Clark celebrates new Stevenish Career Center at GSOM

On April 8, the Graduate School of Management held the dedication ceremony for the new Stevenish Career Management Center at Carlson Hall. Members of the University Trustees, the GSOM Advisory Council, faculty, staff, students, alumni and the Stevenish family were present for the dedication. The program for the event featured several speakers who recognized the importance of the gift that was given to the University by Robert J. Stevenish ’86 and his father, Robert J. Stevenish, a university trustee.

In his opening remarks, Clark University President John Bassett spoke of the significant contributions of the Stevenish family at Clark University. In recognizing their generous support, he reinforced the importance of the new Stevenish Career Management Center to GSOM students and alumni in providing a vision toward the exciting careers ahead of them. “It is especially wonderful to have the Career Management Center here, providing important career planning resources and guidance that will assist our students to go out and become leaders in the business world. This is a major addition to our School of Management as it pursues its strategic plan with a future that is even brighter now, given the support of the Stevenish family,” said President Bassett.

University Trustee Perry Pero, who currently serves as the acting chair of the GSOM Advisory Council, spoke of “our sincere appreciation for the magnificent contribution that the Stevenish family has made to the Graduate School of Management. To me this epitomizes the ultimate role that we have in sharing—sharing our success and sharing our good fortune—and the Stevensishes have made a magnificent gesture here by sharing their good fortune, in order to enhance the Graduate School of Management.”

John Mattson, GSOM’s new director of career services and external relations, talked about his enthusiasm for undertaking the task of building a world-class career center for GSOM. He then introduced Helen Demis and Joe Dalton, president and vice-president of the student council, who presented the School with a gift of video equipment from the Class of 2005.

Dean Ed Ottensmeyer accepted the class gift and thanked the student council members for their thoughtful and timely donation. The Dean welcomed the Stevenish family and recounted how the Stevensishes have been involved with the University and School for many years. “The Stevenish family is amazing. Generosity, as defined by the dictionary, means: ‘free and giving, sharing, high-minded and noble’ — the Stevensishes are people who possess a generosity of spirit that is extraordinary.” Dean Ottensmeyer then introduced Bob Stevenish ’86, who spoke about his time as a student at Clark and how difficult it was to find a good job on Wall Street at that time. In talking about why his family decided to support the career center, Stevenish said, “One of the most important things you’ve got to be able to do is to prepare graduates to go out in the world to get a job.” He also shared his pleasure at serving as a member of the School’s Advisory Council and concluded by saying, “We are honored and proud to be here today.”

Dean Ottensmeyer then introduced Trustee Stevenish for the closing remarks of the day. Speaking on his involvement with Clark, Stevenish said, “I am just proud and honored to be a part of this University. President Bassett and the entire staff are just incredible. I have never, in my business career—and I have been in business for 43 years—seen as many hours of dedication and commitment given by any group of people than by the faculty and staff here at Clark.”

The Center is open throughout the year and its services are available for all students and alumni of GSOM. The Center staff includes John Mattson, director and Nathalie Miquel, assistant director.
“We’re creating a service to effectively market our MBA students so they can get very good jobs and further their careers,” says John Mattson, GSOM director of career services and external relations (and editor of Connect). “The Stevenish Career Management Center,” continued Mattson — who created the Feld Career Center at Boston University’s School of Management — “is a response to GSOM’s need to be attractive in an increasingly competitive MBA marketplace. The idea is to put together an operation that is not only effective, but enjoyable to use.”

Center services will include career planning; resume review and critique; assistance in locating internships; job search strategies and coaching; and videotaped mock interviews. “To support this effort,” Mattson said, “we’ve increased and improved our technology tremendously, with a newly created computer-based resource library and continuously updated research and job search databases.” He added, “new databases to better manage and market our relationships with recruiters will be up and running shortly. We’re trying to get as high-tech as we possibly can.”

The Center’s assistant director of career services and external relations, Nathalie Miquel—who is filling a newly created position—will also teach a mandatory career development seminar for prospective interns. “We want to make sure our students are well prepared when they apply for positions,” said Miquel.

A Career Center Advisory Board, comprised of private and public sector employers, will act as a sounding board for Center programs and provide advice on market trends, conditions in specific industries, and employment opportunities. “They will be a reality test for us to make sure that GSOM is equipping students to meet employer expectations,” said Mattson.

Reflecting on the importance of corporate connections, Mattson spoke of planned outreach this summer by mail, e-mail and telephone to corporations and alumni, as well as visits to HR managers and alumni in their corporate settings. He’ll also be organizing teams of alumni in targeted companies to assist the Center by passing along resumes, creating internships and hosting career panels. “I have met many Clark alumni who are well positioned in companies and eager to help students in their career development.” Mattson emphasized that the Center will continue to assist alumni in job searches. “We’re open for business to anyone with a GSOM degree.”

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**Expansion of Career Services**

Welcome to this special edition of Connect, in which our focus is on career services at GSOM. The past year has seen significant changes and I am delighted to share some of them with you.

First, we have a new Director of Career Services and External Relations, John Mattson. John came to us with a wealth of experience in career services gained from his long career at schools such as Tufts, Boston University and Northeastern. We have asked him to oversee career services as well as develop and implement strategies to increase the School’s visibility — regionally, nationally and internationally. John is joined by Nathalie Miquel, our assistant director of career services and external relations, who has just finished her master’s degree in higher education administration. Current GSOM students have given John and Nathalie an extremely warm and enthusiastic welcome, and it’s not uncommon to see them lining up outside John’s and Nathalie’s offices.

Second, thanks to the great generosity of the Stevenish family (Robert ’86 and his father, Robert, a Clark trustee) we recently dedicated the Stevenish Career Management Center. GSOM career services now include upgraded facilities, a career resource library with new computers and data bases, and additional programming opportunities for students.

Third, we have launched a Career Center Advisory Board, ably led by Dena Knop, of the Bose Corporation, who also serves on our Advisory Council. The CCAB, which will provide strategic direction to our career services efforts, has already had an impact on how we do career services at GSOM. I want to thank all the members of the CCAB for their efforts on behalf of GSOM.

I’d also like to remind GSOM alumni of the critical role you can play in the careers of our students. Your career success is essential to theirs, and your participation in their education is highly valued. Please help us to continue to grow career services at GSOM. When employment or internship opportunities arise in your organization, please contact John Mattson at 508-793-7770 or jmattson@clarku.edu. Consider returning to Clark to visit a classroom, or serve on a career panel or even host such a panel at your company. Please see additional information on Career Services at: www.clarku.edu/gsom/intranet/careers/

With warm best wishes,
Priscilla Elsass, GSOM Acting Dean
pelsass@clarku.edu

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**A Message from the Dean**

John Mattson, director of career services and external relations with Nathalie Miquel, assistant director of career services and external relations

Acting Dean Priscilla Elsass
Distinguished Alumni Profile

Bob Stevenish ‘86

“I’ve been successful, and I felt it was time to help the school— to give something back,” says Bob Stevenish ‘86. That “something” is GSOM’s Stevenish Career Management Center, made possible by Stevenish and his father Robert J. Stevenish in response to a need deeply felt both by them and GSOM. “After 15 years and virtually no contact with Clark, I am now making up for lost time by helping to create a service that I missed but passionately believe necessary so graduates can get good jobs.”

Stevenish began his career as a sales assistant with Salomon Brothers — “as junior as you can get.” He entered the firm’s sales training program in 1989 and became a trader a year later. By 2001, Stevenish headed the corporate bond group in Boston and gained the managing directorship in 2002. He’s now co-head of fixed income sales in Boston and manages the New England office of Citigroup Global Markets Inc., which has merged with Salomon Brothers.

The Center idea took hold of him, Stevenish recalls, when Dean Ottensmeyer called several years ago to talk about some of the interesting things GSOM was doing and hoped to do. Since then, “it’s been a whirlwind of involvement.” Following their funding of the Center, Stevenish joined the GSOM Advisory Council and has been inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma; his father has become a Clark trustee and serves on several university committees. Both have contributed resources to GSOM and the university. “It’s just been a really wonderful experience,” says Stevenish, “so much so, that I almost feel guilty. I’ve gotten more out of this than the school has. It’s such a rewarding experience to be involved and to pledge our support.”

Stevenish, who had a double major at Clark — economics and management — and a double minor — international relations and philosophy — urges students to plan for the intensely competitive job market years before graduation. Develop “phenomenal study habits,” says Stevenish, “get very good grades, and take advantage of the whole curriculum so that you’ll be more appealing to employers. Also, get relevant summer jobs. I took every business course, every economics course, and every related math course, anything that had to do with business, always knowing that I’d do something numerically-based, either on Wall Street or for a bank. I didn’t get straight As, but I worked very, very hard.” (Stevenish was treasurer of the student council and also involved in many other student activities throughout his career at Clark.)

Stevenish is extremely pleased that students now have a new career center to provide the resources he missed. “Learn the resume writing, job search and interviewing skills the Center offers. Take advantage of the internships — the experience can lead to permanent jobs as well as a possible reevaluation of your career goals.”

Stevenish is also happy that GSOM, through the Center, is getting Clark alumni more involved. “There are 15,000 of them out there. Many are very successful. They can help.”

Career Center Advisory Board formed at GSOM

The newly formed Career Center Advisory Board (CCAB) for the Stevenish Career Management Center is made-up of business professionals and alumni — similar to the GSOM Advisory Council — but focused exclusively on providing advice and guidance on issues pertaining to career services and workforce trends in the global economy. Dena Knop MBA ’89, director, internal communications and community relations at the Bose Corporation, was nominated to serve as the chair of the CCAB since she also sits on the GSOM Advisory Council. Acting Dean Priscilla Elsass said, “Dena is the perfect representative to create a linkage between these two important groups — her business experience in public relations is an ideal fit for the leadership of this important board.”

The CCAB also includes Jeannie Herbert ’90, vice-president, human resources services, National Grid-USA; Gayle Holland ’94, senior director, human resources, EMC Corporation; Joseph Javorski MBA ’98, director, worldwide staffing, Analog Devices; Russell Millholland, director of human resources, Saint-Gobain; Diane Santoro, director of human resources, Public Consulting Group; Theodore Welte, president, MetroWest Chamber of Commerce; and James Wilson, vice president, management effectiveness, human resources, Fidelity Investments. At the first meeting, the board reviewed its mission, goals and priorities and drafted an agenda, which includes developing metrics and benchmarks for career services to effectively measure internship and full-time job placement rates, volume of client traffic and overall customer satisfaction. John Mattson, director of the Stevenish Career Management Center, said, “I am excited by the level of energy and expertise that board members will bring to GSOM.”

Profile of a student intern

Shahram Haydari MBA ’05 says that his recently completed internship as a business analyst with Saint-Gobain “fit my background, interests and skills perfectly.” The international firm asked Haydari initially to enhance the supply chain system at its Massachusetts division by developing a database to forecast finished products inventory. This he did. But much to the company’s delight, he then suggested and implemented a software tool that now enables managers to analyze inventory data themselves. In recognition, Saint Gobain extended Haydari’s internship. “I found the experience especially rewarding because my superiors at Saint Gobain, which has a really friendly atmosphere, didn’t micro-manage me. I had time to consider the problem, think critically and use my skills effectively.”

The internship also “developed my ability to work as part of a team,” Haydari reports, “and provided my first opportunity to work on a large scale enterprise system database.” Haydari, who holds an MS in Industrial Engineering-Economic Systems from Tarbiat Modares University, in Iran, and a BS from Iran University of Science and Technology, has a long-range career goal to join a management consulting firm “where I can experience a variety of issues and work environments.”

Other recent GSOM internship placements have included such companies as Fidelity, Babson Capital Management, Merrill Lynch, Deutsche Bank, Sovereign Bank, and Bowditch & Dewey.
Leading executives address students at GSOM

Arjun Mathrani, former CFO of Chase and past CEO of ING Barings, speaking at Executive Discussions at Noon — a new lecture series recently launched by GSOM Executive-in-Residence Peter Rowley — began with an overview of his background, which includes over 30 years in banking after having graduated from the University of Bombay and Cambridge University in England.

Mathrani, who is originally from India, talked about his global career in banking, “which took many surprising twists and turns along the way.” Mathrani shared a number of stories with the audience about his long career at Chase and the importance of “managing your career.” He shared three axioms that are important for success in one’s career: “1) if it is good for the company — it’s good for you, 2) always give people the benefit of the doubt the first time around and 3) you will move frequently in your career and therefore you must build up your repertoire and your brand value. Participate actively in developing yourself, as opposed to leaving it to the corporation. You must develop opportunities where it makes the most sense for you and use your mentoring relationships.”

Mathrani discussed the value of developing personal and business relationships with in-house mentors. “Mentoring relationships are important. Mentors help transmit institutional knowledge, values and experiences of the organization. They can help you gain a perspective on your work from outside of your line-of-command.” Mathrani also noted the importance of integrity and demonstrating your values through leadership skills. “Leadership is important today and you must speak your mind — you are being paid for contributing to the entity of which you are a part. If you think something is wrong, you have to stand up and say something.”

Frederick Eppinger, president and CEO of Allmerica Financial Corporation, based in Worcester, shared his observations about “Leading a Company to Distinctive Performance” at The GSOM Leadership Speaker Series. A former senior insurance company executive and former partner at the consulting firm of McKinsey & Company, Eppinger joined Allmerica in 2003 to lead the 153-year-old organization on a “journey from good to great,” creating a world class regional property and casualty company. Under Eppinger’s direction, Allmerica has completed a broad and successful restructuring program and established a solid foundation on which to build.

Eppinger said Allmerica is now intently focused on further strengthening the distinctive market position of its two brands — The Hanover Insurance Company and Citizens Insurance Company of America — and offered several observations from the company’s journey. “It’s essential to create a vision that is inspirational and convincing — one that goes beyond the numbers,” he said. “You have to create a picture of where you are going and address what needs to be done to get there.”

Eppinger said the journey at Allmerica began with an honest assessment of the company’s position and the commitment to do the hard work it would require. “The journey requires honesty around your current position, what you’re good at and where you are vulnerable. To win, you have to be good at most things and great at something customers want. What you want doesn’t matter,” he said. “You have to build a strong team, attracting, developing and motivating great people, and make consistent, high-quality execution a priority. And, most importantly, you have to build momentum. Confidence and momentum are the secret weapons that create a culture of success and enable companies to achieve and sustain distinctive performance.”