough to compete with big, tech-savvy players.**

THE NUMBER OF SMALL COMMUNITY BANKS across the United States has fallen since 2010, due in large part to transformations in mobile tech infrastructure and consumer preferences. In new, under-review research, SMU Cox Assistant Professor of Finance Charlotte Haendler reveals how mobile technology has altered the competitive landscape between large financial institutions and smaller community banks.

“For banks to withstand fintech competition, they also need a digital footprint, and the way [mobile technology] has rolled out has made banks compete with each other,” Haendler says in her new paper, “Keeping Up in the Digital Era: How Mobile Technology Is Reshaping the Banking Sector.”

Haendler collected new data that maps when each U.S. bank started providing mobile banking services to its customers. Small community banks that were slower to provide apps lost deposits to larger, better-digitalized banks.

BIGGER GROWTH IN A DIGITAL ERA

Once characterized by numerous smaller institutions, the U.S. banking sector saw a rise in consolidation following a period of deregulation in the 1980s, which led to the current dominance of large banks.



“Small community banks struggled the most, having the slowest adoption pace across the banking sector,” Haendler says. “In 2010, about three years after the iPhone launched, only the biggest banks had developed mobile apps. By 2019, that number had grown significantly, but still only 80% of banks offered mobile apps.”

Haendler’s research finds a direct correlation between mobile app availability and deposit retention. As mobile network infrastructure expanded across the U.S. between 2010 and 2019, consumer behavior shifted dramatically.

“When a county gets better mobile signal quality, we observe a migration of depositors from small banks without apps to larger banks providing mobile services,” Haendler says. This pattern held true even when controlling for other factors, suggesting that consumers value digital convenience over traditional relationship banking.

“Small community banks are not only losing deposits and closing branches, but they’re also decreasing their small business lending,” Haendler says. This is despite the fact that community banks have historically excelled at relationship lending, using personal knowledge of local businesses and entrepreneurs to make informed credit decisions.

Although larger banks have increased their small business lending in some areas, Haendler discovered this tends to happen

“ As mobile network infrastructure expanded across the U.S. between 2010 and 2019, consumer behavior shifted dramatically.”

primarily in locations where these institutions don’t maintain physical branches.

“They’re substituting direct daily interaction with digital tools,” she says. However, “it’s not a one-to-one substitution, so we lose some potential for economic growth in the process.”

SPECTRUM EXPANSION

To parse the competitive effects of mobile technology on the banking sector, Haendler identified and measured the spread of mobile network operator spectrum expansions. She notes the greater need for data transfer capacity with the introduction of smartphones and social media—especially streaming video platforms such as YouTube and TikTok, which require more data. Federal Communication Commission spectrum auctions in 2014 and 2016 saw companies bid billions of dollars for frequencies that would allow them to meet consumer mobile data demand.

This technological infrastructure expansion formed the foundation for the growth of mobile banking. From 2014 to 2015, mobile banking adoption crossed the 50% threshold and continued climbing rapidly, alongside changing consumer expectations about financial services.

“Prior to my research, the consensus was that while small banks might not be the most efficient for customers, they excelled at small business lending and relationship banking,” Haendler says. “What I found is that this competitive advantage becomes harder to maintain once they lose their deposit base.”

The substitution of digital interaction for personal relationships in banking is happening rapidly, Haendler concludes. “We need to understand both what we’re gaining and what we might be losing in the process.” ■

“Keeping Up in the Digital Era: How Mobile Technology Is Reshaping the Banking Sector” by Charlotte Haendler, SMU Cox School of Business, is under review.



About the Researcher:

Charlotte Haendler holds a doctorate in finance from the Carroll School of Management at Boston College and a joint master’s degree in financial economics from Bocconi University and HEC Paris. Before earning her Ph.D., she worked at the European Central Bank in the Market Infrastructure and Payments division.

Quotables

3/10/25

KTVT, CBS-11

“Texas Could be State Hardest Hit by Tariffs”

Venky Shankar, professor of marketing, Harold M. Brierley Endowed Professor and academic director of the Brierley Institute for Customer Engagement, predicts Texas will be impacted more than other states by an escalating trade war with China, Mexico and Canada. “Texas and Mexico, we trade about \$275 billion,” Shankar said. “Electrical machinery, mineral fuel and oil, plastics, vehicle parts — all of these will come under a lot of pressure.”

3/10/25

Vox.com

“The Case for Using Your Brain”

Matthew Fisher, assistant professor of marketing, is a source for a story about the pitfalls of relying too heavily on AI chat-bots. Fisher’s previous research “found that people who searched the internet for information felt smarter than they actually are.” He suspects that “this is because old-school internet searching, following hyperlinks and stumbling across information, feels like following your own native train of thought. But it’s important to know what you don’t know.”

3/13/25

Poets&Quants

“SMU Cox Announces New Dean: WashU Olin Prof Todd Milbourn”

Outgoing Dean **Matthew Myers** is quoted in a story that touts what it describes as Myers’ “transformative” tenure and announces Todd Milbourn as the Cox

School’s dean-elect. “Myers told *P&Q* that after talking with Milbourn, he expects the handoff to the new dean to go smoothly. ‘In speaking with Todd, I know he has tremendous respect for the accomplishments of the faculty, staff and students at the Cox School, and will build on that legacy to continue Cox’s ascent to global prominence. Todd’s commitment to excellence in teaching, scholarship, administrative leadership and to community are readily apparent in both his record and his message.’”

3/28/25

KTVT, CBS-11

“Neiman Marcus Downtown Dallas Store to Stay Open Through 2025 Holiday Season”

Venky Shankar, professor of marketing, Harold M. Brierley Endowed Professor and academic director of Brierley Institute for Customer Engagement, comments on the news—just three days before the planned closing date—that the downtown Dallas Neiman Marcus store will stay open through the 2025 holiday season. Shankar says he believes the location’s long history in Dallas may influence its ultimate fate: “It’s [been there for] 100 years plus. Typically, when you have that kind of storied background, shoppers and residents are nostalgic. They’re emotional about it.”

4/11/25

KTVT, CBS-11

“SMU Expert Weighs In on Market Volatility as Students Learn”

Don Shelly, professor of practice in finance, teaches finance students in the Cox School’s Kitt Investing and Trading Center how to withstand the wild stock market swings of

early April. Most college-age students have never witnessed such market uncertainty, but Shelly encourages them to view it as a learning opportunity.

4/23/25

FoxNews.com

“Trump vs. Powell: An Ugly Fight We Don’t Need”

Mike Davis, professor of practice, writes in a commentary that the disagreements between President Donald Trump and Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell over monetary policy and interest rates are more than a “simple power struggle.” Davis writes that unpredictability is negatively affecting bond and currency markets. To restore predictability, he makes a case for what he calls an “easy solution: put a computer in charge of the Fed. Let the machine set interest rates and control the money supply.”

6/2/25

D Magazine

“Texas and Mexico’s Economic Integration Again Faces Uncertain Future”

Michael Cox and **Richard Alm** of the Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom write a follow-up to a 2018 piece about their research on how freedom from trade barriers created economic benefits for Texas and Mexico. Now, seven years later, they maintain that increased tariffs threaten to disrupt those benefits. They write, “When it comes to tariffs, the goal should be reducing them, not increasing them, making trade more, not less, open.”

Faculty & Staff Achievements



**VISHAL
AHUJA**

Ahuja, associate professor in information technology and operations management, traveled to Mumbai, India, in December 2024 to participate in Nanavati Max Super Specialty Hospital's "Unlocking the Future With AI in Healthcare" symposium. A session speaker and panelist, he helped inaugurate the facility's AI and Digital Innovation Hub. In January, Ahuja's paper "The Role of Route-Level Decisions in the Efficiency and Resilience of Airline Operations: Evidence From the Wright Amendment Repeal," co-authored with Yasin Alan and Mazhar Arian, was published by *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*. In April, he moderated a keynote panel on "AI in Healthcare: Prediction to Intervention—How AI is Changing Healthcare" at the Texas Association of Accountable Care Organizations 2025 conference in San Antonio.



**MICHAEL
BRAUN**

Braun, associate professor of marketing and Corrigan Research Professor, was named associate editor at *Marketing Science*, the leading academic publication for quantitative marketing research. His paper "Where A-B Testing Goes Wrong: How Divergent Delivery Affects What Online Experiments Cannot (and Can) Tell You About How Customers Respond to Advertising," co-authored with Eric M. Schwartz, was published in the March 2025 issue of *Journal of Marketing*, the flagship academic journal of the American Marketing Association.



**CRISTALLE
CHOI**

Choi is the director of Professional MBA Admissions, where she develops and implements strategy to attract and recruit top candidates to the PMBA program. Choi comes to Cox from SMU-in-Taos. She graduated from Rollins College with a B.A. in management and a minor in computer science and earned an M.Ed. from SMU Simmons.



**SHANE
GOODWIN**

Goodwin, SMU Cox associate dean of graduate programs and Executive Education and professor of practice in finance, earned a Master of Laws degree from SMU Dedman School of Law in December 2024. Previously, he was awarded a postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard University to conduct mergers and acquisitions (M&A) and corporate governance research and holds a Ph.D. in business administration from Oklahoma State University with a focus on finance. He has more than 30 years of experience in M&A, investment banking and private equity as a practitioner, board member and professor.



**JUSTIN
HARRISON**

Harrison, business undergraduate research librarian, along with Ashley Ajayi, online engagement librarian, and Melissa Johnson, business education librarian, received a Teaching Excellence Award from the SMU Cox Business Leadership Center

for their innovative seminar "When Zombies Attack: An Immersive Research Experience With the Business Library."



**MELISSA JOHNSON &
CLAYTON CRENSHAW**



Johnson, instructional design and educational technologies librarian, and Crenshaw, discovery and

systems development librarian, co-authored the paper "Improving the Student Search Experience in LibGuides," which was published in *Information Technology and Libraries* in December 2024.



**ROBERT
LAWSON**

Lawson, clinical professor and the Jerome M. Fullinwider Centennial Chair in Economic Freedom, received the Gary M. Walton Award for Excellence in Economic Education by the Fund for American Studies at the 2025 TFAS Annual Conference in Naples, Florida. The award recognizes individuals who demonstrate entrepreneurship and innovation in communicating economic principles to students and the public.



SANDY MILLER

Miller, director of the Duda Family Business Library, began serving as SMU Faculty Club vice president in January.



AL NIEMI

Niemi, who increased the Cox School's national and international visibility during his tenure as dean from 1997 to 2017, has retired as professor emeritus. Niemi continued as a Cox faculty member after stepping down from his deanship. He served as the William J. O'Neil Chair in Global Markets and Freedom and continued teaching in the Cox School until 2025.



TRACEY RINEHART

Rinehart, business graduate research librarian, and Melissa Johnson, business education research librarian, presented "When Zombies Attack! Gamifying Research Instruction Using LibGuides CMS and LibWizard" as a Springshare Flash presentation at the Association of College and Research Libraries Conference in April.



RAJ SETHURAMAN

Sethuraman, Marilyn and Leo Corrigan Professor and Harold Simmons Chair in Marketing, received a University Research Council grant for selecting the winner of the Annual Citation Award in Marketing for 2025. He was nominated as senior associate editor of the *Journal of Global Marketing*, where his article, "Non-Reasoned Choice: A New Way of Conceptualizing and Strategizing About an Old Global Consumer Behavior," was recently featured. He also co-authored an invited editorial for the same journal with M.L. Weng, S. Kathuria and A.K. Manrai. Sethuraman was nominated as the international editorial advisory board member of the *Indian Journal of Marketing*. He organized the 12th Global Retail Brand Management Conference, held at Cox in June, and was a visiting research fellow at the University of South Australia in Adelaide in 2024.



VENKATESH "VENKY" SHANKAR

Shankar, Harold M. Brierley Endowed Professor and professor of marketing in the Brierley Institute for Customer Engagement, presented "Leveraging Agentic AI in Marketing" at a University of Texas at Arlington event for its Master of Science in marketing research program. He was also a featured speaker at the Marketing Accountability Standards Board Spring Summit 2025, where he presented "Revisiting Marketing Mix Modeling in a Time of Privacy Concerns." He appeared on WhitegloveAI's *The AI Executive* podcast episode on how AI is revolutionizing marketing and leadership. At the Kellogg Leadership Symposium held at SMU Cox, Shankar was a session panelist for "The Rise of Digital Workers: Transforming Business Operations Through AI."



DEAN STANSEL

Stansel, research associate professor in the Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom, was named to the editorial advisory board of the *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*. He was an organizer and speaker at the 10th Annual Economic Freedom of North America (EFNA) Network Meeting at SMU in September 2024, where academic scholars and public policy experts discussed use of the EFNA report (of which he is the primary author) in their work. In November, Stansel chaired three sessions and presented one paper at the Southern Economic Association conference in Washington, D.C. He appeared on New Mexico's Rio Grande Foundation's *Tipping Point* podcast in December to discuss economic freedom, recorded an interview with NBC-5 TV in Dallas on immigration restrictions and deportation in January, and in February was quoted on inflation in *The Dallas Morning News*. In March, he was a speaker at the Mont Pelerin Society conference in Mexico City, where he discussed the state of U.S. economic freedom, and served as an organizer and session chair at the Public

Choice Society conference in Louisville, Kentucky. In April, Stansel moderated a Bridwell panel discussion of housing affordability and gave five presentations around Texas for the Institute's Teaching Free Enterprise program.



TOM FANGYUN TAN

Tan, associate professor of information technology and operations management and Corrigan Research Professor, was invited to serve as senior editor at the *Production and Operations Management Journal*, a top journal in IT operations management research.



YANHAN (SAVANNAH) TANG

Tang, assistant professor of information technology and operations management, co-authored "Multi-Armed Bandits With Endogenous Learning Curves: An Application to Split Liver Transplantation" with Andrew Li, Alan Scheller-Wolf and Sridhar R. Tayur. The paper was published in *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*. Another paper, "Split Liver Transplantation: An Analytical Decision Support Model," co-authored with Alan Andrew Scheller-Wolf, Sridhar R. Tayur, Emily R. Perito and John P. Roberts, has been accepted for publication in *Operations Research*. In May, she was invited to give three presentations at the 35th Production and Operations Management Society Annual Conference in Atlanta: "Using Wearable Devices for Opioid Use Disorder: A POMDP Approach With Budget Constraints," "Voices of the Vulnerable: Analyzing Social Media Discourse on Child Protective Services," and "Social Media Discussions on Opioid Use Disorders."



JACQUELYN S. THOMAS

Thomas, a Frank and Susan Dunlevy Faculty Fellow, has retired. She is a professor emerita of marketing.



MEG TUSZYNSKI

Tuszynski, managing director and research assistant professor at SMU Cox Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom, published her first book, *Reason, Ideology, and Democracy: A Study in Entangled Political Economy*, co-authored with Richard Wagner. With Robert Lawson and Vincent Miozzi, she co-authored the academic article “Economic Freedom and Growth, Income, Investment and Inequality: A Quantitative Summary of the Literature,” published in the *Southern Economic Journal*. Tuszynski co-authored two op-eds with John Hendrickson of the Iowans for Tax Relief Foundation, published in the *Des Moines Register* and the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*. She also co-authored an op-ed, “How Trump’s Trade War Threatens U.S. Economic Freedom,” which was published in *News & Observer*.



KUMAR VENKATARAMAN

Venkataraman, professor of finance, Maguire Chair in Energy Management, and academic director of the Maguire Energy Institute and Kyle Miller Energy Program, co-authored the article “Receiving Investors in the Block Market for Corporate Bonds” with Stacey Jacobsen, associate professor of finance and Fabacher Endowed Professor of Alternative Asset Management. The paper has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Financial Economics*. Venkataraman also co-authored “Quote Competition in Corporate Bonds,” which has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Finance*, with Terrence Hendershott, Dan Li, Dmitry Livdan and Norman Schuerhoff.

2025 Faculty and Staff Honorees

Cox Senior Associate Dean Bill Dillon honored seven faculty members for their outstanding research and teaching work:

NURI ERSAHIN, Research Excellence Award 2024–25

RUIDI HUANG, Research Excellence Award 2024–25

MARIBETH KUENZI, Carl Sewell Distinguished Service to the Community Award 2024–25

HELMUTH LUDWIG, Eugene T. Byrne Endowed Faculty Innovation Award 2024–25

DARIUS MILLER, Boghetich Family Distinguished Teaching Award 2024–25

MARCEL TUIJN, C. Jackson Grayson Endowed Faculty Innovation Award 2024–25

ERIKA WHEELER, Barbara and James Mangum Endowed Award for Teaching Excellence 2024–25

Outgoing Dean Matthew Myers presented 2025 Staff Recognition Awards to standout Cox staff members nominated by their colleagues and voted on by last year’s Staff Recognition Award honorees:

MONICA BUMPASS, assistant director for marketing, Career Management Center

MIKE GEBRESELASSIE, academic technology services director

TWINK HALASZ, Accounting Department academic support

JILL JONES, coordinator, Career Management Center

DEBBIE MACEDONIA, assistant dean, Graduate Admissions

EMILY NEWSOME, associate director, Executive MBA program

VINCENT PHILLIPS, associate director, Graduate Admissions

TOSHA RIDDLE-MAY, associate director, Folsom Institute for Real Estate

EMILY SCHMEHL, associate director of client engagement, Executive Education

Dee Powell Retires After 41 Years With SMU Cox

Dee Powell, long-serving executive assistant of the dean’s office at Cox, retired on December 31, 2024. She joined the Cox School in 1983 and tirelessly served the school and its community for more than four decades. She shepherded numerous deans and interim deans through both good times and challenging times, including Roy Herberger, David Blake, Al Niemi and Matthew Myers—and did it all with a smile, a sense of humor



and incredible capability. Powell is beloved not only by so many at Cox but also by colleagues on campus, members of the Cox Executive Board and countless alumni who call her friend.



Development

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SHAPING
ROW

SMU Ignited Campaign Surpasses Expectations

With donations totaling \$1.64 billion, the campaign ranks among the largest private university campaigns in Texas history.



Outgoing SMU President R. Gerald Turner (left) and SMU Board of Trustees Chair David Miller shake hands at an event thanking campaign donors.

THANKS TO MORE THAN 67,500 donors, volunteers and supporters, *SMU Ignited: Boldly Shaping Tomorrow* exceeded its \$1.5 billion goal three years ahead of schedule. At the end of the spring semester and 2024–25 fiscal year, the University announced a campaign total of more than \$1.64 billion, placing *SMU Ignited* among the largest private university campaigns in Texas history.

In early May, the University hosted a midday celebration honoring everyone who made this tremendous success possible.

“Since launching in 2021, the *SMU Ignited* campaign has promoted pioneering research and teaching, support for outstanding students, and the enhancement of our campus and community,” said R. Gerald Turner, then-SMU president. “Donor support has fueled an era of unprecedented impact and national prominence in academics and athletics. The University will be forever grateful to our supporters for creating an exciting future through their boundless dedication and generosity.”

During the *SMU Ignited* campaign, the University achieved transformative milestones:

- **Receiving Research One (R1) status** from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education
- **Entry into the prestigious Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC)**, a national conference of some of the most accomplished college athletic programs and the premier conference when it comes to academics
- **Significant growth in student recruitment**, with undergraduate applications 59% higher than when the campaign launched in 2021

“We are deeply grateful to the *SMU Ignited* donors and volunteers. Your dedication and commitment have been crucial to helping us achieve this great milestone,” said SMU Board of Trustees Chair David B. Miller, ’72, ’73. “Your support enables the University to champion bold research,

attract exceptional talent and enhance our community.”

The University joins an elite number of universities that have concluded fundraising campaigns totaling \$1.5 billion or more, including fellow ACC members Stanford, Duke and Miami. SMU is a member of CASE 50, a group of top global fundraising educational institutions, as certified by the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

Campaign support enables SMU to serve more high-achieving students, regardless of means or background, and invest in faculty pursuits that have substantial societal impact. By expanding academic centers and institutes, endowed positions for faculty members, and resources for research and travel, SMU attracts teachers and graduate students who provide thought leadership in their fields and tackle complex challenges important to communities around the world.

In addition, *SMU Ignited* results in more partnerships with corporations and nonprofits for investments in academic and athletic facilities that foster a vibrant environment where students and faculty excel.

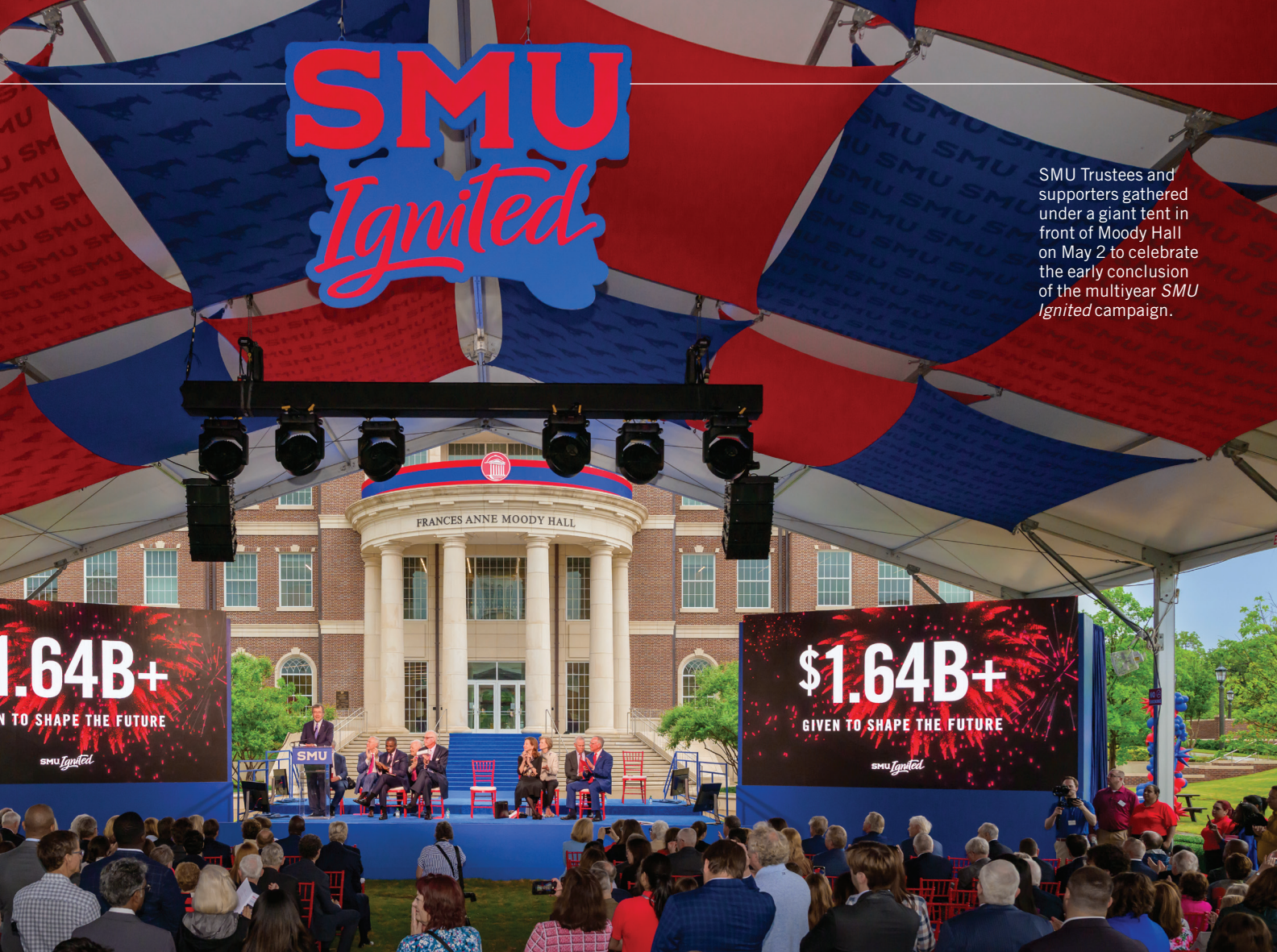
Throughout the campaign, several generous donors made transformational gifts that set new University records:

- **Moody Foundation** gave the largest gift in SMU history—\$100 million—to create the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies.
- **Carolyn and David B. Miller, ’72, ’73** committed \$50 million—the largest contribution in SMU history from an alumni family—to support the Cox School of Business.
- **Garry Weber Foundation** made the largest gift ever to SMU Athletics: \$50 million for the Garry Weber End Zone Complex at Gerald J. Ford Stadium.
- **William S. Spears** contributed the largest gift by a non-alum to establish the William S. Spears Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership in the Cox School of Business.



- **Jan and Trevor D. Rees-Jones, ’78** committed \$30 million to the construction and endowment of the Rees-Jones Library of the American West, plus the gift of the Rees-Jones Collection valued at more than \$100 million. They continued to make significant contributions for collection enhancement and expenses related to the incorporation of the collection into the SMU library system.

“Through unwavering generosity and dedication, our donors have supported the growth of the University and have created a lasting legacy that will inspire generations of Mustangs,” said SMU Senior Vice President for Development and External Affairs Brad E. Cheves. “Their leadership and vision empower SMU to make a personal and enduring impact on our communities through education and research.”



SMU Trustees and supporters gathered under a giant tent in front of Moody Hall on May 2 to celebrate the early conclusion of the multiyear *SMU Ignited* campaign.

By the Numbers

SMU has improved in significant ways, generating momentum for continuous growth and providing funding for every area of the University:

61%

Increase in the SMU endowment

23

Major new and renovated facilities

554

New endowed scholarships and fellowships

59%

Increase in research expenditures

37

New endowed academic positions

20

Major academic initiatives and institutes

Over the last 30 years, SMU has raised more than \$3 billion during three comprehensive campaigns for new scholarships, student support, capital projects, and academic positions and programs, in addition to contributions for the George W. Bush Presidential Center. Although *SMU Ignited: Boldly Shaping Tomorrow* concludes ahead of schedule, the University's commitment to fundraising in support of students, faculty and facilities remains strong. Efforts will continue for capital, current-use funds, endowment gifts and key priorities such as scholarships, faculty positions, athletics and school initiatives. Volunteer fundraising committees and executive boards will remain active to address pressing needs and support SMU schools and units.

See the complete list of SMU Ignited campaign donors and volunteers at smu.edu/ignited. ■

Ignited Generosity

We thank the generous donors who made **GIFTS AND COMMITMENTS OF \$100,000 OR MORE** to the Cox School of Business from June 1, 2024–May 31, 2025.



Anita Ray Arnold and Truman Arnold

Cox School Renovation and Expansion Fund

Anonymous

EnCap & LCM Group Alternative Asset Center

Anonymous

Alessandra Comini Endowed Scholarship Fund (*Planned Gift*)

William E. Armentrout Foundation

Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom

Peter J. Bates '96 and Sarah Riley Bates '96

SMU Fund for Cox Business

Ellen M. Beldy and Timothy Dempsey

SMU Fund for Cox Business

Allison T. Benners and Frederick H. Benners, Jr. '90, '97

SMU Fund for Cox Business

Robert S. Bennett '76 and Elaine C. Bennett

Cox School Renovation and Expansion Fund

Kristen Blabey and Robert Blabey, III

The Blabey Family Endowed Fund

CFP Foundation

CFP Foundation B.B.A. Scholars Subiendo Academy at SMU Cox

Christine Abshire Cook '91 and Christopher T. Cook '91

The Christine and Chris Cook Endowed B.B.A. Scholars Fund

Jeffrey S. Ellerman '81 and Pamela Ellerman

Cox School Renovation and Expansion Fund

Farley Hooper Erikson '90 and Steven B. Erikson

Cox School Renovation and Expansion Fund

Doug E. Ferber '84

The Professor Thomas E. Barry Endowed Marketing Scholarship Fund

Deborah O'Neal Gibbins '87 and Robbin C. Gibbins

SMU Cox School of Business Student Scholarships (*Planned Gift*)

Laura Guerin Howard '00 and William J. Howard '00

SMU Cox School of Business Student Scholarships (*Planned Gift*)

Joshua W. Hunt '01 and Martita Sealy Hunt '02

Cox School Renovation and Expansion Fund

The Jeanne R. Johnson Foundation

The Jeanne Johnson Women in Business Scholarship Fund

Kristine S. Johnson and Scott A. Johnson '86

The Scott and Kristine Johnson Endowed Scholarship Fund (*Planned Gift*)
Folsom Real Estate Institute Fund

Charles M. Kennedy

The Charles M. Kennedy Endowed Accounting Scholarship Fund

J. Luther King, Jr. and Teresa King

Luther King Capital Management Fund

Jeremy M. Lacy '96

The Jeremy M. Lacy Endowed Scholarship Fund

George R. Lewis †

The James M. Lewis Memorial Scholarship Fund

Steven J. Lindley '74 and Shelli Mims Lindley

Cox School Renovation and Expansion Fund

Laura V. Lodwick and Peter A. Lodwick '77, '80

The Peter A. Lodwick Endowed Business Scholarship Fund

Katherine A. Maddox and Matthew O. Maddox '98

SMU Fund for Cox Business

Donald N. Morriss '76 and Patricia Glasgow Morriss '75

Academic Support

Laran Claire O'Neill '01, '08

The Laran C. O'Neill Endowed Business Scholarship Fund (*Planned Gift*)

Jacqueline R. Pack and John A. Pack

Folsom Real Estate Institute Fund

David L. Powell

The Helen Gissler Powell Endowed

Business Scholarship Fund, in memory of Mrs. Helen Gissler Powell

H. Walker Royall '93 and Jennifer Anne Royall

SMU Cox Real Estate Impact Fund

Carl Sewell '66 and Peggy Higgins Sewell '72

Sewell B.B.A. Scholars

Estate of Walter G. Sheffield

The Walter Sheffield Endowed MBA Scholarship Fund

C. Morgan Simpson '73 and Linda M. Simpson

Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom

Jennifer Overstreet Styslinger '86 and Mark J. Styslinger '87

B.B.A. Business Scholars Program

Mimi Vanderstraaten and William H. Vanderstraaten '82

Cox School Renovation and Expansion Fund

Margaret Weekley and Richard W. Weekley '67

Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom
Cox School Business Economics Education Programs

Jennifer C. Witz and Joshua A. Witz '93

The Witz Family Endowed Business Scholarship Fund

Lisa Pon Wong '95 and Tony Wong '95

The Tony and Lisa Wong Endowed Scholarship Fund

Words of Impact

Donors and recipients share their excitement and gratitude.

A **DONOR GIFT** can help shape the future for one student or many students. These gifts come in all sizes and honor a range of donor wishes, such as the Cox School's Renovation and Expansion Project, and planned gifts support future efforts. Operating and endowment gifts benefit a range of Cox programs, faculty research and student scholarships *for decades*. Below are examples of the many ways donors make immeasurable impact.

PLANNED GIVING



"We truly believe it's important to leave people, places and things better off than we found them.

Establishing a planned gift at this stage in our lives helps ensure a bright future for SMU."

— **Courtney Caldwell**
B.B.A. '00

"When I look back at my life and what has influenced me, SMU is right up there at the top. The only way I know to return that favor is to give back."

— **Sam Thomas**
B.B.A. '72, planned gift supporting scholarships for future Cox students

PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT



"We want to put students' bright brains to work helping solve problems in the community. Their eyes light

up when they apply their skills toward helping other people. It's gratifying to positively impact other people for generations."

— **Bill Vanderstraaten**
B.B.A. '82, supporting the SMU Cox Real Estate Fund



"The opportunity to have a focused energy management program at the Cox School where we're situated—in the Southwest and the center of domestic energy industry—makes all the sense in the world. I was thrilled to support this important endeavor."

— **Kyle D. Miller**
B.B.A. '01, supporting the Kyle D. Miller Energy Management Program

FACULTY SUPPORT



"Generous support of the Maguire Chair of Oil and Gas Management facilitates my research activities that

enhance SMU's reputation as a major research university and the classroom experience for Cox students."

— **Kumar Venkataraman**
Maguire Chair of Oil and Gas Management



"Donor support to the Cox finance department is invaluable to our ability to provide excellent educational outcomes and resources for our amazing students—and to produce impactful research."

— **Stacey Jacobsen**
Fabacher Endowed Professor of Alternative Asset Management



"I am genuinely grateful to have had the opportunity to work hand in hand with Hal Brierley, a generous, visionary leader who is sincerely committed to SMU Cox students and their mastery of customer engagement principles, strategy and tactics."

— **Marci Armstrong**
Founding Director, Brierley Institute for Customer Engagement

SCHOLARSHIPS



"Since I graduated, I have been contributing to SMU scholarship funds to attract top students in our SMU

family from all different backgrounds. Diverse thought and experiences enhance the total education that SMU can provide to its students."

— **Billie Ida Williamson**
B.B.A. '74, supporting the Billie Ida – Ernst & Young Scholarship Endowment



"Growing up in the Dallas area, I always hoped to attend SMU, so I feel grateful and honored to have received the

B.B.A. scholarship. My highlights at SMU include serving as a Don Jackson Fellow in the Alternative Asset Management Center program and as student representative to the Board of Trustees Finance and Audit Committees, but I've loved it all. SMU's supportive environment and top-notch education have empowered me both academically and personally."

— **Mohan Desai**

B.B.A. '24, recipient of the CFP Foundation B.B.A. Scholarship



"Generous support made an immense impact on my ability to fully immerse myself in the MBA program

and excel as a first-generation student. I have been able to focus my energy and attention on my studies and leadership roles in extracurricular activities. Thank you for unwavering support and helping me achieve my dreams."

— **Muneerah Jemal**

MBA '24, recipient of the David B. Miller Endowed Scholarship



"It is an honor to be a recipient of the David B. Miller Endowed Scholarship. I am truly grateful for the

opportunities it has provided. I hope to one day make a difference in the lives of others, just as donors have in mine."

— **Manu Ravindra Reddy**

MBA '24, recipient of the David B. Miller Endowed Scholarship



"Kind and generous gifts empowered me to pursue business as an agent for social change, inventing an

affordable, self-stabilizing eating device that empowers people with Parkinson's and essential tremor. We've won several pitch competitions and received investment interest from VC firms and angel investors. My success is possible because of SMU donors."

— **Raleigh Dewan**

B.B.A. '23, recipient of the Susie V. and Edgar W. Armentrout Memorial Scholarship

"As someone who grew up in the Dallas area and always hoped to attend SMU, receiving a B.B.A. scholarship was an honor. After I graduated in May, I moved to New York City to work in investment banking at Goldman Sachs. I hope to one day give back to SMU to fund similar scholarships and attract other high-achieving students to the university."

— **Weston Emery**

B.B.A. '24, recipient of the CFP Foundation B.B.A. Scholarship



"Generous support is one of the reasons I decided to come to SMU from San Diego, California. Being a B.B.A.

scholar allowed me to explore my passion for business and learn the skills I will need to succeed in the future. Thank you for helping give me the best possible college experience."

— **Emily Engler**

B.B.A. '27, recipient of the Sewell B.B.A. Scholarship



"The Sewell B.B.A. Scholarship is not just a financial award; it is an investment in my future.

With your generous support, I am able to pursue my dream of becoming a Certified Public Accountant. Your support not only helps ease my financial burden but also serves as motivation for me to excel in my academic journey."

— **Bianca Hidalgo**

B.B.A. '24, recipient of the Sewell B.B.A. Scholarship

CAPITAL



"Our gift is an investment in the next generation of entrepreneurs and big ideas. I am excited to support the Cox

School's forward-focused vision for advancing business education and developing talented business leaders, and I can't wait to see what the future holds for SMU Cox."

— **David B. Miller**

B.B.A. '72, MBA '73



"The Cox School taught me to anticipate future business landscapes. This facility will give next-generation CEOs

experience in a data-driven, collaborative environment and the skills to build trust with customers. Sharroll and I are thrilled to give back to SMU and to educate the next generation of entrepreneurs."

— **Bryan S. Sheffield**

B.B.A. '01



"SMU has truly made the American dream possible for me. SMU is a place that encourages students to think

and lead. Gina and I are excited to support Cox and see the future impact of the Bridwell Institute. We can't wait to see how future Mustangs, using their SMU education, change the business landscape."

— **Tucker S. Bridwell**

B.B.A. '73, MBA '74

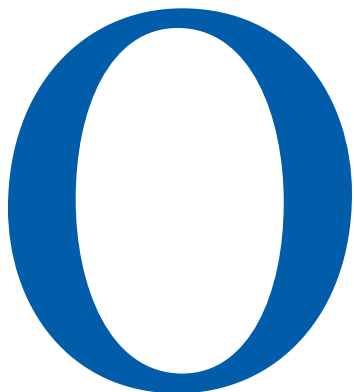
The Legacy of **Dean Matthew Myers**

At the end of **HIS TRANSFORMATIVE EIGHT-YEAR TENURE**, the outgoing dean and his colleagues reflect upon how he launched a “new era” for SMU Cox.

By SHAWN SHINNEMAN







OUTGOING SMU COX DEAN Matthew Myers still remembers what an outgoing chancellor at the University of Tennessee once told him at a cocktail party, a bit of insight that ended up as advice.

"I said, 'Why are you stepping down?'" Myers says. "He said, 'Matt, let me tell you: The difference between leaving too early and staying too long is one day.'"

Remembering that advice, and after the opening of the new \$140 million David B. Miller Business Quadrangle, Myers announced last summer that the 2024–2025 academic year would be his last as dean. After a tenure that saw Cox's standing as a top business school grow and its campus transform—launching a "new era of the Cox School," as SMU President R. Gerald Turner put it—Myers will return to SMU as the David B. Miller Endowed Professor in Business, as well as the inaugural Senior Fellow at the Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom at Cox. He will be on sabbatical during the 2025–26 year, and in the spring semester of 2026, he will serve as visiting faculty at the IE Business School in Madrid.

The move comes eight years after Myers walked onto campus and developed a 10-year plan to build the SMU Cox brand, the building, the programs and the endowment.

"Last year, we took a look around and realized it was a great time to hand off the baton," Myers says. "It's great to bring in new energy and new ideas when those transition points occur. ... They don't always happen on five-year cycles."

“

The amazing result of his effort to renovate and expand the school was an investment of \$140 million, the largest single project in SMU's history. This has transformed the entire campus and the culture within Cox.

— **Tucker Bridwell**
Cox Executive Board Chair



AMBITIOUS BEGINNINGS

Before Myers got the job at SMU, he held the same role at the Farmer School of Business at Miami University in Ohio, a position he refers to now as "like administrator graduate school." That is to say that by the time he got to SMU in 2017, there weren't many remaining surprises.

Despite its smaller size, SMU felt like going from AAA ball to the big leagues. The Cox School was exponentially larger in terms of opportunity and reputation, and Myers' team quickly developed a plan to leverage that stature to elevate the Cox name.

During the interview process, Myers snuck over to campus from his hotel at night and visualized a campus renovation. "I thought, 'This is a real opportunity for the next person that comes in,'" he says. Still, campus upgrades were nowhere to be found on the school's master plan.

"When Matt came, there were no plans

for remodeling or revamping the Cox School buildings," says Tucker Bridwell, Cox Executive Board chair and benefactor of the Bridwell Institute for Economic Freedom. "The amazing result of his effort to renovate and expand the school was an investment of \$140 million, the largest single project in SMU's history. ... This has transformed the entire campus and the culture within Cox."

Step one was convincing campus of the need, which meant stealing attention from some 20 other construction projects in motion—and winning over donors. Myers channeled what he'd seen elsewhere, from the transformation of Miami's Farmer School to similar projects at Duke University and the University of Southern California, which saw their rankings climb after completion.

"Matt tells our story and value prop well, and he's established really close relationships with trustees, executive board members and donors," says Bill Dillon, senior associate dean at Cox. "When



(Left to right)
David B. Miller,
B.B.A. '72, MBA
'73; Dean Myers;
Tucker Bridwell,
B.B.A. '73,
MBA '74; and
Kirk Rimer,
MBA '89 at the
groundbreaking
for the David B.
Miller Business
Quadrangle in
May 2022.

donors step up and put their hands in their pockets, that says the relationship is real and meaningful.”

The turning point came when David Miller, SMU Board of Trustees chair and Cox Executive Board member, walked into his office and said he’d give \$50 million to the cause. “I can tell you exactly how he was sitting; he was drinking a Diet Coke,” Myers says. “That launched everything.”

A TRYING TIME FOR CAMPUS LIFE

Though he had a plan for campus, Myers couldn’t have imagined the challenges

that would come about during his tenure as dean.

The last decade, he points out, has brought about social unrest in a variety of forms that spilled over onto college campuses: the #MeToo movement in 2017; protests following the 2014 killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and the 2020 murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis; the ongoing conflict in Gaza; and a few particularly polarizing election cycles.

Add to those a global pandemic, and “you’d be really hard-pressed to find a more challenging time for a higher education administrator,” Myers says.



Dean Myers, joined by his family, was honored at the Cox Executive Board dinner in April.

So even beyond accomplishments such as the building and Cox's elevated national standing, it's navigating the various social and cultural hurdles that shines brightest as Myers reflects on his tenure.

"What I'm most proud of is the fact that the culture in this school held steady. We've kept our eye on the ball," he says. "We focused on what's best for students and what's best for each other. We have a work-hard, play-hard culture here, which I think is appropriate for Texas and appropriate for this campus. And we have preserved that sense of community, whereas a lot of other schools have not."

Still, Myers is quick to acknowledge that, as dean, creating a sense of teamwork is key. "The dean is not a boss," he says. "You're a

managing partner at best." The job is about building consensus, navigating a handful of constituencies—students, faculty, central administration, donors and companies—that can pull you and the school in different directions.

"A great business school dean is part strategist, part motivator, part visionary and—let's be real—part magician," said Cox Executive Board Member Katherine R. Crow at a recent executive board dinner honoring the outgoing dean.

"They have to attract world-class faculty, inspire students, expand programming and experiential learning, engage alumni, build relationships with industry leaders, and somehow still have time to shake hands and attend a seemingly endless lineup of

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What I’m most proud of is the fact that the culture in this school held steady. We focused on what’s best for students and what’s best for each other.

— *Matthew Myers*



networking events. And let me tell you, Matt Myers did all of this and more with style, grace and a good dose of humor.”

Myers tried to focus his efforts on building a narrative, striking a balance between the interested parties while keeping the school’s commitment to teaching and research excellence at the forefront. As the new campus came together, he pushed for a “9 to 9” culture, meaning students would remain on campus during those 12 hours of the day. He’d seen other successful deans adopt a simple philosophy: culture first.

“When people are happy and working well together,” he says, “their performance is just light-years better than where there’s a lot of strife and conflict and unhappy people.”

THE LONG ROAD TO SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

When Myers was an undergrad himself, academia couldn’t have been further from his radar. He studied structural geology and figured he’d never work an “indoor” job in his life. In the early 1980s, he served in Panama as a platoon medic in the U.S. Army Airborne. Afterward—and when the energy market crashed in 1986—Myers made the decision to head back to school.

He attended the Darla Moore School of Business at the University of South Carolina for his master’s degree in international business studies—years that proved transformative. “They were the best two years I ever had,” he says. “When I set foot on campus, I knew I never wanted to leave campus again.” He then headed north for his Ph.D. at Michigan State University’s Eli Broad College of Business.

Myers began his career as a professor with a broad base of real-world experience, including stints at Merrill Lynch and IBM Argentina prior to his graduating, which helped him relate to his students.

“It’s great to have those experiences as you come into the applied portion of your classroom teaching,” Myers says. “It’s not only a credibility thing; you’re able to speak on the level that you should be able to.”

For any dean, an ability to relate to wide audiences proves critical. “Cultures are

driven by things as practical as budgets and org charts, but they're also driven by the narrative about, 'What do we want to accomplish together?'" he says. "If you can put that narrative together and communicate it throughout the entire group—faculty, students, donors, central administrators—no success is guaranteed, but your chances of success are higher."

Building upon that narrative and the foundation in place at Cox, Myers next envisions the school propelling into a role of global education business leader by strengthening academic programs and thought leadership. To that end, SMU announced in March 2025 that Todd Milbourn will lead the effort. The corporate finance expert and former professor at Washington University's Olin Business School became the 10th dean of the Cox School in June.

"I think he's the perfect person for that role," Myers says. "It's a lot of hard work, but I know we've got the right guy."

Meanwhile, Myers will get another go at relating to students in a classroom setting when he and his wife Gina are in Spain for his visiting professor role at IE Business School in Madrid.

"We love to spend time there, and IE Madrid has been a wonderful partner to the Cox School," Myers says. "[The visiting professorship] will allow us to be part of another university community, and for me to get ready to get back in the classroom in Fall 2026."

MYERS' LEGACY AND THE FUTURE OF COX

The Cox School's new home—all 260,000 square feet of it—officially opened in Fall 2024. It's a state-of-the-art, technology-driven learning space that emphasizes collaboration. With the new buildings have come an updated curriculum and programming that emphasizes experience over lecture, in line with the shifting business world. It's also built to accommodate projected future growth at Cox.

"One thing that was readily apparent was that if we were going to become a top 35, top 30 business school, we weren't going to do it in those buildings," Myers says. "It wasn't just because of the size. There was no way we could teach a modernized curriculum or attract a world-class student in the facilities we had."

“

If we had to point to one defining achievement of Matt's tenure, it would undoubtedly be the newly renovated Cox School of Business and Miller Quadrangle. This isn't just a building; it's a bold statement about the future of business education.

— **Katherine R. Crow**
Cox Executive Board Member



Matthew B. Myers

Dean, Edwin L. Cox School of Business,

Tolleson Chair in Business Leadership and
David B. Miller Endowed Professor in Business

Dean Myers addresses the crowd at the dedication ceremony for the Miller Quad in May 2024.



Myers spearheaded the project from a conceptual phase through fundraising and, finally, construction. He energized the donation process along the way, securing more than \$300 million since the SMU Ignited campaign launched in 2017. He credits the team around him for helping bring the project to life, including Dillon, who was instrumental in executing Myers' vision.

"What I do here is everything that he doesn't want to do," says Dillon, who has been associate dean since 1994 and helped acclimate Myers to the culture at Cox.

"He's a people person and a student-centric person—part of his motivation for this new building," Dillon says of

Myers. "It wasn't just that the old building was outdated, but it was that students were losing out on the experience. It wasn't a place where anybody wanted to hang out."

Greater recognition throughout national rankings has already started to trickle in. Cox now ranks No. 34 on *U.S. News & World Report's* Full-Time MBA (FTMBA) rankings, up from the low 50s just a few years ago. The Cox FTMBA comes in at No. 26 in *Bloomberg Businessweek*. The school's Online MBA program ranks No. 21 in *Poets&Quants*.

"If we had to point to one defining achievement of Matt's tenure, it would undoubtedly be the newly renovated Cox School of Business and Miller Quadrangle," Crow said

at the recent executive board dinner. "This isn't just a building; it's a bold statement about the future of business education. And it wasn't just about bricks and mortar. It was about bringing people together."

Appreciation for Myers' efforts was apparent at the dinner, which featured Crow's remarks as well as those from several other board members who offered their gratitude for a tenure that saw it all.

"Matt, I want to say thank you," said David Miller. "You not only profoundly impacted the Cox School of Business, but you've helped elevate the brand and the national reputation of SMU." ■

All in the Cox Family

When it came time to make a college decision, these children of Cox School faculty and staff didn't have to search too far to **FIND A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION.**

By SHAWN SHINNEMAN

WHEN A COLLEGE DECISION approaches, it's natural for parents to have opinions about it—and perhaps a desire for their children not to wander too far from home.

But when those parents work at a given university, the decision can hold even more weight. Still, the SMU Cox faculty and staff members we spoke to mostly said they took a gentle touch to their kids' decision-making process, supporting broad quests that took them to campuses across the country.

For the four families in this story, those explorations eventually led back to the Hilltop. We chatted with them to hear about the search process and what it's like to have Mom or Dad on campus—sometimes down the hall—while creating your own college life.

LINDA KAO AND JULIANA LU

At the start, Juliana Lu wasn't just exploring her options. She was dead set on leaving Texas. She thought staying in Dallas for college would have a way of trapping her in the same high school community and keep her from trying anything new. But when her mom, SMU Cox Assistant Dean of Global Programs Linda Kao, convinced her to simply set up an official campus visit, everything changed.

"Despite my preconceived notions, I was blown away," Lu says. "I'd walked through the buildings regularly with my mom, but the campus tour showed me a side of the school I had somehow never seen before, and the tour guide spoke with such energy, wisdom and poise that I couldn't help but reconsider my decision to get out of Dallas."



“

The campus tour showed me a side of the school I had somehow never seen before, and the tour guide spoke with such energy, wisdom and poise that I couldn't help but reconsider my decision to get out of Dallas.

— *Juliana Lu*
Rising Senior

Kao, who'd been trying her best "not to intervene and encourage her to see the one-of-a-kind opportunities SMU Cox offered," was in Buenos Aires for a global leadership program with MBA students when Lu, in the last hour before the decision deadline, called to tell her the news. "I was so excited that I broke down in tears," Kao remembers.

Having her daughter on campus for the two to discuss Lu's classes and community, challenges and achievements, has been a thrill. "I enjoy visiting with her and giving her big hugs," Kao says. Lu, who is studying finance at Cox and about to start her senior year, had been worried that being on campus with her mom could stunt her independence but says Kao actively encouraged her to find her tribe and become self-sufficient.

"She's been very hands-off but also incredibly supportive of my journey, and I'm so appreciative of it," Lu says. "The best part about having my mom here is that she's always there for me when I need her most. During the most stressful times, I'm never alone. And during my proudest moments, she's always there cheering me on."

MATTHEW, WINSTON AND CARLI MYERS

In 2017, when Matthew Myers accepted the role as the Cox School's next dean, he wasn't just making a career move. He was setting the foundation for his family's next chapter. At the time, his twin daughters, Carli and Winston, were in seventh grade. "We just knew they were going to thrive a lot more in Dallas and Texas than they were in southwestern Ohio," he says. "They were both born in Tennessee—they're Southern girls."

Fast forward to today, and the two rising seniors have indeed found a home in Texas, although they took their own paths to choosing SMU. Carli wanted to go far away at first but came back around to SMU after getting a taste of the atmosphere on campus and at tailgates during high school. For



Winston, SMU edged out American University in Washington, D.C., when she got the chance to be a part of SMU's drumline.

"The culture here was a big plus for me, as well as the great education SMU provides," she says. Both were admitted into SMU and Cox and enrolled, with Winston focusing on marketing and Carli on real estate.

Gina Myers, the girls' mom, says the decision was never forced. "We did ask them to strongly consider SMU, but then we really took our hands off the wheel and allowed them to explore other universities," she says.

She still remembers coordinating the deliveries of their acceptance letters, a tradition for local students. "The look on their faces when they received the package, for me, made it real," she says. "They were really going somewhere—whether it was SMU or somewhere else."



Outgoing Cox Dean Matthew Myers with daughters Winston and Carli, on track to graduate from the SMU Cox B.B.A. program in May 2026, and wife Gina.

“
The culture
here was a
big plus for
me, as well
as the great
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SMU provides.”

— *Winston Myers*
Rising Senior

Both Carli and Winston had early reservations about attending college where their dad is dean—“I was petrified he’d find me in the halls and embarrass me,” says Carli—but both siblings have found independence. They enjoy their on-campus run-ins with Dad, the support of a never-too-far-away sibling and the ability to swing home to see Mom.

“Having her as a best friend I can see whenever I want while balancing life as a student at SMU Cox,” Carli says, “has been the best experience.”

HEMANG AND MOHAN DESAI

Though he had fond memories of tagging along with his father to SMU sporting events growing up, Mohan Desai had always pictured himself getting out of Dallas after high school. He’d



Cox Distinguished Professor of Accounting Hemang Desai with son Mohan (above). Maguire Energy Institute Director of Energy Innovation Xavier Tison and son Alec (right).

looked on both coasts and everywhere in between before narrowing the list to four: Washington University in St. Louis, Emory University in Atlanta, the University of Texas in Austin and SMU—right here at home.

The turning point came during a visit for a Cox Spotlight event, during which representatives from SMU laid out what Mohan's life on campus could look like, personalizing discussion about internships, employability and future job prospects for the pending business major. "That stood out from some of the other college visits," he says. "That's when the decision was made in my mind."

Hemang, who chairs the Cox School's accounting department, says he remained mostly hands off throughout the process, offering objective advice and reminding his son that no matter what decision he made, it would come with trade-offs—but that he could carve out a good experience anywhere. Still, knowing the education Cox would afford, Hemang was thrilled to see the glow in his son's face when he came home from the Spotlight that day.

"He will not get the exposure to another city or another part of the country, that was the downside," Hemang says. "But

“
There was a good balance of not feeling like I was too close to home but also getting that mentorship and advice when needed.

— Mohan Desai, B.B.A. '24

“

I know [my dad] is here to help me and I love him, so it's always great to be around him.

— **Alec Tison**
Rising Sophomore

the benefits are, of course, this is such a good university and such a good business school—and you have your whole life ahead of you to live outside of Texas and get the exposure.”

Mohan would go on to take classes taught by Hemang's peers at Cox, although his dad never mentioned the relationship to his fellow faculty members. Mohan has since graduated and taken employment as an investment analyst at Cambridge Associates, although he'll soon transition to a new role in growth capital at a firm called Oris.

Although his time on campus was

mostly marked by proximity to family rather than pressure, the two relished getting 10 or 15 minutes before or after classes and Mohan's ability to swing by home for family get-togethers. “There was a good balance of not feeling like I was too close to home but also getting that mentorship and advice when needed,” Mohan says.

XAVIER AND ALEC TISON

For Alec Tison, the college decision didn't require much soul-searching. He may have briefly flirted with choosing a school in the United Kingdom, but SMU had always been a part of his story—right down to the moment his parents met on campus and, later, when his dad proposed to his mom in a Dallas Hall classroom. “I figured I was going to SMU for a while,” he says.

So did his father Xavier Tison, director of energy innovation at SMU's Maguire Energy Institute, who is not shy about saying he “100%” took an active role in his son's recruitment. “The financial benefit alone,” he says, speaking to the tuition discount for children of full-time faculty and staff, was well worth it.

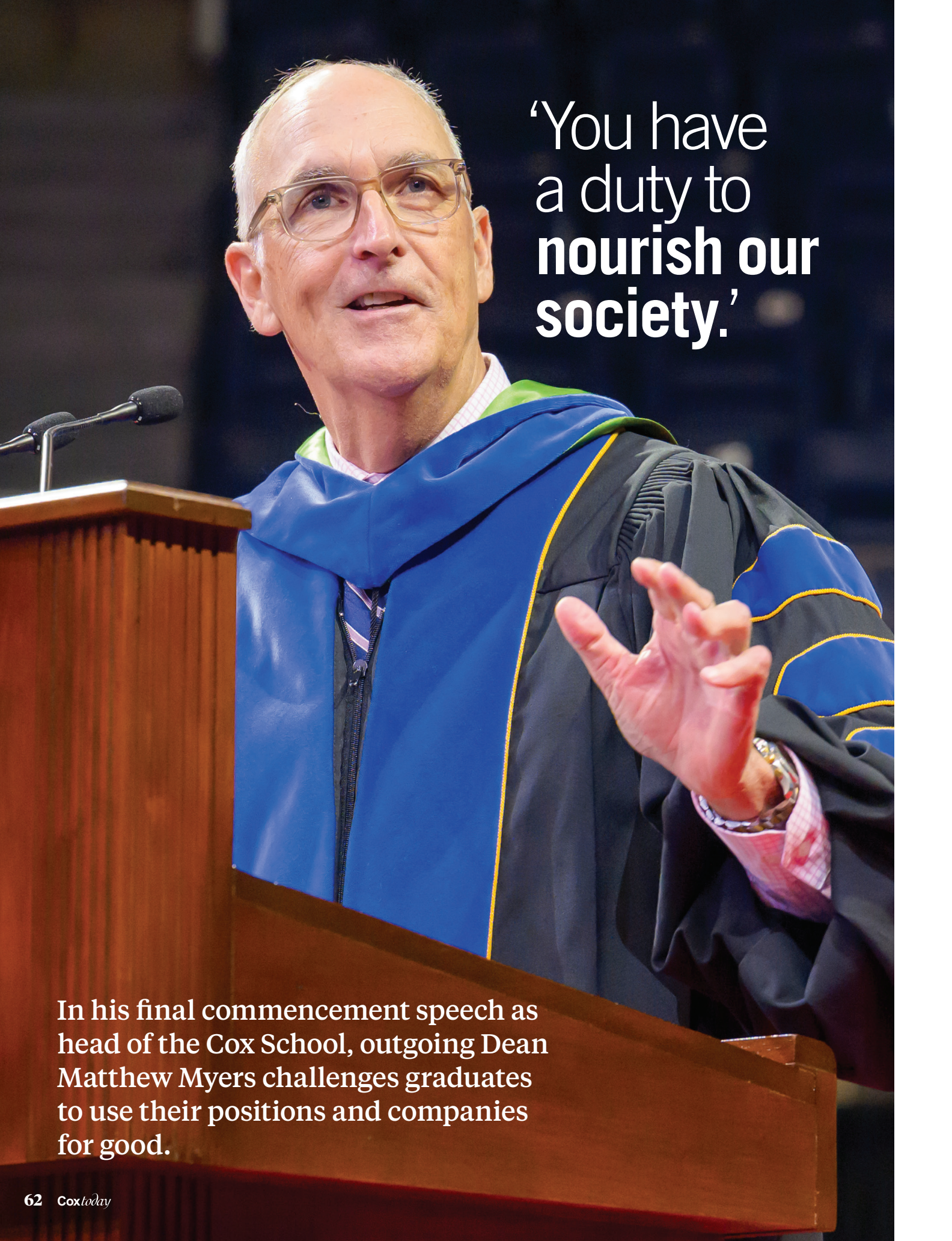
But there's also the pride of his son walking the same halls that served as Xavier's home away from his home back in France—and the pragmatism of being nearby. “We've traveled as a family,” he says. “We've been in many locations across the world. It's nice to travel, but it's also very nice to be there in 30 minutes.”

Alec didn't take much convincing. Academically, SMU's programs aligned with his goals. Alec, who just completed his freshman year, is already designing his own path, double majoring in business and political science, minoring in Russian, working as a residential assistant at his dorm, and eyeing a future in energy.

He's also enjoying college life and routine campus meet-ups with his father, planned or otherwise. “Sometimes I see him and I text from the other side of campus,” Xavier laughs. “I'm like, ‘I see you.’”

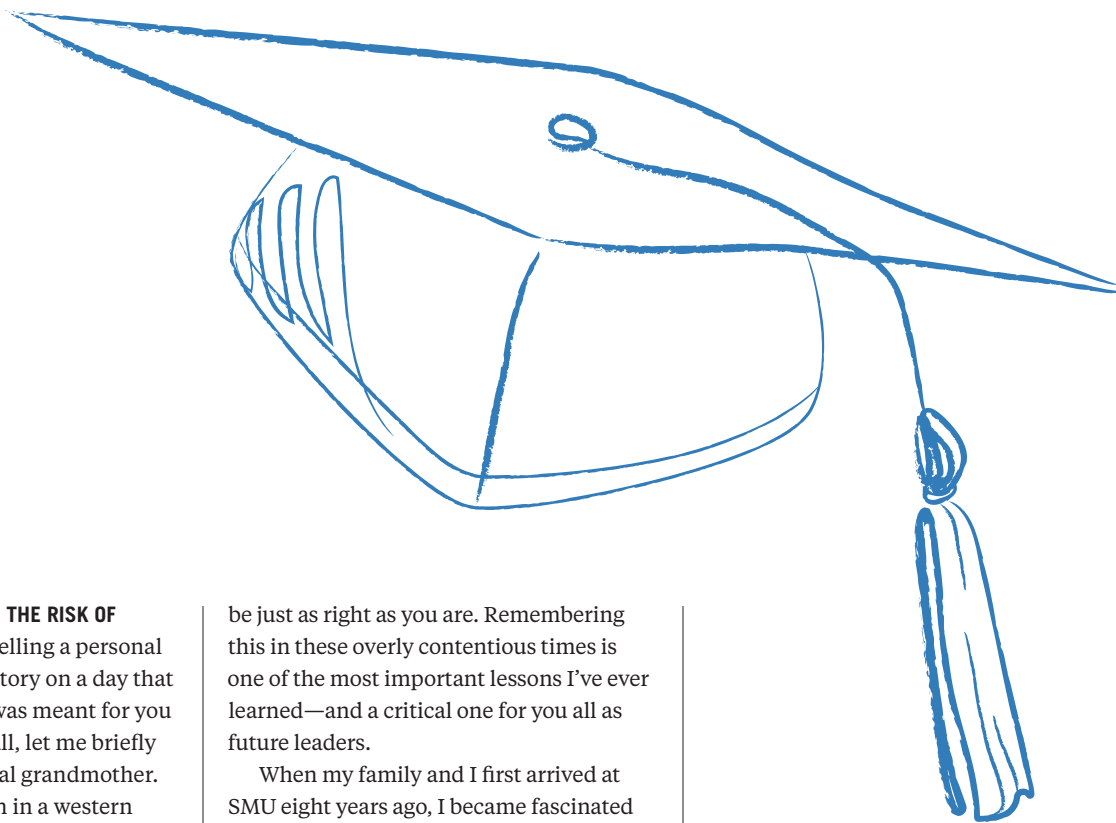
Of course, for his part, Alec doesn't mind the proximity. “I'm not one of those kids that's wanting the space,” he says. “I know he's here to help me and I love him, so it's always great to be around him.” ■



A photograph of Matthew Myers, an older man with glasses, wearing a blue and black graduation gown with a green stole. He is standing at a wooden podium with a microphone, gesturing with his right hand. The background is dark and out of focus.

‘You have
a duty to
**nourish our
society.**’

In his final commencement speech as head of the Cox School, outgoing Dean Matthew Myers challenges graduates to use their positions and companies for good.



A

T THE RISK OF
telling a personal
story on a day that
was meant for you
all, let me briefly

tell you about my maternal grandmother. She was one of 13 children in a western Kentucky farming family. She had an eighth-grade education in a one-room schoolhouse, heated by chunks of coal in an iron stove in the winter. That schoolhouse, and the crossroads where it stood, are long gone.

My grandmother never learned to drive and never flew on an airplane. She never smoked, drank whiskey, played cards or bet on the horses. Despite this, she was one of the wisest people I've ever known. This time of year back in Kentucky and Tennessee is a glorious time, with the dogwoods and redbuds in bloom and the wild blueberries and blackberries getting ready to grow on the old fencerows and barn sides.

When I was boy, whenever I was absolutely sure I was right about something—or furious with someone else, whose opinion I knew was wrong—my grandmother would say, “Now, Matthew, always remember: When blackberries is green, they’z red.”

When blackberries is green, they’z red. And she was right. A green, unripe blackberry is as red as any apple.

Of course, what my grandmother was trying to tell me was, don’t be so sure you’re always right. The other person could see the world very differently from you and still

be just as right as you are. Remembering this in these overly contentious times is one of the most important lessons I’ve ever learned—and a critical one for you all as future leaders.

When my family and I first arrived at SMU eight years ago, I became fascinated with the history and traditions of this institution. One of the more impressive lessons I learned was something I didn’t know a lot about before arriving here, and that was the history of service of our graduates.

From the wars in the Pacific, Europe and Middle East to the philanthropic efforts that have become such a part of our culture in Dallas and the heart of Texas, Cox graduates have always stepped up when asked and sacrificed when others wouldn’t. It is that spirit I’d like our graduates to take with them.

For you graduates, it’s time to understand that, once you walk out of here today, the rest of your lives will be measured by your willingness to accept duty and responsibility. It is now your time to answer that call.

We speak quite a bit at SMU about respect and integrity. One of the things that most attracted me to the Cox School was the feeling of fairness, of honest discourse and the value placed on all people and perspectives—in understanding that “when blackberries is green, they’z red.” That’s RESPECT.

Graduates, you’ve also had many conversations about INTEGRITY. We all know that, simply, if you have integrity, nothing else matters. And if you don’t have

“

**Duty calls on you
to see societies as
recipients of the
fruits of your own
successes and
the benefactors
of your future
growth.**

integrity—say it with me—nothing else matters.

Today I'd like to speak to you about the third side of the Holy Trinity: RESPONSIBILITY, or as I've always thought about it, duty. Let me stress the importance to you, the graduates, in understanding your duty in engaging your companies, businesses and organizations in the growth of our societies. Too often, business leaders see people and markets as nothing more than profits and PE ratios, cost structures and dividends. Instead, duty calls on you to see societies as recipients of the fruits of your own successes and the benefactors of your future growth.

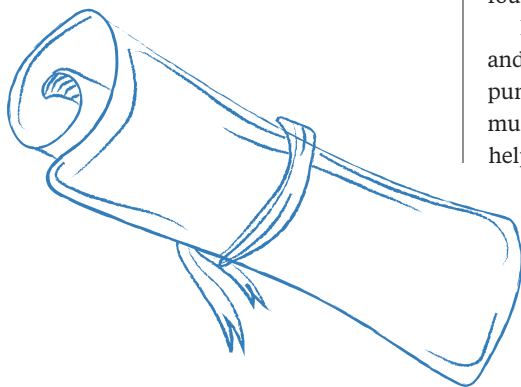
It is undeniable that the future of our country depends on the actions of business leaders, and our society depends on the next generation of leaders—you all sitting here today—to understand that you have a duty to nourish our society with the actions of your decisions.

Today we run the risk of our business leaders becoming a distinct class within our society, followed around by C-suite paparazzi and protected by their successes from the economic and societal roadblocks everyday people face. This can be attributed to technology, college costs, challenges in our K-12 system, the pressures to generate short-term gains or any number of issues, but the fact remains that there is a growing divide between business leaders and the average citizen—not simply in income but in understanding the most basic of challenges to our communities.

To address this, as the future leaders of business, you must possess two very important aspects of the human condition: compassion, because helping those in need is the right thing to do, and enlightened self-interest, because unless business leaders understand they must nourish the societies in which they live, those societies will no longer function in a manner that allows businesses to thrive—or this country

“

Not only is the spirit of service and giving back the right thing to do, but this philosophy also exhibits an enlightenment by understanding it's the best thing for businesses to be actively involved.



to survive.

Think about this for a moment. We are living in world where a billion people live below the poverty line, where natural resources are under tremendous stress, where in developed nations like this one, the middle class is shrinking, and where increasingly we are seeing a greater percentage of the world's wealth being held by a smaller percentage of the world's populace.

Like it or not, the smaller percentage that controls most of the future world's wealth comprises people like those sitting here today. That's OK, as long as we learn to give back.

So, what do you do? What is your duty as a Cox graduate?

Your duty is to make business an integral part of the fabric of our society. Not through the payment of corporate taxes, but through the action of entrepreneurial behavior that brings new jobs and opportunities to your communities, and through the philanthropic activities of your organizations that reinvest resources back into those communities when schools, cities and politicians fail. It's not about wealth redistribution. It's about creating opportunities and exhibiting global stewardship.

Your duty is in understanding the difference between making something cool versus making something of worth.

It's being confident with a personal introspection by asking yourself, "Do I create value or simply shift money from one pocket to another?"

It's in asking yourself, your employees and your board, "What are we doing to help the sick, the poor and the under-represented, and how is this building a foundation for future generations?"

Because life already is naturally hard, and in nature there are no rewards nor punishments, only consequences. And we must be there to help those who cannot help themselves.

Dean Myers also told graduates that “nothing could be more personally rewarding” than using their professional success to give back.



It is about understanding that sustainability is more than just a trendy buzzword, and that you'll be remembered for your care of your employees and your stewardship of our natural resources, not for your stock price.

You as business leaders must stay above today's political, partisan fray and understand that if businesses don't proactively step in to address so many of these societal challenges, governments and regulators will—and often in ways that are counter-productive to the free-market premise we find so important.

Thus not only is the spirit of service and giving back the right thing to do, but this philosophy also exhibits an enlightenment by understanding it's the best thing for businesses to be actively involved.

The concept of duty is important here at the Cox School. During your time here, you have learned the Cox School doesn't give—it gives back, and that this is a wonderful place to begin exploring how giving back pays forward. Duty and responsibility are nuanced topics, ones that every business and business leader must address individually. The good news is, there are so many ways for you to give back that there is really no limit to what you can do or how your organizations can be involved.

I encourage you to think long and hard about how you and your companies can give back to those in need, whether schools, neighborhoods, hospitals, environmental

causes, or the underprivileged and disenfranchised. Not only is it your duty to do so, but the personal rewards are enormous. You should see your duty as a business leader as one of the greatest opportunities of your life. It can be rewarding beyond measure.

We all have long careers with many successes and many more failures, and their accompanying quarter-life and mid-life crises. There will be times when you wonder, “Is what I'm doing worth it, and what will be my legacy after my career is done?”

There is that old saying that goes, millions long for immortality who don't know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

But you'll know what to do.

Because you know that nothing could be more personally rewarding than using your professional success to give back

to the communities and causes that are important to you. This should be a great personal motivator that provides you with an inspiration to succeed, every day.

And your faculty here? They expect this of you. They expect each of you to come back to Cox in five or 10 years and tell our future students how you have made an impact on the environment, on your towns and on your communities. We will hold you to that.

And remember: As Cox School graduates, your actions and behaviors will always reflect on this institution. It will be your duty to fight for those with less, to fight for those in need of more. All the success in the world doesn't mean a thing if you won't step up when asked and sacrifice when others won't.

Thank you very much, and congratulations to you all. ■

Yearbook

Cox School Honors Four at 2025 Distinguished Alumni Awards Luncheon

ON APRIL 4, the SMU Cox School of Business held its annual Distinguished Alumni Awards Luncheon in the Collins Executive Center, bestowing two Distinguished Alumni Awards and two Outstanding Young Alumni Awards. Nominations are submitted to the SMU Cox Alumni Association for consideration by a selection committee.

In alphabetical order, this year's Cox Distinguished Alumni Award winners are **James Landen**, Sr., B.B.A. '82, executive chairman of Omaha-based Security National Bank, and **William Shaddock**, MBA '74, owner/partner of Shaddock Companies. Cox Outstanding Young Alumni honorees are **Gloria Salinas**, B.A. '10, EMBA '23, Frisco Economic Development Corporation senior vice president, and **Amrita Vir**, B.B.A. '12, Gates Foundation senior program officer. All four made heartfelt speeches about how the Cox School influenced their career paths and lives.

Nebraska native **Landen** recounted how, just before they both started at Cox, he met Diny, his future wife, whom he credits for

helping him become a better student. Their dedication to SMU and the Cox School inspired their siblings, children, and several nieces and nephews—a total of 20 more family members—to attend SMU and/or SMU Cox. Diny and Jim Landen are generous donors to the SMU Cox Renovation and Expansion Fund.

Shaddock grew up in Orange, Texas, and founded Shaddock Development Company in Plano with his brother Peter. Shaddock has since developed a series of successful real estate and related companies based in North Texas. He and his wife, Kim, are benefactors of Shaddock Hall in the David B. Miller Business Quadrangle. At the awards luncheon, Shaddock fondly recalled an impactful real estate class during his MBA program. He gained insight and inspiration from titans including Trammell Crow and Ray Nasher, who talked not so much about their accomplishments but about the challenges they overcame and their thought processes in doing so.

Salinas, a Frisco resident, is an economic development executive with more than 15

years of experience and a track record of success in Texas cities and the nonprofit sector. She is passionate about developing sustainable cities and creating access to thriving opportunities for the people who live in them. At the awards luncheon, the double SMU alumna shared a story about a daunting EMBA group consulting assignment that started badly. Ultimately, it yielded a glowing review from the client. "I learned that failure combined with perseverance will yield success—eventually."

Vir, who was a B.B.A. scholar during her time at SMU Cox, said two lecture tickets given to her by Associate Dean Jim Bryan proved "catalytic." The tickets enabled her to hear from Muhammad Yunus, the "father of microfinance." She left the lecture inspired to pursue a career focused on transforming lives through innovative financial solutions. Today, she works for the Seattle-based Gates Foundation scaling inclusive, global financial interventions with a focus on women underserved by the financial sector. ■



(Left to right)
Honorees Amrita
Vir, B.B.A. '12, Bill
Shaddock, MBA '74,
Jim Landen, Sr.,
B.B.A. '82, and Gloria
Salinas, B.A., '10,
EMBA '23.

Connections

Commencement

GRADUATE
May 16, 2025

UNDERGRADUATE
May 17, 2025





Go to coxtoday.smu.edu/commencement2025 to see more photos.

Events

1. JAN. 14, PARK CITIES CLUB.

Talmadge Boston moderates a discussion about Lindsay Chervinsky's book "Making the Presidency: John Adams and the Precedents That Forged the Republic."

2. JAN. 21, MOODY COLISEUM.

EMBA students gather for an SMU basketball game.

3. JAN. 25, COLLINS CENTER.

The Spears Institute hosts entrepreneurs.

4. FEB. 3, OLD PARKLAND.

The Bridwell Institute hosts guest speaker Marshall Stocker.

5. FEB. 12, COLLINS CENTER.

Lisa Tran interviews Marissa Solis, SVP, Global Brand and Consumer Marketing for the NFL, for the Leaders on Leadership Speaker Series.

6. FEB. 19, DALLAS COUNTRY CLUB.

The 1911 Group hosts a roundtable discussion with Texas Stock Exchange Global Managing Director Nicole Chambers and SMU alumni.

7. FEB. 21, MILLER QUAD.

Prospective student Naveen Kutte and his father, Winston Kutte, MBA '01.

8. FEB. 21, MILLER QUAD.

Cox B.B.A. alumni present to the students in Professor Denson's negotiations class.





9. FEB. 22, MOODY COLISEUM. The Leo family at an SMU basketball game.

10–11. FEB. 23, MOODY COLISEUM. Catherine Collins and Matt Milbourn; Michael Buscker (B.B.A. '99, MBA '04), Tom O'Mahony (MBA '04) and Brad Hannigan (MBA '04).

12. FEB. 27, CRUM AUDITORIUM. Shawna and Kurt Fedderson of Gameday Couture, Chris Gronkowski of Ice Shaker, Justin Fenchel of Beatbox Beverages, Brian Riley of Guardian Bikes, and Steve McKean of Bill Shark spoke about their experiences pitching their businesses on *Shark Tank*.

13. MARCH 6, ST. LOUIS, MO. Jim Bryan, associate dean of the Cox B.B.A. program, speaks at a reception hosted by Chip Hiemenz, B.B.A. '06 and Alexis Hiemenz, B.B.A. '11, MS '12.

14. MARCH 8, UNIVERSITY PARK. Mike Sullivan, BS '85 hosted a dinner for classmates and friends, including Jim Saccacio, B.B.A. '81, Frank McGrew, B.B.A. '90 and Dina Saccacio, B.B.A. '21.

15–17. MARCH 13, NEWPORT BEACH, CA. David Medina, Cox Executive Board member Mike Skillman and John Santry, MBA '02 at a Cox School reception hosted by the Skillman family; Sherri Skillman, Hayden Kent and Amanda Kent; Jim Saccacio, B.B.A. '81 and Riley Eggers, B.B.A. '17, Cox Alumni Board.

18. MARCH 19, MOODY COLISEUM.

Former SMU basketball player Ira Terrell, B.B.A. '76, and Gordon Welch, B.B.A. '81.

19-21. APRIL 2, SCOTTSDALE, AZ.

Justin Breece, Kevin Knox, Jeff Perry (B.B.A. '81, JD '84), Jim Bryan and Patricia Breece at a Cox School reception hosted by the Chappell family; alumni, prospective students and parents; Jeff Birkelo, B.B.A. '83, Kathleen Birkelo and Brian King, B.B.A. '08.

22. APRIL 5, MILLER QUAD.

Cox Alumni Board of Directors' spring meeting.

23. APRIL 5, DALLAS.

Gerard Lebar, MBA '20, Bill Ajello, EMBA '19 and Nick Kapral, MBA '10 at a Cox Alumni Board lunch.

24. APRIL 10, NASHVILLE, TN.

Dean Matthew Myers at an SMU Alumni Association reception and networking event.

25. APRIL 15, COLLINS CENTER.

Shane Goodwin interviews Thaddeus Arroyo, chief strategy and development officer for AT&T, for the Leaders on Leadership Speaker Series.

26. APRIL 22, FRISCO.

Plano native Jimmy King, one of the University of Michigan basketball team's "Fab Five," at the Texas Legends network breakfast at Comerica Center, sponsored by the Cox School.



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Garry A. Weber '58
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**Billie Ida
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Member
Ernst & Young

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Royce E. "Ed" Wilson
President & CEO
Whisper Advisors

Tony Wong '95
Sr. Managing Director &
Co-Head of Investments
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Calendar

AUGUST

20 **MBA & M.S.**

EMBA Virtual Information Session
12–1 p.m.

25 **B.B.A., M.S. & MBA**

First day of classes

29–30 **EMBA**

First weekend of classes

30

Cox tailgate on the Boulevard (3 hours prior to kickoff); SMU hosts East Texas A&M
8 p.m.

SEPTEMBER

3 **B.B.A., M.S. & MBA**

Fall Cox Career Connections Fair
4:30–7:30 p.m.

6

Cox tailgate on the Boulevard (3 hours prior to kickoff); SMU hosts Baylor
11 a.m.

12

SMU Presidential Inauguration
Moody Coliseum
2 p.m. (as of press time)

SMU Cox Open House
All day (as of press time)

13

SMU at Missouri State
3:30 p.m.

B.B.A., M.S. & MBA

Graduate Admissions Super Saturday
8:45–11:30 a.m.

20

SMU at TCU
Time TBA

OCTOBER

4

Cox tailgate on the Boulevard (3 hours prior to kickoff); SMU hosts Syracuse (part of SMU Family Weekend)
Time TBA

8

SMU at Boston College
Time TBA

11

Cox tailgate on the Boulevard (3 hours prior to kickoff); SMU hosts Stanford
Time TBA

13–17 **M.S. & MBA**

Fall Break

15 **M.S. & MBA**

On-Campus Information Session
6:30–7:30 p.m.

18

SMU at Clemson
Time TBA

20–21 **B.B.A.**

Fall Break

25

SMU at Wake Forest
Time TBA

31 **MBA & M.S.**

SMU Cox Homecoming Os and 5s Class Reunions at the Collins Center, compliments of Dean Todd Milbourn and the Cox Alumni Association
7–10 p.m.

NOVEMBER

1

Cox tailgate on the Boulevard (3 hours prior to kickoff); SMU Homecoming football game: SMU hosts Miami
Time TBA

8

SMU at Boston College
Time TBA

15 **MBA & M.S.**

Fall Preview Day
8:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

20

Cox tailgate on the Boulevard (3 hours prior to kickoff); SMU hosts Louisville
Time TBA

27–28

Thanksgiving Break

29

SMU at California
Time TBA

DECEMBER

8

Last day of classes

20

Winter commencement

23–1/1

University closed

Scan for more information on admissions events or to connect with the admissions team:



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Brierley Institute for Customer Engagement

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Caruth Institute for Entrepreneurship

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Don Jackson Center for Financial Studies

214.768.4150

EnCap Investments & LCM Group Alternative Asset Management Center

214.768.4150

The Robert and Margaret Folsom Institute for Real Estate

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SOUTHWESTERN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BANKING

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David Davis
214.768.2991

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Thank you, Dean Myers, for your incredible contributions to the Cox School of Business and the broader SMU community.



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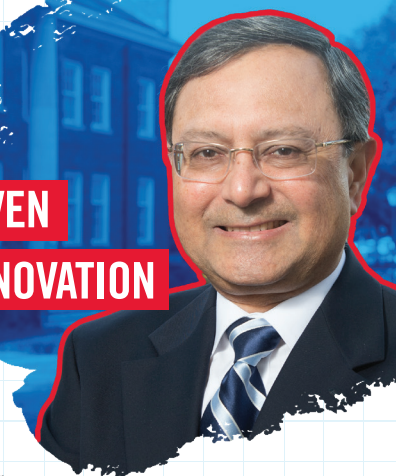
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