By Jesse Laseman

Northern Illinois University was a different place when Experian’s Director of Global Product Strategy, Matt Tipperreiter, attended in the late 1990s. When Matt was a student at Northern Illinois University, the football team was at a record low, Douglas Hall was still a standing building on campus, the College of Business was in Wirtz Hall, and the BELIEF program was yet to be imagined. Matt graduated with a degree in Marketing and was an immensely involved student on campus putting his efforts in the University Honors Program, Lambda Sigma Honors Society, and the Newman Catholic Center. As a striving business student he also underwent an internship with United Airlines and did research on the topic of analyzing emotional intelligence and its relationship to long term success.

Tipperreiter was not the original Experian representative for the BELIEF Program, but was asked to fill the position as the usual corporate shuffle occurs and people left the company. When asked about his motives for being a corporate sponsor he replied, “My experiences as a student from Northern Illinois University made me want to...”

Ross Hayes

By Jesse Laseman

As a student who always had an interest in competing in the Eller International Ethics Case Competition at some point in my career at Northern Illinois, I enjoy talking to past competitors who represented the College of Business. Unlike myself, Ross Hayes of McKesson did not have anyone to turn to for advice about Eller because Amber Blatt and he were the first two students to compete from NIU. I enjoyed my discussions with Ross Hayes as he reflected on being one of the original members of LEAD and setting precedence with the Eller Case Competition tradition.

Ross Hayes was one of the original eight members as the BELIEF Program expanded by forming the student organization of LEAD. Ross took part in the interview process to join LEAD, which was different than it is now. Now the interview process works by an applicant’s interview with the students of LEAD and Dr. McCoy. Back then there was no student organization, so applicants were interviews by the founding faculty members Dr. Bishop, Ms. Joan Petros, and Dr. Pam Smith. The faculty members introduced LEAD to the Eller Case Competition and encouraged a couple members to participate...
NIU Ethics Case Competition Breakdown

By Jesse Laseman

Outside of Barsema Hall the temperature may have been in the low twenties and snow may have covered the ground, but inside Barsema the LEAD Case Competition turned up the heat. On Friday, February 20, Northern Illinois University Business students and students from two high schools, Rockford Christian and Hampshire, met to compete in the Fifth Annual NIU LEAD Ethics Case Competition. When the day started, over thirty teams (twelve high school and twenty college) reported to the check-in table to present their cases.

Both college and high school competitors received a case written by Dr. William McCoy that simulated real ethical dilemmas much as a business professional or everyday citizen might face. The students were to tackle these dilemmas considering all stakeholders and the consequences of any action taken. All teams, consisting of one or two people, were asked to give a visual presentation and state their position on what actions were necessary for problem resolution.

College teams received a case discussing a decision to be made by an Athletic Director on how to react to an athlete’s personal situation. The star of the university football team was in the summer of his senior year and was filled with talent that made him a top NFL prospect for the upcoming draft. The tragedies of life hit as his mother combat a serious unknown medical illness, leaving him the decision of transferring to a closer school to help his mom or stay and finish the season in hopes of making it to the NFL. The athletic director is asked by the student for advice, while he receives pressure from the university head to keep the student for his financial value to the athletic program.

The high school teams received a different case about a Nuisance Law. This law allowed a landlord to evict tenants from the property who were the cause of many law enforcement calls to the area. A woman was faced with the decision to call the police out of fear of eviction when her husband, a man with a past of violence, has another temper flare-up. Both cases asked the students to place themselves in the subject’s shoes while thinking logically and outside the box.

It was an early morning that began with general check-in and an orientation for judges, which explained to the volunteer judges the itinerary and judging responsibilities. The judges consisted of business professionals and/or alumni who wanted to give back to NIU; individuals from an array of different fields such as politics, college administration, accounting, manufacturing, and real estate.

See Ethics Case on page 8.
LEAD alumni give back to organization

By Jesse Laseman

Last summer the Director of LEAD, Dr. Bill McCoy, issued a challenge to LEAD alumni to give back to the organization. He contacted all the LEAD alumni and issued them the challenge to donate to the annual budget for the present LEAD group; in return he pledged to match up to $1,000 of these donations. The alumni really took the challenge to heart and with the help of corporate donation matches, were able to come up with $925. With Dr. McCoy’s gift a total of $1,925 was raised for LEAD’s budget. This money gave LEAD more leeway and opportunities to create events that will help increase the ethical awareness of students on campus. A special thanks to those who donated: Curtis Batterton, Nick De Jong, Jill & Ross Hayes, Sam Kunde, Wasił Pahuchy, and Hunter Smith. Having this new source of funding has allowed us to expand upon the things that we already do, as well the possibility of adding an additional event or two that we have brainstormed for next semester.

This Alumni Giving Challenge has not only given us the benefit of funding, but it seems Dr. McCoy was able to ignite us to stay in touch with our alumni base as well. LEAD wants to find more ways to keep the alumni close and involved moving forward. We believe they are a valuable resource that could certainly continue to help push the group forward towards greater success. There

See LEAD on page 5.

Video Ethics Competition

By Jesse Laseman

Deere & Company is among the World’s Most Ethical Companies according to the Ethisphere Institute, which annually recognizes organizations that have had a material impact on the way business is conducted by fostering a culture of ethics and transparency.

The Institute released its annual rankings recently, and Deere has earned a position on the list for nine consecutive years. The Most Ethical Companies research evaluates companies in five key categories including an organization’s ethics and compliance program, corporate citizenship and responsibility, culture of ethics, governance and leadership, innovation and reputation. As John Deere has earned this honor once again, it is a privilege for Deere to partner up with the BELIEF Program to host the 4th annual NIU/John Deere Ethics Video Contest. Within the past ten years John Deere and NIU continue to grow their partnership and passion for engaging, developing and attracting students. Deere values the relationship with NIU for many reasons.

One of those reasons is the prestige of the NIU College of Business, particularly the recognition the Accountability program receives.

Additionally, the proximity of NIU to Deere’s headquarters in Moline, IL, which is located just 90 miles west of DeKalb, makes it a logical partnership. Over time this relationship has grown stronger as more NIU alumni fill the offices of John Deere.

John Deere wanted to work with the BELIEF Program because the program carries some of the same founding principles as Deere. John Deere is focused on its core values of integrity, innovation, quality, and commitment.

After hours of brainstorming on how to take the NIU/John Deere partnership to the next level, the idea of the video case competition came to mind. It is a great competition because it encourages the students to work in teams and apply ethical ideas to real world situations.

The videos are judged based on professionalism, creativity, and the ability to think beyond standard business issues.

John Deere employees, who are part of the NIU team chosen to review the videos, view and judge the videos and receive a consolidated single vote in the competition.

This year’s competition was Andzelika Wojnowska, a business administration student and community advisor at NIU.

The second place video belonged to ASCEND, a College of Business student organization dedicated to the leadership and global business potential of Pan-Asians. The third place prize was awarded to LEAD, the student ethics group associated with BELIEF.

Susie Bojanoski, a current member of LEAD, participated in hopes that, “peers will watch and learn a little bit more about ethics and the student organization of LEAD.”

This year’s competition was a success in the eyes of John Deere, the BELIEF Program, and the College of Business.

To see the winning video, go to cob.niu.edu/belief.

Andzelika Wojnowska, winner of this year’s NIU/John Deere Ethics Video Contest
Insight on a Business Environment

By Katheryne Perez

Over the course of the UBUS 101: Business and Society class, students have been tasked with understanding the importance of business ethics through a classroom setting.

Dr. McCoy, the instructor of this course, decided to engage his students in learning what it takes to progress in a business environment. The UBUS 101 students invited two business professionals to come to class to conduct an interview and learn firsthand what it takes to progress in a business environment.

Tim Suter, CEO of The Suter Company located in Sycamore, Illinois and Ralph Pfeifer, Executive Vice President of EMCOR Services Team Mechanical located in Buffalo Grove, Illinois, were gracious enough to talk to the UBUS 101 students.

After introductions were made, the questions began.

What does your average day look like?

“Everyday before I leave I have a to do list. Things change everyday,” replied Pfeifer.

“Between attending meetings and responding to emails, that’s half of my day. I work with customers and responding to their requests along with planning what to do next within the company. I spend a fair amount of time developing culture within the company,” replied Suter.

Expand on the importance of maintaining communication.

“Communication is extremely important. You have to do email, face to face, and phone calls. If you email back and forth more than once or twice, you pick up the phone and call them to effectively fix the situation,” said Pfeifer.

We know that motivation is key to a successful company, but as inexperienced students we often wonder, how do you motivate those below you?

“Communicating their results such as how they are doing. We have meetings every Friday and talk about what is going on, we joke and laugh, but it’s a good way to let others know what is going on. Every year we have an evaluation to let employees know what is going on,” said Pfeifer.

If there was one thing that you would pass down to the College of Business students, What would it be?

“One thing would be hard work. I was not the smartest person or talented, but I was always dedicated and worked hard. If you have that work ethic and have a passion for what you do, then that’s what’s going to get you going where you want in your career,” said Pfeifer.

Suter responded with, “Don’t short change what you are interested in or like doing. If you really want to excel and enjoy going to work, then it’s a combination of figuring out, here’s what I’m good at and here’s what I like to do. If you can find things that intersect with what you like and what you are good at, then you’re lucky. Finding that will turn people into great performers.”

As the interview came to an end, we were left to reflect on the wisdom given to us by Pfeifer and Suter. Upon reflecting on the interview, I was curious as to what some of the students took from the experience.

Aaron Knight responded with, “The biggest thing I took from the interview was communication. Communication through all levels of business is key to good business practices and how well you perform.”

“The thing I agreed with most was that communication is key. This is something that has been pushed on me at a young age, so to hear business professionals who are higher up say it, just confirms what I heard when I was younger,” said Anthony Accetta.
LEAD

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are a lot of things that can be done to help keep people involved once they graduate from NIU; the Alumni Giving Challenge has certainly sparked LEAD’s interest and attention as one of those opportunities.

As we finish the school year, LEAD wanted to give an update on how our budget stands. An ethical company would inform stakeholders and investors of the company’s financial standing. As an organization focused on ethical practices, LEAD believes that informing donors of current funds is the right thing to do. As an organization, we started the year with a set budget of $2,000. In the summer, LEAD hosted a joint-strategic planning session with CAUSE to help make a partnership for future events. LEAD and CAUSE shared an expense for the meeting, which included food with a total cost of $126. We have finished the school year with a surplus for next year. Our remaining current budget is about $1,009. One of the largest expenses was our LEAD T-Shirts, which were ordered from Ink smart, totaling about $306. The shirts were designed by LEAD and promote both the organization and the student sponsors.

The other expenses were news articles and seeing the headlines, our society sees the real life ramifications of being unethical. Matt believes that, “As more people wonder how to solve the problem of ethics, BELIEF will increasingly stand out as the thoughtful, effective model that it is.” This will only benefit NIU students and help them stand out in an application pool as the competitive differentiation continues to grow.

Working for Experian since graduating, he has now earned the title of Global Product Director in their Marketing Services division. His job is to ensure Experian makes great products that solve complex marketing and promotional problems for their clients in many different markets. To the surprise of most people, Experian does much more than credit reporting, but also global digital marketing. To sum up the purpose of Experian, they help brands that consumers shop for have meaningful interactions with their customers. They do this by helping their clients learn more about their customers and help them determine the best way to market to them. His favorite thing about working for Experian is that working there for so long he has been able to continue advancement in his career and expand his knowledge. He has had no less than five different jobs, each of them using knowledge learned from the previous job. Experian is a constantly evolving company, so Matt’s job never gets old.

While reflecting on encountering his first real world ethical issue by saying that, “We didn’t have BELIEF when I went to NIU, so I couldn’t pull the ethical dilemma decision card from my wallet. But I did feel that the quality of the professors, instructors, and staff in the College of Business played a role in preparing me for life after college.” His ethical decision dilemma was immediate as he entered the position of project manager in the field of marketing data processing. Matt’s responsibilities were to interpret client instructions, program the systems to give clients what they wanted, and then quality check the output. Such a complicated process is prone to errors which could lead to significant costs downstream, especially under the pressure of constant deadlines. With the idea that missing deadlines meant loss in profit, he faced the decision of approving data to meet the deadline or challenging and correcting the issue. He quickly found that positive, long term relationships with his clients were built by making the harder decision.

Unfortunately in the business world, short term success is often seen as the reward for cutting ethical corners. Crossing ethical lines isn’t just about the black and white of whether an activity is legal or not, but rather navigating the gray spaces. It can be really difficult to stand up for what is right when observed behaviors maybe didn’t break a law but clearly wouldn’t pass the “Mom Test.” Now more than ever, students need to be equipped to deal with the discomfort and challenge that can often come with defending ethical behavior. Matt closes by saying, “I believe that BELIEF is succeeding in doing this.”

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give back to the college.”

The memories he gained from being a student made giving back more personal. The word that can be used to describe the impact that the BELIEF Program had on him is connection. This one word explains perfectly how Matt can use what he has learned since graduation and pass on his lessons learned to future professionals. This forms a connection to the program and the people who put forth so much effort in the first place to help prepare him for the business world. In his opinion the program offers a great service to the College of Business. The BELIEF Program has been established long enough that students graduating have now been infused with the concepts in correlation with the BELIEF program. This makes a big difference to Matt, as both an employer and a person that values ethical behaviors. The BELIEF program is a competitive differentiator. Reading news articles and seeing the headlines, our society sees the real life ramifications of being unethical. Matt believes that, “As more people wonder how to solve the problem of ethics, BELIEF will increasingly stand out as the thoughtful, effective model that it is.” This will only benefit NIU students and help them stand out in an application pool as the competitive differentiation continues to grow.

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Faculty for Ethics Spotlight: Joan Petros
Guiding student work for the real world

By Jareshiah Quarles

In the midst of another spring semester at Northern Illinois University, BELIEF brings some warmth with our semi-annual Faculty for Ethics spotlight. This semester we chose Joan Petros to be our honored faculty candidate who we spent time getting to know a little better. Joan is a graduate of NIU and spent some time in the corporate world before coming back to the College of Business. Joan is one of the founding members of Faculty for Ethics and has some insight on the path it has taken.

Q: What is the favorite part of your job here at NIU?
A: I’m currently the Director of the Experiential Learning Center (ELC). My favorite part of this job is guiding student’s work on projects for real organizations. Throughout this process, I observe them develop and grow professionally. Also, they gain real life experience from the business professionals sponsoring the project. Project teams are expected to deliver something of value to their sponsors, or clients. When this happens and their hard work pays off, we all feel great about their accomplishments.

Q: How long has the ELC been in existence at NIU?
A: The ELC has been at NIU since 1998, but it has been in its current format since 2004. We have a long standing history working with many different organizations and companies.

Q: What’s your favorite aspect of the BELIEF program?
A: As a group, when the BELIEF program began, we wanted to increase students’ awareness of ethical issues by utilizing a common framework and integrating it throughout the curriculum. The program has grown and it inspires students, like the LEAD group, to participate in activities like the case competition and video contest, along with other ethics-related activities. I am proud that so many of our students care so deeply about the topic. It is also inspiring that our corporate sponsors are dedicated supporters in so many ways and that they continue to grow in numbers.

Q: What advice would you give students to thrive in a work environment but still be ethical at the same time?
A: I would tell them you can thrive and flourish in a work environment by maintaining ethical standards. Good guys don’t always finish last! Students should try to find an employer with a culture that fits with their belief system. They should ask questions about policies, corporate values, and codes of conduct and how they are demonstrated by employees at all levels of the organization.

Thanks to Joan Petros, we have now learned more about the ELC and the BELIEF Program. As a member of LEAD, I aspire every day to spread our knowledge of ethics to our peers and faculty. Joan has been an indispensable part of the Faculty for Ethics group and continues to add greatly to the furthering of ethics within the walls of NIU College of Business.

Students should try to find an employer with a culture that fits with their belief system.

—Joan Petros
Hayes

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Ross Hayes graduated from NIU in May of 2010 with a degree in Marketing. He decided on NIU over Southern Illinois because the business school and the marketing program is much more competitive. On top of being a student member of LEAD, he was very active in the Collegiate Sales Advisory Board as that directly correlated with his Certificate in Professional Sales.

Ross was also a contributing team member in the Experimental Learning Center (ELC). He was a member of the Hall Associate Flying Affects ELC team under the direction of Dr. James Johnson. Hall Associates Flying Effects designs, builds, installs and operates mechanical systems used to lift and support performance artists during live theater events, sporting events, film productions, and industrial shows. This local company is one of three major companies in the USA and one of ten worldwide that offer this type of service. The company was facing exponential growth, and was looking for assistance from an ELC team in a variety of areas such as creation of a growth model and streamlining their accounting systems. He continued his experience in the ELC by being an assistant coach on the Icon Companies project. He applied to the program because it was a great way to apply his skills and knowledge from the classroom into a real world situation. Additionally, it was a great opportunity to work with those business professionals to get professional exposure and experience.

The summer between his junior and senior year he interned with McKesson, an international company distributing pharmaceuticals which was a great way to learn what McKesson did and what the industry was like. McKesson also provides health information technology, medical supplies, and care management tools all around the country and globe. Hayes graduated his senior year with numerous marketing awards from the Marketing Department such as the Marketing Achievement Award (2010), Marketing Scholar Award (2010), Top Marketing Achiever Award (2010), and the Commitment to Sales Excellence Award (2009).

Looking back, LEAD opened his eyes to the real world impact and relevance of ethics in the business world. It helped expose him to real world scenarios and ways to handle those scenarios with insight from BELIEF Corp rate Partners. This made him and other students realize that they needed to be aware that business ethics could impact them one day. Business ethics is not just the huge dilemmas we see in the news, but also a part of everyday work and life.

Hayes continued by saying, “My experiences with LEAD, and especially the opportunity to participate in the Eller Ethics Case Competition at the University of Arizona, helped me learn to look at the big picture and identify people or pieces that could be impacted by a decision or action.”

The importance of LEAD is that it helps bridge the gap of just hearing about ethics in a classroom to actually putting some thought and consideration to the important topic. This is achieved in the many events hosted by LEAD such as Belief Week and the Ethics Case Competition; which were not a part of the LEAD activities when Ross was a student. Ross also met his wife Jill Hayes, Director of the College of Business Passport Program, through LEAD as she joined a semester after him.

After graduation, Ross was offered a full-time position with McKesson, causing him to relocate to Indianapolis. His starting position was as an Account Manager for the McKesson health system business in Indiana. In the middle of 2012, he had the opportunity to relocate back to the greater Chicagoland area. His new responsibilities were to cover the health system area. His new responsibilities for the McKesson, causing him to relocate back to the greater Chicagoland area. His new responsibilities were to cover the health system area.

Ross left me with advice on how to deal with college and the idea of ethics. On the topic of ethics Ross said, “Put some time and thought into your identity and your core values to understand who you are as a person.” This helps you handle any ethical situation you will deal with. The College of Business and the BELIEF program do a good job generating awareness on the idea of ethics, but how an individual handles the situation varies on their personal values.

He also left me with a piece of advice that stuck with me and I plan to implement as soon as possible. He encouraged college students to start thinking like a business professional while in college rather than waiting until you are thrown out into the real world. He went into detail by saying, “Begin working on time management, prioritization, business communication, and other fundamental skills that are essential for success.” The shift from college student to business professional is a tough transition which includes a large shift in unexpected responsibility. The sooner you start making that transition, the easier it will be.

Put some time and thought into your identity and your core values to understand who you are as a person.

—Ross Hayes
Ethics Case

Continued from page 2.

This competition would not have been successful if it were not for these volunteers generously giving of their time.

The first round of the competition began promptly at 9:45 AM with the next two hours consisting of all the teams presenting their case to a panel of judges. Each team was judged on the content of information presented, ability to present professionally, and answers provided to questions asked by the judges.

The scores from round one were added up and the top three teams from each level, college and high school, moved on to the final round. When the finalists were announced they were given a half hour to prepare as the keynote speaker, Dean Denise Schoenbachler, addressed the audience on the coexistence of ethics and business. When Dr. Schoenbachler finished speaking, the remaining teams presented their case to the judges of the final round. The winners for the college walked away with a thousand dollars and the high school team won a trophy for their school, but both teams walked away from the event with bragging rights until next year.

All in all, the event was a huge success in the eyes of all who participated. Marketing student Katelyn Houlne, member of the winning team, said, “The case competition not only challenged me with my critical thinking skills, but it also provided me great networking opportunities and helped me improve my public speaking skills.”

The second place team of Anna Borovitskaya and Kirsten Feggestad said, “We feel like it’s a great opportunity to put yourself out there and try something different—thinking outside of the box and developing an extraordinary idea while being able to network with all different types of people.”

All students, finalists or not, walked away with experience and knowledge. Freshman finance student Muhammed Diallo stated, “Competing in the case for the first time was nerve-wracking for me, but I knew I was experiencing what every day business professionals go through. I learned so many things on the topic preparation and presentation in a formal setting that will stick with me in my future career and for next year’s competition.”

This was also the first year many of the newest LEAD members were a part of hosting the case competition. Jazmin Banderas was not a LEAD member during last year’s competition but knew of the standards we had going into competition day. For the 2014 case competition, we had 28 high school participants, a record high of 14 teams. The competition keeps growing and getting better each year. Jazmin said, “For it being my first experience, I don’t have but positive things to say. The case competition definitely keeps getting better and better each year.” The LEAD organization and Dr. McCoy spent much of the semester preparing for this competition. We would like to thank the many participants, judges, and volunteers!

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