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WKU gets $10 million

Gordon Ford and his wife, Glenda, talk to a reporter Monday at University Plaza Hotel. The Fords are giving a $10 million gift to Western Kentucky University’s business college.

Largest-ever gift to the university will go to the business college

By JASON RILEY
The Daily News

A gift of more than $10 million has Western Kentucky University’s business college planning for a bright future and has given contributor Gordon Ford a chance to pay tribute to his past.

The $10.6 million donation is the biggest Western has received and the sixth-largest gift in a university in Kentucky history.

Ford, a 1954 graduate of Bowling Green Business University who now lives in Louisville, donated the money as a tribute to his mother and a commitment to higher education.

Western’s business college was today renamed in honor of Ford, who was in town to announce the gift at a 10 a.m. news conference on Western’s campus.

“I have always believed in education. It is the hope of the world,” Ford said. “If you don’t get one you will be left out and my wife (Glenda) and I are in a position to help. I want the college of business here to be strong and to prepare graduates for the 21st century.”

Ford also cited the gift as a tribute to his mother, Mattie Newman Ford, who attended Western from 1907-09 and received a teaching certificate.

“She wanted me to go to college and I appreciate the inspiration she was to me, so it pleases me to do this in her name,” Ford said. “She touched the lives of so many people in her lifetime; this is my way to pay tribute to her.”

Mattie Newman Ford died two years ago at the age of 107.

The commitment includes $9.2 million in unrestricted funds in the “Gordon Ford Dean’s Fund for Excellence.” In addition, $500,000 in state matching funds will create the Mattie Newman Ford Professor of Entrepreneurial Studies.

Ford also will continue to fund a scholarship program for accounting and business majors that he began in 1992, bringing the total commitment to $10.6 million.

“The Gordon Ford College of Business reflects the impact that this commitment will have on Western Kentucky University,” Western President Gary Ransdall said. “This gift ... will be transformational, not only for Western, but for the community and region as well. It will provide a solid foundation for growth into the next century.”

The old Bowling Green Business University merged with Western in 1963 to become the Bowling Green College of Business Administration.

Fellow graduate and longtime friend Harry Pearl of Bowling Green said Ford, among other BU graduates, began to get more involved when Western started having reunions for those who attended the university.

“They have been having these reunions for the last 15 to 18 years that have helped BU graduates develop a feeling of attachment between their old school and Western,” Pearl said. “Gordon is a very charming, handsome, charismatic and generous man.

“Out of a sense of appreciation for his education, he feels it is only natural for him to give something back.”

Ford, 65, was a founding partner in the accounting firm of Yeager, Ford and Warren in Louisville. That firm merged with the firm of Coppers & Lybrand, which recently merged with Price Waterhouse.

He is a retired partner, a member of the WKU Board of Advisors and a director of the WKU Foundation. He also works with offensive lines and has much more to discuss in his golf game than business accomplishments.

“I shot an 84 yesterday,” Ford said, laughing. “I have shot my age 30 times or more and have his five holes in one. The key is good putting. It is nice to have a good drive, but if you can’t putt you can’t play golf.”

Pearl has an explanation for Ford’s golf skills.

“He ought to be good. Sam Snead was one of his clients,” Pearl said, laughing.

Glenda Ford is a co-sponsor of the gift.

This is the third donation of more than $1 million to the business college this year.

“A donation like this helps Western to be able to compete for faculty, better students, fund research and help us raise us to the top,” Pearl said.

“We are both thrilled and happy to be here. An education is the foundation for life and is most important for the future of our country,” the Fords said.

The money will be used to raise the quality of the business program by drawing high-caliber students with scholarships and retaining and attracting quality faculty members, said Bob Jefferson, dean of the business college.

The college also wants to change to a more hands-on student-centered learning environment and get away from the typical lecture format, Jefferson said.

“We want to create the experiences graduates need before they enter the work world,” he said. “We want to lead the pack in quality student-centered, faculty projects and goals. But instead of simply reacting to what others are doing, we will certainly raise the expectations people have for us, thus is for sure.”

This is the third donation of more than $1 million to the business college this year.

“A donation like this helps Western to be able to compete for faculty, better students, fund research and help us raise us to the top,” Pearl said.

“The possibilities are unlimited now. This is a once-in-a-lifetime event.”
Western’s business school gets $10 million

Louisville donor made fortune in accounting

By CHRIS POYNTER and RICHARD WILSON
The Courier-Journal

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Gordon Ford knows the importance of higher education. In the 1930s, his mother taught in a one-room school in Muhlenberg County so she could send her son to Bowling Green Business University — which merged with Western Kentucky University in 1963.

Yesterday, Ford, 85, affirmed his commitment to education and to his alma mater by donating $10.1 million to the school’s business college. It is Western’s largest single gift and among the largest single gifts to any Kentucky college.

Ford, a retired Louisville businessman, got a standing ovation from university officials and alumni of the former Business University after the announcement. He said yesterday was one of the happiest days of his life, and he spoke fondly of his mother, the late Mattie Newman Ford, who received her teaching certificate from Western in 1909.

"My mother worked my way through college," Ford said. "She went back to teaching school during the Depression."

She taught in the rural schools of Muhlenberg County in a one-room school where you have all eight grades, a potbelly stove and outhouses . . . which the boys on Halloween would get a lot of fun from the girls," he said with a smile. "She believed in education back at a time when everyone believed that her son was going to graduate from college.

After yesterday’s announcement, the regents met and agreed to name the business college after Ford, who made his fortune from an accounting firm he started in Louisville.

Ford, who retired in 1975, took a job with a Louisville accounting firm after graduating from Western in 1934. A few months later, he became a founding partner in Yeager Ford and Warren, which became the state’s largest independently owned accounting firm. It later merged with Coopers & Lybrand, which recently merged with Price Waterhouse.

Western President Gary Ransdell said the gift will help boost the university’s standing. Ransdell said Western will receive about half of Ford’s commitment soon, the other half is deferred until his wife’s death. The money will be invested and is expected to provide $900,000 a year.

Part of Ford’s gift will establish a professorship in his mother’s honor. The gift includes $9.5 million in unrestricted money for a “Gordon Ford Dean’s Fund for Excellence.” An additional $500,000, to be doubled by state matching money, will create the professorship in his mother’s name, and Ford will continue to fund a scholarship program for accounting and business majors that he began in 1992, bringing the total benefit to $10.6 million.

Income from the fund — to be set up as an endowment — will support student and faculty scholarship, research projects, improvements in technology, and social and leadership development for graduates, business Dean Robert Jefferson said.

The fund’s focus, Jefferson said, "is to establish study at Western’s Gordon Ford College of Business as the premier undergraduate program in Kentucky.”

Ford has several ties to Western. His mother attended the university and his sister, Martha Louise Ford, graduated from it. He is a member of the WKU Board of Advisers and a director of the WKU Foundation. He has also provided 10 or more scholarships a year for Western students since 1982. Also, he and a group of Western’s business university’s alumni have endowed a business professorship.

Ford said he is giving the money because he has been so successful.

"I just think education is what’s necessary to move the world along," he said.

Ford has been giving to education for a long time. About 30 years ago, he and three other Louisville Baptist businessmen contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to start a new institution, Kentucky Southern College, in eastern Jefferson County. It operated for several years, but financial problems forced it to merge with the University of Louisville.

Ford is a native of Greenville and has been a trustee of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Bellarmine College, both in Louisville. He and his wife, Glenda, divide their time between Louisville and Village of Golf, Fla.

Ford said yesterday that as a young man, he would not have predicted that one day he could make such a gift to Western.

"Not in my wildest dreams. In 1934, if somebody had offered me $10,000 a year for life, I would have signed a contract.

"I didn’t know he had accumulated that kind of money," Kelley said. Kelley, a donor to several colleges, recalled a recent chat with Ford about philanthropy. "I said, ‘We need to do this,’ and he said, ‘I’m going to do something big down there’ (at Western).” Kelley recounted.

Ford said the education he got from dedicated professors inspired him. He said he wanted to give back to Western — and he challenged others to do the same.

“They need it,” he said. "I had it."
Western gets another big cash donation

University is taking full advantage of state's matching funds program

By JASON RILEY
Feb 14, 1999
The Daily News

In what will qualify Western Kentucky University for nearly all of its share of a state trust fund set up to spur more private donations, the university has received $500,000 from a Louisville businesswoman to create an accounting professorship.

The gift will be matched with funds from the Kentucky Regional University Excellence Trust Fund to create the Mary R. Nixon Professor of Accounting in the Gordon Ford College of Business.

"I believe in (Western President Gary Ransdell's) leadership and I was a student working the accounting department and worked with the department head, Dr. Jack Hall," said Nixon, who is vice president and controller for accounting at Kentucky Fried Chicken Corp. "I want this gift to benefit the university while they are driving the university and department forward."

Nixon's gift marks the fourth $1 million professorship announced at Western since the Regional University Excellence Trust Fund was established in July. Ransdell said. The fund has provided $500,000 for each $500,000 private gift.

"All of the good things that have happened to me -- including my success and ability to make this pledge -- are in large part due to the experiences I had at Western," Nixon said.

This will be the last $1 million professorship available under the fund. Western has only $311,000 left out of the $2.3 million it was allotted.

"We have clearly demonstrated its value and that the incentive does indeed encourage people to step forward and in some cases make gifts larger than they otherwise would," Ransdell said. "My hope is not only that the state make this money available again in the next legislative session but that it be divided more appropriately among the institutions. We could clearly take advantage of considerably larger appropriations."

"All of the good things that have happened to me -- including my success and ability to make this pledge -- are in large part due to the experiences I had at Western."

--Mary R. Nixon
Makes donation to WKU

The University of Louisville was allotted more than $33 million in the program and has used $14 million. The University of Kentucky was allotted more than $66 million and has claimed $42 million, according to Debbie McGuffey, a spokeswoman for the Council on Postsecondary Education.

A $10 million allocation was divided among Western and the state's other regional universities. Western is the only regional university to take advantage of the money so far.

"Western is way ahead of their other peer comprehensive universities in the state," McGuffey said.

The other three Western professorships include:

- In October, the James "Bud" Layne Professor of Mechanical Engineering Technology was created through a gift from the Glasgow businessman.
- In December, Gordon Ford of Louisville created the Mattie Newman Ford Professor of Entrepreneurial Studies in honor of his mother. It was part of a $10.6 million commitment to Western.
- In January, an anonymous donor created a music professorship.

Before last year, Western had no such professorships.

Nixon, a 1977 Western graduate, said the 100 percent match from the state "would be a huge opportunity lost if Western could not take advantage of it. I hope this will demonstrate to the legislature how powerful this program is and continue it in the future."

It is too early to determine if the General Assembly will extend the matching-fund offer for two or more years, McGuffey said.
Business college plans hands-on strategy seminar

Western Kentucky University's Gordon Ford College of Business will have the hands-on seminar "Strategic Planning in the 21st Century" from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday at the Institute for Economic Development.

During the seminar, participants will work in teams to run a simulated computer company and will compete against other teams.

By formulating, implementing and evaluating the results, employees will learn how to gain sustainable competitive advantage in a global marketplace.

Such computer simulations are used to teach undergraduate and graduate students in the college, and Western is sponsoring two teams to travel to Georgia Southern University to participate in the World Game, a competition in which students compete in strategic simulations.

Seminar fees are $150 a person or $500 for four employees. Proceeds will help finance Western participation in the World Game.

For more details, call 745-5810.

DN April 24, 1999
WKU to host open house

The Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University will host an open house today at Western's Owensboro campus, 1716 Frederica St.

Western representatives will be there from 5 to 7 p.m. to provide information about programs and answer questions.

For information, call the Owensboro campus at 684-9787.
University dedicates new college

May 8, 1999

Largest gift ever to Western put to good use with business college

By JASON RILEY
The Daily News

In what Rep. Jody Richards, D-Bowling Green, called "one of Western Kentucky University's finest moments," the Gordon Ford College of Business was dedicated on Friday nearly five months after Ford gave $10.6 million to the university.

"We are here to recognize a contribution from a gentleman who has touched our lives and Western Kentucky University's future," Richards said. "The business leaders of tomorrow will forever be indebted to his generosity."

The $10.6 million donation — which includes $500,000 in state matching funds — from Ford and his wife Glenda to the business college in December was the largest Western has received and the sixth-largest gift to a university in Kentucky history.

Ford, a 1934 graduate of Bowling Green Business University who now lives in Louisville, donated the money as a commitment to higher education and as a tribute to his mother, Mattie Newman Ford, who attended Western from 1907-09 and received a teaching certificate.

"I'm particularly proud of the professorship in honor of my mother who, despite great hardships during the Great Depression, put me through college and inspired in me a great respect for education," Ford said. "Through the (Mattie Newman Ford Professor of Entrepreneurial Studies), she can keep teaching forever."

See COLLEGE, 2A

Gordon Ford talks to friends Friday after the dedication of the Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University, nearly five months after he donated $10.6 million to the university.
WKU students show off their business sense

By JASON RILEY

Two teams of Western Kentucky University students dominated the World Games Competition for college business students.

The semester-long competition started in January. Student teams from around the world ran their own simulated computer companies and made all business decisions, including how many computers to produce, where to make them, quality, price and worker pay. The information was then submitted to Georgia Southern University where it was put to the test.

"They make a judgment on how much you would have sold had you been in competition with the other companies," said Robert Wharton, assistant professor of management and information systems at Western.

"They decided Western was the most healthy company."

Western’s undergraduate team won first place and the graduate team came in second.

"This is a really difficult competition and it shows that Western Kentucky business students can compete against any in the globe," said Linda Parry, associate professor of management and information systems and a faculty sponsor.

Western competed against teams from Finland, Pakistan, Mexico, Eastern Kentucky University and Georgia Southern.

Undergraduate students included Jill Jones and Jack Ferguson of Louisville, Matt Cowen of Adair County, Courtney Snell of Bowling Green, and Vladimir Cara of Moldova.

Graduate students included Andrew Kolestine, Jim Lindsey, Shane Simmons and Robert Taylor, all of Bowling Green, Jamie Saar of Nashville, Amy Ballou of Lafayette, Tenn., and Paul Jacoway of Clarksville, Tenn.
Six Western Kentucky University students won honors during the recent State Leadership Conference for Phi Beta Lambda professional business fraternity in Louisville.

Chad Parnell of Columbia placed first in Web site and newsletter.

Kevin Hughes of Louisa finished first in individual parliamentary procedure and in team parliamentary procedure and fourth in economics.

Nicole Hendricks of Franklin finished first in parliamentary procedure and third in individual parliamentary procedure. She also was appointed state parliamentarian.

Mitchell Bailey of Winchester finished first in team parliamentary procedure and second in impromptu speaking.

Matt Cowan of Smiths Grove finished first in team parliamentary procedure and fifth in management.

Leandra Celaya of Mayfield finished fourth in public speaking.

Faculty adviser Steve White was recognized as an outstanding adviser finalist.
WKU students conduct research for ITA, others

By Owing Green, Ky. -- A research study about the Kentucky TriModal Transpark was a win-win situation for Inter-Modal Transportation Authority and Western Kentucky University's Gordon Ford College of Business.

"The students win. The company wins. The college wins," said Dr. Felicia Lasssk, assistant professor of marketing.

Eighteen students in Dr. Lasssk's Marketing 421 class conducted a survey about the Transpark for the ITA during the fall semester. "It's just a great experience because the students get a real-life project to see how marketing works and marketing research works," Dr. Lasssk said.

The survey of 400 people in Warren County and communities within a 25-mile radius showed that 69 percent favor the Transpark while 14 percent oppose it. The survey showed that most people were aware of the Transpark and that a majority felt job growth and development were important. A site near Oakland has been selected for further study as a business/industrial park that would have access by railroad, highway and air traffic.

"We are very pleased with the outcome of this study and the opportunity to work with Western students," ITA President Dan Cherry said.

The ITA was one of four groups that worked with Dr. Lasssk's marketing students last semester. Students in two Marketing 421 classes also conducted research for Commonwealth Health Corp., United Way and WBGK.

"It's a benefit for the students because they get some hands-on experience," Dr. Lasssk said.

Each semester five to eight teams of students select a company, nonprofit agency or other group for their marketing research studies, Dr. Lasssk said.

In the ITA study, Cherry and ITA Vice President Melinda Hill met with the students, discussed a benchmark study about the Transpark and worked with students to develop a questionnaire.

The students worked in four teams and collected 100 responses per team during the week of Nov. 15. Those responses were compiled using a statistical software program and each team completed a report about the findings. The reports were completed on Dec. 17 and presented to the ITA on Jan. 3.

"This class is a win-win for the College of Business to work with the business community," Dr. Lasssk said.

The marketing class also is a win-win for the students who'll leave Western better equipped for the job world, she said. "The basis behind it is that students take what they've learned about marketing and what they've learned about statistics and put it all together," Dr. Lasssk said.
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County second within the past few weeks to endorse major project.

BY JASON RILEY
The Daily News
jriley@bgdailynews.com / 783-3240

The past few weeks have been good
times for Dan Cherry, president of the
Intermodal Transportation Authority
that is overseeing the proposed Ken-
tucky Tri-Modal Transpark project.

For weeks,Edmonson Fiscal Court on
Tuesday unanimously passed a reso-
lution supporting the proposed $60
million to $100 million transpark,
which would contain industrial
and distribution centers and be served
by road, rail and air.

"We want to see this built," County
Judge-Executive Freddie Travis said.
"The economic impact it will have on
this area will be tremendous not just
for us, not just for Warren County, but
for all surrounding areas. It's going to
be a win-win situation."

That news came just more than a
week after Edmonson County Fiscal
Court expressed its support for the
transpark in a Dec. 27 letter to the
Daily News.

"With an anticipated annual pay-
roll during construction expected to
be in excess of $10 million, and the
annual economic impact expected to
be in excess of $100 million, we feel
the opportunity of high-paying jobs
and career opportunities close to
home is a luxury many of our citizens
have never expected," the letter said.

With heated and almost unanimous
opposition by residents near Oakland
- the proposed site of the transpark -
support from the two counties was a
welcome boost, Cherry said.

"We are delighted about this," he
told today. "We see our project as a
regional project in that the jobs creat-
ed will provide opportunities to a
large area of southern Kentucky. So,
even though the facility will be in
Warren County, it has the potential to
impact multiple counties."

Preliminary feasibility studies have
shown that up to 10,000 jobs will be

"The opportunity to keep our children
here and have good

jobs for the future gener-

ation is a tremendous

shot in the arm for this

part of Kentucky."

created by the transpark, Cherry said.

More good news came from a
research study recently completed by
18 Western Kentucky University
marketing students.

Hoping to keep up with public
opinion of the transpark, ITA teamed
with Western's Gordon Ford College
of Business on a survey to determine
the knowledge and opinions of south-
central Kentuckians.

The study, which targeted War-
ren County and surrounding commu-
nities, found that 69 percent of the tar-
get population was in favor of the
transpark while 14 percent was
opposed.

"I think both of those numbers are
significant numbers," Cherry said.
"The only problem is, it gives us a
tough benchmark to improve on as
we go forward."

The survey of 400 people showed
that most are familiar with the
transpark, and feel the transpark will
either impact them slightly or not at
all and be beneficial to the area.

That last sentiment is the one Bar-
ren County magistrates focused on
Tuesday, Travis said.

"I understand there is going to be
some inconvenience; I understand
that there is some opposition, espe-
cially in Oakland," he said. "How-
ever, the opportunity for higher-paying
jobs will outweigh any inconve-
niences."

"The opportunity to keep our chil-
dren here and have good jobs for the
future generation is a tremendous
shot in the arm for this part of Ken-
tucky."
Automotive and General Industry Managers, your success of your firm depends on being ready for the future. Learn the survival skills of the highly competitive Auto Industry that your business can use to thrive. Attend the GAC 2000 in Bowling Green, KY. Call or e-mail for details about international speakers and delegations at this world class event.

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Website: www.gac.ky.net
Ask for Andrew and get a discount.
Western teams eye business contest

By the Daily News

Two teams of Western Kentucky University students will participate April 13-15 in the 36th Annual International Collegiate Business Policy Competition in San Diego.

In the competition, students make business decisions about their company each week for a semester and submit them via the Internet, said Linda Parry, associate professor of management and information systems at Western.

The teams will compete against students from 33 other universities from all over the world.

During the competition, students will get hands-on experience in running a company, bring together functional academic concepts in an integrated management experience and compete with others from outside their school to get a more global perspective and promote teamwork.

The undergraduate team, WKU Solutions Inc., includes Matthew Cowan of Russell Springs, Kelli Miller of Smiths Grove, Chris Conlee, Jane Rutledge and Maryana Kushnir, all of Bowling Green, and Bryan Carrico of Knoxville, Tenn.

The graduate team, Big Red Industries, includes Craig Nunnari, Trina Smith, Jim Pultorak and Shane Simmons, all of Bowling Green, and Tim Young of Alvaton.

Last year, Western's undergraduate team won the competition.

The graduate team came in second.
Western students participating in business policy competition

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. -- Two teams of Western Kentucky University students are participating in the 36th Annual International Collegiate Business Policy Competition.

In the competition, students make business decisions about their company every week for a semester and submit them via the Internet, said Linda Parry, associate professor of Management and Information Systems. The teams are competing with students from 33 other universities from all over the world.

The teams will compete in San Diego April 13-15, requiring students to make a number of decisions in a compressed time period, Parry said.

Parry said the benefits for the students include: hands-on experience running a company; bringing together the functional academic concepts so students have an integrated management experience; allowing students to compete with others outside their school so they get a more global perspective, and promoting teamwork.

The undergraduate team, WKU Solutions Inc., includes: Matthew Cowan of Russell Springs; Keli Miller of Smiths Grove; Chris Comlee, Jane Rutledge and Maryana Kushnir, all of Bowling Green; and Bryan Carrico of Knoxville, Tenn.

The graduate team, Big Red Industries, includes Craig Nunnari, Trina Smith, Jim...
April 13-15 in San Diego.

In the competition, students had to make business decisions about a simulated company each week for a semester and submit those decisions via the Internet.

Western's undergraduate team was named first runner-up while the graduate team was fourth. Four members of each team made the trip.

Members of the undergraduate team, WKU Solutions Inc., were: Chris Conice, Jane Rutledge and Maryana Kushnir, all of Bowling Green; Bryan Carrico of Knoxville, Tenn.; Matthew Cowan of Russell Springs; Sonya Robertson of Columbia; and Keli Miller of Smith Grove.

Members of the graduate team, Big Red Industries, were: Craig Nunnari, Trina Smith, Jim Pultorak and Shane Simmons, all of Bowling Green; and Tim Young of Alvaton.

Linda Parry, associate professor of management and information systems, and Robert Wharton, visiting professor of management, were co-advisers to the teams.
Local musicians to be featured on CD marketed by WKU students

Glasgow’s Section 8 is one of four Glasgow bands that will be featured on a CD produced, marketed and distributed by a group of students at Western Kentucky University’s Gordon Ford College of Business.

The CD, “Code Red: Destination Unknown” will feature the work of not only Section 8, but Gear, Jelcom and Seven Limbs, as well as Totem Soul, of Russellville; 37, of Morehead; Elk River, of Bowling Green; Mark Mallone, of Elizabethown; Laced, of Santa Claus, Ind.; and Mr. Neutron, of Evansville, Ind.

“Code Red: Destination Unknown” should be on store shelves by September. The bands are recording their songs this month at David Barrick Recording Studio in Glasgow.

A CD release party is planned for Sept. 14 at the Armory in Bowling Green. Pre-release events are scheduled during the Southern Kentucky Fair later this month and when students return to campus next month.

The CD is the project of the 20 students in a two-semester entrepreneurship class taught by Dr. Linda Parry and Dr. Felicia Lassk. The students set up their own company, Starving Student Productions, and make all the decisions, said Parry.

Parry said she got the idea after attending a conference and hearing about another school that had produced a CD. When the class began in January, the students conducted market research of students, alumni and music stores and decided to make a rock music CD aimed at 16-to-30 year olds.

In April, Starving Student Productions auditioned and evaluated about 60 bands.

“We picked 10 bands that we thought would swing the target market our way,” said student Rob Easterday. Two of the bands, Gear and Totem Soul, play clubs in the area and have a solid fan base, he said.

Producing the CD will cost about $15,000. Students paid $40 each for four shares of Starving Student Productions and have spent the summer lining up sponsorships and donations.

“We’ve had a lot of people tell us this couldn’t be done, but we’ve far exceeded expectations,” Easterday said.

To learn more about Starving Student Productions and the students involved, visit the group’s Web site at http://starvingsstudents.bizland.com.
Students try hand at business
WKU class produces CD for profit and learning

BY SARA SHIPLEY
The Courier-Journal

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. -- Following an approach that is becoming wildly popular at colleges, 20 students at Western Kentucky University are learning how to succeed at business by trying it themselves.

The students in Western's first hands-on entrepreneurship class have invested their own money to produce a rock-music CD that will be marketed to young people as they return to school this fall.

Starving Student Productions aims to educate, entertain and turn a profit.

"It sounded cool, but actually it's a lot of work, just like a real business," said Rob Easterday, 21, a senior business student from Brentwood, Tenn.

Perhaps there is no substitute for the school of hard knocks, but a growing number of entrepreneurship-education programs now attempt to provide potential business owners with the tools they will need to survive in a fast-changing marketplace.

The number of such classes at business schools nationwide grew from just 16 in 1970 to more than 450 two years ago, according to research by Karl Vesper, a business professor at the University of Washington in Seattle, one of the first schools to teach entrepreneurship as an academic subject.

Like universities in other states, those in Kentucky have latched on to the idea that entrepreneurship education can promote home-grown alternatives to dependence on economic development from outside.

"We look at it as a strategy to grow our own businesses," said Bob Taylor, dean
of the University of Louisville's School of Business and Public Administration. The university's 6-year-old entrepreneurship program helps students launch real companies, instead of just looking to Fortune 500 firms for jobs.

"WE HOPE in the next 20 years, the next Vencor, Papa John's, Humana, whatever, we will have helped start one of those businesses," Taylor said. "I think what we really need to do is recognize we have some bright people right here" in Kentucky.

U of L's program, which was ranked No. 2 in the nation last year by the U.S. Association on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, spawned a Web-development company called Net Tango that has been in business more than six years.

Another one, launched this year and called FreightJungle, hooks independent truckers up with loads to deliver, Taylor said.

Economists say that because small businesses account for 75 percent of the jobs created in the past decade, entrepreneurs are an essential part of the new economy. The Internet craze and the availability of venture capital create more opportunities for starting a business.

But even if today's students don't end up founding their own companies, the skills taught in the entrepreneurship classes popping up at most university business schools will help graduates be better employees, said Bob Jefferson, dean of WKU's Gordon Ford College of Business. Employers want workers who are creative, responsible and forward-thinking -- some of the same qualities that make a successful business owner.

And entrepreneurship programs let business schools meld various disciplines, such as accounting, finance and marketing.

"The thrust in our college is whether you own a business or work for somebody else, you should think as if you own that business. In other words, we should foster a sense of entrepreneurship whether you're working for State Farm, Dollar General or General Motors," Jefferson said. "Then if you happen to start a venture, whether a dot-com or a restaurant, you'll probably respond better."

THE TREND also dovetails with the desire to move colleges from ivory-tower theories to "real-world" training.

"Always before, when we did business classes, it was made-up projects, made-up business plans," said Linda Parry, an associate professor of management at Western who is leading the two-semester entrepreneurship class. She got the idea of producing a CD from a conference two years ago.

"Nothing will make you sit up and take notice more than if you're dealing with your own business."
Students agree. Jason Alvey, 21, a senior business major from Calhoun, was one of 65 students who applied for the 20 spots in Western's entrepreneurship class. "I was tired of theory and reading books," he said. "Plus, maybe I'll make a buck."

But halfway through the project, after a summer of meetings on personal time, drawing up business plans, applying for loans, and wearing out shoe leather all over town on endless errands, Alvey said he realizes that starting a business is not for him.

"I just don't want all the problems and hassles that go with it," he admitted. "I just want my paycheck."

Easterday, the student from Brentwood, a Nashville suburb, had the opposite reaction. "It was the greatest thing I've ever come across," he said of the class. "When I get out of college, which will be in May, I will go into the music business because of this... I want to have a record label."

All of this begs the question: Can entrepreneurship be taught? After all, Bill Gates dropped out of Harvard before going on to found Microsoft and become the world's richest man.

The answer is no, says U of L's Taylor. "I think what you can do is help someone who has that passion to understand the mechanics of what they need to do, and help them be more successful earlier than if they had gone through the trial-and-error method," he said.

Business people tend to back the notion that entrepreneurship education offers a leg up on the competition. Several Kentucky corporate leaders have recently donated large sums to start entrepreneurship programs.

Examples include Louisville accountant Gordon Ford's $10 million gift in 1998 to WKU; part of the money established the university's first endowed chair in entrepreneurship.

**THE UNIVERSITY** of Kentucky received a $7 million gift this year from venture capitalist Douglas J. Von Allmen, part of which will support the Center for Entrepreneurship and Electronic Commerce.

Business-development centers and workshops -- such as those at WKU, Eastern Kentucky University, Kentucky State University and Northern Kentucky University -- are other manifestations of the drive toward entrepreneurship.

Small-business owner Tim Earnhart, president of The Liberty Group in Bowling Green, said he could have used such assistance when he bought a printing company six months ago. Earnhart, 28, suddenly went from working for another firm to supervising 32 employees in a $2.5 million company.
He has donated several thousand dollars' worth of materials and advice to Starving Student Productions to help those students learn the ropes earlier. "Doing internships in the summer is great, but to produce something from nothing and to sell it, and hope to make money and not lose money, that's what business is all about," he said.

University entrepreneurship programs are churning out plenty of new business owners, some of whom don’t last very long. "Failure is one of the most important lessons of entrepreneurship," said U of L's Taylor.

But some do have staying power. The University of Washington in Seattle, for example, helped launch Cybercamps, a company that runs summer computer camps for youngsters; World2Market, a Web-based business selling artisan crafts from around the world; and Aptelix, which makes software to deliver e-mail via telephone.

"This is not an academic exercise, and we make that really clear to them," said Connie Bourassa-Shaw, managing director of the university's Program in Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

**WESTERN** Kentucky University's experimental class has spent about $10,000 so far on the CD project, which was partially financed by the 20 students, who each invested $40 in the company. Starting last spring, the students researched the type of music most likely to sell on campus; auditioned more than 60 regional bands; and promoted their project at radio stations, stores and other businesses.

The 10 bands chosen recorded their tunes at a studio in Glasgow, and production should start soon. A party to celebrate the release of "Code Red: Destination Unknown" will be held Sept. 14 at the Armory in Bowling Green. The CD, which will be sold at local stores and online at Amazon.com, is aimed at the 16-30 age bracket.

Then comes the golden question: Will investors make money?

"There's no doubt in my mind that they will in the worst case break even," Professor Parry said. "But that isn't the point about this. We got into it because we wanted them to have the experience of running a real project. . . . We've had students learn a lot not only about running a business but about themselves and what they're capable of doing."

**BACK TO NEWS DIGEST**  **TO NEWS ARCHIVE**
Chief economist to visit Western campus

National City Corp.'s chief economist will present his outlook for the U.S. economy Wednesday at Western Kentucky University.

Senior Vice President Richard J. DeKaser will visit Western's Gordon Ford College of Business as part of an Executive-On-Campus program, according to the university.

His presentation will be at 2 p.m. at Grise Hall Auditorium.
WKU, Nepal utilize biz link

Event gives distributors chance to shore up or expand their offerings

By JIM WATERS JAN 22 2002
The Daily News
Jwaters@kydailycourier.com/772-3369

This was not your usual carpet demonstration.

Members of the Nepalese Carpet Federation Association brought samples of handcrafted carpets, some with 75 percent of the best Chinese silk all the way from their central Asian country to the University Plaza Hotel's Salon A on Monday. The event gave distributors a chance to consider sourcing up or even expanding their offerings.

The delegation is taking advantage of an invitation from Western Kentucky University's Office of Global Business and Entrepreneurship to develop new markets in the United States.

The showcase is out of the relationship between Western and Kathmandu University, located in the capital city of 2 million by the same name.

"The Gordon Ford College of Business has already sent six of our faculty teach courses there," executive professor Bill Parsons said.

The Americans also have helped establish a master's of business administration degree program there.

"It's very much a hands-on program where we help link businesses and organizations here in the U.S. with those over there," Parsons said.

Nepal, a David sandwiched between Goliaths India and China, is the fifth-largest exporter of handwoven carpets to the United States. It's also the only country in the world where the hand-carding system — a technique that involves wrapping carpet around large rods as different colors and textures are woven into it — is required.

While machines are now allowed to be used to make other garments, "machine carding is strictly prohibited in the carpet sector," said Purna Man Shrestha, chairman of Nepal Carpet Industries and vice president of Nepal Carpet Industries Association. "Hand carding keeps the natural look, but you can't do mass production.

That explains some of the prices for the higher-end knotted rugs, some of which can cost $36 a square foot.

Doug Morberg, who owns Oriental Rug Experience in Louisville, stopped in Bowling Green on his way home from a trade show in Atlanta, where the Nepalese delegation also had been.

Morberg said he's hoping to work out a way to buy some of the carpeting.

"We sell a lot of Indian goods and different types of rugs, but I would like to get more of the Tibetan good and Nepali goods; it would help us fill a niche in this market," Morberg said.

Nepalese carpeters hope there are many more like Morberg as they try to increase U.S. exports, which presently comprise 17 percent of Nepal's market, compared to Europe's command of 70 percent of the market.

Please try to increase U.S. exports. See LINK, 3A

A delegation of Nepalese carpetmakers talks with local business leaders Monday at University Plaza Hotel.

A delegation of Nepalese carpetmakers talks with local business leaders Monday at University Plaza Hotel. They have taken on a new urgency since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Shrestha said.

While still the largest industry in Nepal, employing even more than the government, the carpet industry did not escape the current recession, as evidenced by a reduction of about 30 percent in its workforce, he said.

"Our economy is in bad shape; Sept. 11 affected us," Shrestha said. "It's had a direct impact on the tourism industry.

Since tourism has been the past brought in the most hard U.S. currency, the carpet and garden industries now are trying to pick up some of the slack.

"We're trying to open up and explore the U.S. market to help the carpet industry," said A.G. Sierpa, president of the 1,200-member Central Carpet Industries Association.

By establishing on-site day-care schools that are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day, Nepal's carpet industry has worked hard to resolve child labor issues, Sierpa said.

Two years ago, the country's government imposed a law requiring industry workers to be 18 years old.

"We're very aware of what the child labor issues and are doing our dead level best to eliminate it," he said.
WKU gets international business grant

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Western Kentucky University $85,000 under the Business and International Education Program, according to U.S. Sen. Jim Bunning, R-Ky.

The grant will be used for two years.

The Business and International Education Program awards grants to institutions of higher learning to promote links between such institutions and the U.S. business community engaged in international economic activity.

Western Kentucky University will use the funds to help reach the established aims of the following programs: Incorporating Mexican and South American Business Focus into International Business Curriculum, Faculty Development & Training in International Business, Development of Students' International Focus, Developing and Fostering Linkages to Business Community, Outreach to High Schools, Community Colleges, Exchange Universities and Community at Large.
College of Business students receive awards for the third year in a row

By the Daily News May 02 2012

For the third consecutive year, students from Western Kentucky University’s Gordon Ford College of Business received awards at the International Collegiate Business Policy Competition.

Four graduate students and five undergraduates traveled to San Diego earlier this month for the three-day intensive phase of the 38th annual competition.

WKU’s graduate student team – Brian Bickett of Whitesville, Kelly Maxey of Tell City, Ind., Jill Kummer of Franklin and Tim Davis of Bowling Green – finished first in best company business plans and annual reports and placed first runner-up in company performance.

Since January, graduate and undergraduate business students have been meeting weekly to make business decisions necessary to run their companies. Competing against 36 other universities, students experienced inventory buildups, rapid devaluation of foreign currency and boycotts.

In San Diego, students made a series of decisions and presented their analyses to a group of business executives from companies such as Intel and Cisco.

Undergraduate students who traveled to San Diego were Diane Livers of Webster, Krista Stock of Sunman, Ind., Dan McKeown of Beaver Dam and Steve Karpinski and Kristin Firkins, both of Bowling Green.

Other undergraduate students who participated were Krista Britt, Adrienne Frey, Marquis Miles, all of Louisville; Kevin Kilpatrick and Stephanie Draper, both of Bowling Green; and Jennifer Portmann of Elizabethtown.
Couple donate scholarship funds

James W. Brite Sr. and his wife, Mary Carolyn Wolfe Brite, have made a provision in their estate plan to provide annual income that will establish a scholarship fund at Western Kentucky University for students in nursing and in the Gordon Ford College of Business.

The gift is being funded through the creation of two charitable remainder unitrusts that will benefit Western and several different charities as well, according to H. Alexander Downing, president of the College Heights Foundation. The trust has a current value of about $50,000 in annual income.

Brite, owner of Hartland Furniture in Bowling Green, said: "My wife and I wanted to provide opportunities for students choosing careers in nursing and business. We know that there will always be a need for nurses in our community, and we are pleased that we will be helping to fulfill that need in the future."
Global Auto Conference helps companies strategize

I have an idea for the good folks over at Western Kentucky University's Office of Global Business and Entrepreneurship (besides a shorter name) when it comes to the Global Automotive Conference. Send only five copies and e-mails of your programs rather than 10! Perhaps having its own, "lean manufacturing workshop" would help it have more efficiency.

In spite of that, William Parrson, the office's executive director, has done a good job of putting together a conference that speaks to the needs of many companies in "automotive alley," where Bowling Green is located.

One of the highlights of the year for Bowling Green's business community is the annual Global Automotive Conference. Gov. Paul Patton will share the podium today with Tim Leuliette, CEO and president of Metaldyne.

The conference, which is administered by the Office of Global Business and Entrepreneurship of Western Kentucky University, got under way Monday and continues through Wednesday. Chris Gauthrie, director of operations at Bowling Green's Trace Die Cast, and Wil Cooksey, plant manager for General Motors, will be among an all-star panel addressing issues of flexibility and productivity in the nation's workforce. They will be joined by several other speakers, including Paul Gelacak of Honda of North America.

There will be a timely presentation on how Bridgestone/Firestone of North America has survived competing in a global economy at 5:30 p.m. today. Mark Rankes, the company's CEO, will be giving his company's testimony.

The event is especially helpful to managers of automotive manufacturing and supply companies to network and learn about emerging strategies and trends.

Some of the top names in both the manufacturing and supply sectors of the industry have participated in past conferences. It's no different this year. Included in this year's seminar leaders are Kevin Williams, executive director of worldwide purchasing for General Motors; and Phillip Sklad, the technical field manager for Oak Ridge National Lab.

Raja Bhattacharyya, associate director of the Office of Global Business, will moderate a session Wednesday morning on what has happened to make the efficiency that e-commerce was supposed to be brought in during the years during the downturn.

"What has happened to the new business model after the technology bubble burst?" is the question panelists will address.

—Business reporter Jim Waters can be reached at 783-3269.
Business college recognizes its best

The Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University held its seventh annual Student and Faculty Recognition Dinner on April 11 at the Carroll Knicely Institute for Economic Development.

Faculty and staff receiving recognition for the 2002-03 academic year included: **Ron Milliman**, Outstanding Teaching Award; Ian Colbert, Outstanding Research Award; Harold Little, Outstanding Public Service Award; Mel Borland, Outstanding MBA Teacher Award; Harold Little, Lou Prida Student Service Award; Marjorie Gibson, Anne and Dan Greenwell, Support Staff Awards; and Afzal Rahim, the Vitale Award for Initiative, Innovation and Leadership.

**Lawrence K. Probus** was recognized as the 2002-03 Outstanding Alumni for the Ford College. Probus is a 1977 accounting graduate and serves as senior vice president-finance and chief accounting officer for the Brown-Forman Corporation in Louisville.

**Diane Olsoska Wallace** was recognized as the 2002-03 Outstanding Recent Alumni for the Ford College. Wallace, a 1993 accounting graduate, is employed with Deloitte and Touche in Louisville.

The MBA Director recognized **Pat Jordan, John Lea and Dean Spainhower** for excellence in services rendered on behalf of the MBA program.

**Chris Guthrie**, director of operations at Trace Die Cast, was recognized by the Office of Global Business as the Industry Partner for 2002-03.

The Gordon Ford College of Business recognized **Sarah E. Eubank** of Scottsville as the Outstanding Junior in Accounting.

**Roger M. Doszak and Jake B. Lyon III** were named outstanding seniors in the college; **May Cano Jaramillo** was recognized as the Outstanding MBA Student, and the Overall Outstanding Gordon Ford College of Business Graduate Award went to **Jake B. Lyon III**.  

**Daily News**  
APR 30 2003
Western working on entrepreneur program

By JASON DOOLEY
The Daily News

Thanks to a growing program, Western Kentucky University's Gordon Ford College of Business is grooming students for entrepreneurship.

Under the direction of Leo Simpson, holder of the Mattie Newman Ford Professor of Entrepreneurship chair in the college for the past two years, Western is working to expand its program to reach outside the college of business and into the academic careers of other students.

Part of Gordon Ford's $10 million pledge and contributions to the university included $500,000 for the creation of the chair that was matched by $500,000 in state money.

"Hopefully, we'll eventually be able to offer courses to students in other academic disciplines who are interested in growing their own business," Simpson said. "We've really gotten the ball rolling here in the college of business the past couple of years and the program is really taking off."

Students take courses in designing and analyzing business plans and have won regional and national awards for their work, he said.

"We won second in the nation with a report that some of our students did on the business plan of Mariah's restaurant, and we came in first in the region and third in the nation with another report on Regina's Hair Salon," Simpson said.

Simpson and other faculty members also work closely with Western's Center for Innovation and Commercialization to help students find facilities for their entrepreneurial ideas.

Western President Gary Ransdell has been instrumental in encouraging the program's growth, Simpson said.

"It helps that we have a president who is very entrepreneurial and has created resources dedicated to creating opportunities for our students," he said. "When the leadership is entrepreneurial, it makes it that much easier to create the spirit among the faculty."

Ransdell, meanwhile, credits Simpson and other faculty members with helping to nurture that spirit.

"We brought Leo on board to bring that elements of how to start your own business and manage it, how to deal with accumulation of profits and plan for the long term," Ransdell said. "It's a tough world out there if you have to learn those kinds of things on the job, but we give them the chance to learn them in the classroom."
September 06, 2003

Humana Foundation creates WKU visiting professorship in memory of co-founder Cherry

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. -- A gift from The Humana Foundation of Louisville, will be used to create a visiting professorship in business leadership and ethics at Western Kentucky University in memory of Wendell Cherry, the co-founder of Humana Inc. Cherry spent 30 years as the company’s president and chief operating officer prior to his death in 1991.

According to WKU President Gary Ransdell, the "Wendell Cherry Visiting Professorship in Business Leadership and Ethics" will be created through a gift of $250,000 from The Humana Foundation. This gift will be matched by $250,000 from the Commonwealth of Kentucky’s Regional University Excellence Trust Fund to create a total professorship fund of $500,000.

"We are extremely grateful that The Humana Foundation has chosen to support Western in such a generous way," said Dr. Ransdell. "Such innovative gifts are essential in preparing competent graduates and leaders with high ethical standards who seek to create new or expand existing business organizations and bring new ideas for business development to Kentucky."

Dr. Ransdell said this gift will enable the Gordon Ford College of Business and WKU to provide annual programs in business leadership and ethics for students, faculty and members of the business community.

"Funds from the endowment will also be used for the continuing improvement of the Gordon Ford College and its quest to foster entrepreneurship and leadership among business graduates and faculty," he said. "The encouragement of personal character and professional leadership with integrity will be enhanced through the use of these endowment funds."

Tom Hiles, WKU's vice president for Institutional Advancement, said, "We are very appreciative of Humana's support, as it signals Western's intention to become a leader in the study of leadership." David A. Jones, chairman of Humana Inc. and the Humana Foundation, said the organization is honored to make this gift in memory of Cherry. "Wendell Cherry was a near neighbor to WKU growing up in Horse Cave, Ky., where he played basketball for a Caverna team that reached the semifinals of the 1953 state tournament," he said. "His parents instilled in him the work ethic, sense of purpose and..."
nearrock integrity with which he lived his life. He was a consummate entrepreneur whose life proved that ethical behavior is an essential element of a truly successful enterprise."

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Foundation gives $76,000 to WKU college

The State Farm Companies Foundation made a $76,000 donation to Western Kentucky University’s Gordon B. Ford College of Business on Monday.

The gift will be used to fund a new executive classroom for the university’s business program, additional scholarships for business majors, and the Certified Financial Planner program at Western.

Western President Gary Ransdell said the gift is another example of Western’s work to develop partnerships with the private sector.

“State Farm’s generous gift will provide scholarship funds and training opportunities for students who will then be excellent potential employees for companies like State Farm,” Ransdell said.

The company chose to make the donation to Western because of the large number of Western alumni employed by State Farm’s various companies and because of the company’s long-standing relationship with the company, said G. Ron Nichols, vice president of operations for State Farm.

“Through this donation to Western, we are supporting the university’s efforts to give Kentuckians the chance to live out their dreams,” Nichols added.
Bank chairman gives talk about values to WKU business students

BY CHRISTOPHER MILLER
The Daily News

Western Kentucky University business students heard advice Wednesday on values and happiness in life and work from BB&T Chairman and CEO John Allison.

"I think values are the least understood in leadership," Allison said, during a lecture in Grise Hall.

Allison came to WKU as a part of the Gordon Ford College of Business Hays Watkins Visiting CEO Professor series, the last in this academic year's series, which started with Warren Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway.

BB&T, based in Winston-Salem, N.C., is a $91 billion bank holding company.

Allison outlined values used by the company — a set of "principles (to) improve probability of success and happiness:" recognizing reality, the ability to reason, an emphasis on independent thinking, productivity, honesty, integrity, justice and fairness, pride, self-esteem and self-motivation, as well as teamwork and mutual support.

"In order to be better we must begin by understanding what the facts are," he said.

Evasion, or refusing to recognize reality, is the ultimate psychological sin.

Allison repeatedly cited the experiences of Galileo Galilei, in his original thinking and reasoning. He also touched on Aristotle.

Successful people in business have the ability to stay in focus and rarely evade the reality, Allison said. These same people don't necessarily have the highest IQ. He also said successful people often learn from their mistakes.

Rick Wilson, area president for BB&T, was impressed with how Allison focused on the pursuit of happiness.

"I don't think that gets enough airtime in our world today," he said. "People are real quick to talk about values, right? But the pursuit of happiness is vastly underrated."
Bowling Green set to play host for global conference

By CHRISTOPHER MILLER
The Daily News

Come Monday morning, the participants of the Global Automotive Conference will be strolling though the General Motors Corvette Assembly Plant. As they experience the making of an American legend, they'll be kicking off the two-day conference.

"We've got a lot of interest; people are registering at the last minute," said Bill Parsons, director of the office of Global Business and Entrepreneurship, which is sponsoring the event. A projected 200 to 250 will attend.

Gov. Ernie Fletcher will be the keynote speaker Tuesday, along with Ian Browde, director of Strategy and Business Development Enterprise Solutions at Nokia.

Monday's keynote speaker will be Heyi Xu, chairman of Beijing Hyundai Motor Company. Xu has worked for the Chinese government in the past and for the private sector in the last 10 years, and will talk about China's role in the automotive manufacturing industry.

Though the conference was created for middle to upper management in the automotive industry, Parsons encourages anyone interested in business to attend.

"The conference might be called automotive but its leading edge in terms of management skills and financial advice that can be applied to any business," Parsons said.

The conference offers a panel that includes David Jean of Sumitomo Electric Wiring Systems; Rich Iler, Lanpher Wilson Business Consulting; Martin McKinley, president of Wells Fargo Business Credit; Mark Emkes, chairman and CEO of Bridgestone Americas Holding Inc.; Neil DeKoker of the Original Equipment Suppliers Association and Stephen Wakitas, vice president of Corporate Quality for Daimler-Chrysler.

The event will be held at the Sloan Convention Center.

— To register, contact Laura Page at 745-6522.
Auto MOTIVES

Global conference draws executives worldwide

BY CHRISTOPHER MILLER
The Daily News
christopher@dailynews.com/785-5000

How could Chinese academic institutions better serve the budding automotive industry there? The answer doesn’t involve creating better structural engineers, materials experts, electrical technicians or computer programmers, as one might expect. Rather, the Chinese need help in a way an American would hardly imagine.

Chinese academic institutions should create more car salesmen, said Heyi Xu, chairman of the Beijing Hyundai Motor Company. After all, the country’s automobile industry only started in 1953, and is currently striving to satisfy the world’s third-largest automobile market.

Xu spoke through a translator at the 2004 Global Automotive Conference held at the Sloan Convention Center. The two-day event, for middle-to-upper management was sponsored by Weatherhead.

In 1992, China made 1 million automobiles. By 2000, that number had doubled to 2 million, and the industry — did you see how fast they got things up and running?"-Teo was commenting on Xu’s comparison of how much faster one Hyundai plant was put together and starting production in China than a similar plant in the United States.

Reiner Bachmann, the controller for NASCO in Bowling Green, another sponsor for the event, echoed Teo’s amazement. "Up to 250,000 vehicles in two years, that makes your head spin," Bachmann said. "If that's what they're doing in China, we should watch out!"

Xu was the last speaker of the day, one filled with workshops on safety and ergonomics in manufacturing, a materials technology road map for the Southeastern automotive industry, ethics and technology, communication with Japanese customers, achieving successful technology transfer at Japanese firms in the United States and the Toyota production line in Michigan (Mich.)"-Heyer said. Heyer was attending the event to evaluate whether the conference would be one of the three industry conferences sponsored by Oracle next year.

"This geographical area is the single largest platform for automotive growth (in the United States)," Heyer said of the South. "We are very excited to come here — next year we plan to be a sponsor."

Oracle normally doesn’t have contact with many of the CEOs who attended the event, so the company perceives it as an "open door" for the right business connections.

"We think the conference was very well-attended by the right people," he said. "This is where the centers of excellence are going to be."

He also complimented the recent additions of Magna International Inc. to Bowling Green’s automotive industrial base.

Mark Emens, chairman and
CONFERENCE, from 1B

"We were here last year," Emkes said. "We really enjoyed the people from the university, the town. The thing that really jumped out at me is the global diversity of the university and the town."

Emkes had heard the presentation of Wil Cooksey, general manager of the General Motors Corvette Assembly plant, and then heard Hyundai’s Xu.

"We had GM, right after him was China," Emkes said. "I think that’s absolutely fantastic, today’s world is a global economy."

Emkes’ and Firestone’s relationship with the conference started a year ago, and included extensive communication with Bill Parsons, director of the Office of Global Business & Entrepreneurship at Western.

"I was just so impressed with his knowledge and business background; Western Kentucky University is lucky to have him," Emkes said.

Emkes thinks Bowling Green and WKU are well-kept secrets.

"The people, the work ethic," Emkes said. "That’s why we’re back here.

"There are conferences that are bigger, there are conferences that are more global. We like this one. Once they see Parsons, they’re going to keep coming back."

Today Emkes was scheduled to present about Firestone’s run-flat tires, a developing concept of putting motors inside tires, low roll-resistant tires for hybrid vehicles and the recent trend of tires with larger rim sizes.

Gov. Ernie Fletcher is scheduled to speak today at the conference.

Workshops
Scott Meza, a specialist at the Toyota Supplier Support Center, presented a workshop on the components of the Toyota manufacturing process.

In the Toyota philosophy, customers are first, Meza said. No defect should be passed on to the customer. The price of a product is determined by what the customer is willing to pay, as opposed to an arbitrary markup by a producer. And Toyota should meet customers’ exact order immediately.

People — employees — are the company’s most valuable resource, Meza said. People want to make valuable contributions to the world, and they have limitless capacity for personal development.

In Kaizen, the company pursues closing the gap between current and true north, Meza said. In this example, true north is the ideal place where a company wants to be, not necessarily where it can be under current logistics. The process involves cost reduction, which doesn’t include cost shifting.

Toyota also is shop-floor focused, Meza said, and one needs to be on the shop floor to understand its current status. Additionally, input from people on the floor is extremely valuable, he said.

After explaining these and other Toyota philosophies, Meza offered a demonstration of various production lines and their efficiency. Workshop attendees had the chance to examine the progressively efficient production models as Meza explained how each exemplified Toyota philosophical maxims.

Rochelle Kopp, managing principal at Japan Inter-cultural Consulting, offered two workshops. Both involved cultural relations and business environments of Japanese and American working environments.

"Their flavor is different," Kopp said. "It’s important to understand where Japanese are coming from."

She identified the top 10 things Japanese customers expect from suppliers.

Japanese look for stability and long-term commitment, and Kopp encouraged any older U.S. company to brag about its age. They also look for a good track record, which means a U.S. company should show off its client list and awards, she said. Such recognition makes it easier for a Japanese firm to recognize a good track record.

And a well-known company in the U.S. may not be well known in Japan, she pointed out.

Kopp explained that Japanese firms look for a main contact person when interacting with a company, and they describe that person as a sort of window into the company. This person should be the standard contact and be able to serve in this position for an long period of time.

Japanese also desire high quality.

She said communications with Japanese firms should be quick and positive. Japanese firms look for acknowledgment of a message within 24 hours, even if it is "I’m working on it," she said.

Kopp also said keeping commitment is very important. Unlike "flexible" American deadlines, Japanese deadlines should be considered set in stone.

After a sale is made, Japanese firms look for "aftercare," Kopp said. The Asian country considers that relations begin with the sale.

Japanese firms also look for a continuous improvement attitude and give hospitality high regard.
WKU business faculty, students recognized

By the Daily News

The Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University held its annual Student and Faculty Recognition Dinner April 16 at the Knicely Institute for Economic Development.

Faculty and staff recognized for their work during the 2003-04 academic year included: Dr. Paula Potter – Outstanding Teaching Award; Dr. Zubair Mohamed – Outstanding Research Award; Dr. Michelle Trawick – Outstanding Student Advisement Award and Prida Student Service Award; Dr. Nace Magner – Outstanding MBA Teacher; David Sparks – Adjunct Faculty Excellence Award; Paula Newby – Anne and Dan Greenwell Support Staff Award; Dr. Lukas Forbes – State Farm Junior Faculty Fellow; Dr. Ed Wolfe – State Farm Senior Faculty Fellow; Dr. Cathy Carey – Vitale Award for Initiative, Innovation and Leadership; and Dr. Charles Hays – outstanding service to the college and university.

Scott Gary was recognized as the 2003-04 Outstanding Alumni for the Ford College. Co-winners of the 2003-04 Alumni Award for the Ford College were Sean Torr and Pat Jordan.

Students receiving presentation awards were: Aaron Morris – Ramsey “Best Paper” in Economics Award; John E. Penny Jr. and Kortney Wonderlich – National City Bank Student Leadership Awards; Michael Butts – The Wall Street Journal Award in Finance; Adam Yates – Leon Page Scholar; Jenny Cecil, Sarah Jones, Jennifer Rakestraw, Anna Stoyadinova and Kortney Wonderlich – Delta Sigma Pi Golden Key Awards; and Sarah Jones – Dean’s Student Achievement Award.

The MBA director recognized Peter Kimaru for excellence in services rendered on behalf of the MBA program. The Office of Global Business Student Awards went to Oscar Cherry and Juan Figueroa. The 2003-04 Global Business Industry Awards went to Marty Deputy, director of the International Center in Bowling Green, and Tom Teel, president of TWK Fastener Inc. Jeffrey Felchner received the Entrepreneurial Student Award. William Parsons and Raja Bhatcharya won the Entrepreneurial Spirit Awards.

The Gordon Ford College of Business recognized the following as outstanding juniors for the 2003-04 academic year: Jeffrey Zoglmann – Outstanding Junior in Accounting; Jillian Kearns – Outstanding Junior in Economics; Stephanie King – Outstanding Junior in Finance; Joshua Knight – Outstanding Junior in Information Systems; Christine Burton – Outstanding Junior in Management; and Ashly Miller – Outstanding Junior in Marketing.

The following students were recognized as outstanding seniors by the Ford College: Kortney Wonderlich – Outstanding Accounting Senior; Katharine Towery – Outstanding Economics Senior; Cassandra Hanssen – Outstanding Finance Senior; Jennifer Rakestraw – Outstanding Information Systems Senior; Emily Burnley – Outstanding Management Senior; and Palmer Pedigo – Outstanding Marketing Senior.

James T. Hodgkins was recognized as the Outstanding MBA student for 2003-04, and the Overall Outstanding Ford College of Business Graduate Award for 2003-04 was given to Cassandra Hansen.
Fletcher hails hybrids at auto conference

By RAED G. BATTAH

The Daily News
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Gov. Ernie Fletcher said Kentucky continues to discuss bringing in hybrid technology vehicle production and engineering through its commercial partnership with Toyota.

The governor’s remarks were made during the kickoff of the sixth annual Global Automotive Conference today at the Sloan Convention Center.

Hybrid technology, education and public policy are all important and integrated elements of maintaining an innovative and profitable auto industry sector in Kentucky’s economy, Fletcher said.

"The increases in fuel prices will have a tremendous influence on a consumer’s decision in purchasing an automobile,” Fletcher said. “It will also play an important role in a manufacturer’s design of automobile models.”

Toyota manufactures the popular Camry model at a Georgetown production plant. Fletcher said he hopes the company will locate some of its hybrid technology production units in Kentucky.

“We’ve been encouraging Toyota to locate those operations in Kentucky,” he said.

Fletcher said education and innovation are key to keeping Kentucky and the United States competitive in a global market.

“As you look at the ability to increase productivity, it is related to the skill sets of your work force,” he said. “We’re integrating our universities and our technical colleges with economic development to generate those skilled workers.”
Automotive conference important

The Global Automotive Conference being held in Bowling Green this week is an important program that brings people in the industry together to exchange and promote ideas. The conference, which is in its sixth year, was designed to track and analyze recent developments within the automotive industry. The event began yesterday and ends Friday.

Over the course of the conference, executives, suppliers, automotive assemblers, middle management and service providers will be flooding the Sloan Convention Center to learn more about the automotive industry and the exciting future it faces in the 21st century.

Kentucky is an important player in the automotive industry because Toyota's plant in Georgetown is the second largest producer of light vehicles.

At yesterday's meeting, Gov. Ernie Fletcher expressed the hope that Toyota would locate some hybrid technology production units in our state. This could be huge for Kentucky if that should happen.

Also, Bowling Green is a one-day drive from 62 auto plants and is home to the Corvette plant. This event is important because it brings global automotive leaders together to discuss ideas on issues such as the growth and future of the industry.

Our view

because it brings global automotive leaders together to discuss ideas on issues such as the growth and future of the industry. It is also a time to discuss the challenges facing the industry and the world economy.

“ accesses to the company’s products. It’s about successful practices,” said GAC co-chairman and former Bando President Jim Blankenship. "Presenters are here to share ideas about how to be successful companies. It hits every facet of the way a company does business, including dealing with relationships between suppliers and original equipment manufacturers.”

Western Kentucky University students will also be able to benefit from the event.

Students can learn about management lessons from speakers at the conference. It will also give them an idea of how to be competitive in the business world.

The conference is good for Bowling Green and will allow a better understanding of basic business principles.

We hope that much comes out of this conference and that visitors enjoy their stay in Bowling Green.
WKU students finish first in competition

Graduate and undergraduate teams from Western Kentucky University's Gordon Ford College of Business swept first place awards in the 41st annual International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition.

The MBA graduate team of Doug Elliot, Leila Matthews, Oscar Medina and Randall Stathers, all of Bowling Green, and Christopher Barnes of White House, Tenn., was awarded first in the graduate division and first runner-up for business plans and reports.

The undergraduate team also was awarded first place in the April 14-17 competition in San Diego and received first runner-up for business plans and reports. The undergraduate team members are Jeff Zoglmann of Elizabethtown, Grant Jarnigan of Brentwood, Tenn., Brandon Kareem of Bowling Green, Larry Martin of Russellville and Mary Skrlivanek of Whites Creek, Tenn.
Western's college of business gives honors

The Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University held its annual Student and Faculty Recognition Dinner April 8 at the Carroll Knicely Center. Faculty and staff receiving recognition for the 2004-05 school year included: Brian Strow, outstanding teaching award; Johnny Chan, outstanding research award; Harold Little, outstanding public service award; Sheri Henson, outstanding student advisement award; Indu Deep Chhachhi, outstanding MBA teacher; Cheryl Payne, adjunct faculty excellence award; Reed Vesey, Prida student service award; Julie Dent, Anne & Dan Greenwell Support Staff Award; Allan Hall, Gordon & Glenda Ford Faculty Award for Excellence; and Jeff Butterfield, Vital Award for Initiative, Innovation and Leadership. Robert Brotz, Linda Johnson and John Watson were recognized upon retirement for their service to the college and university.

Business alumni recognitions included Leilani S. Boulware, Esq., who was named the 2004-05 Outstanding Alumni for the Ford College, and Daniel Stone, who received the 2004-05 Recent Alumni Award.

Students receiving presentation awards included Jessica Malloy, Ramsey Best Paper in economics; Kevin Cook, Eaton Student Leadership Award; Melinda Hamilton and Jeffrey Zoglmann, Delta Sigma Pi Golden Key Award; Jillian Kerns, Wall Street Journal Award in Economics; Rebecca Jewell, Wall Street Journal Award in Finance; Jaclyn Thurmond, Leon Page Scholar; and Sarah Jones, Dean's Student Achievement Award.

Millie Matthew was recognized for excellent service on behalf of the MBA program; Joshua Tarter was given the Entrepreneurial Spirit Award by the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Buddy Steen, director of the Innovation and Commercialization Center, was presented with the Entrepreneurial Spirit Award; and Rick Ball, president of R.C. Components, was given the Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

The event recognized the following students for the academic year: Mikus Paipars, outstanding junior in accounting; Kyle S. Fritsch, outstanding junior in economics; Mary S. Mills, outstanding junior in finance; Joshua R. Moody, outstanding junior in information systems; Alicia B. P堤le, outstanding junior in management; and Elizabeth Kristen Land, outstanding junior in marketing.

The following students were recognized as outstanding seniors: Ryan A. Spainhoward, outstanding accounting senior; Veronica N. Hornier, outstanding finance senior; Michael D. Dunn, outstanding information systems senior; Christine M. Burton, outstanding management senior; Rebecca L. Barnett, outstanding marketing senior.

Doug Elliott was recognized as the outstanding MBA student, and the Robert W. Jefferson Award for the Outstanding Gordon Ford College of Business Graduate was given to Christine M. Burton.
Eminent domain up for debate

Panel discusses impact of recent Supreme Court property-rights case

By JIM GAINES
The Daily News
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Eminent domain — a government's power to buy property from an unwilling property owner — has been the subject of rising national and local debate for several years.

Monday night, that debate came to Western Kentucky University in a panel discussion, "Eminent Domain: Public Walker begins Purpose?"

A U.S. Supreme Court decision earlier this year allowed governments to set their standards for eminent domain to permit its use for economic development projects.

That same day, Mayor Bill Green established a redevelopment district over 29 blocks of downtown, running between Eighth Avenue and the riverfront.

The master plan for redevelopment describes that area as blighted, under Chapter 99 of Kentucky Revised Statutes, which allows the use of eminent domain to clear blight.

Within that district, the city is slowly buying up property for specific redevelopment projects, such as a large park and a housing complex for the elderly.

The discussion between Mayor Elaine Walker; Commissioners Brian Snow; Bill Thiel; general counsel for the Kentucky League of Cities; and Jim Waters of the local libertarian policy group, the Bluegrass Institute, and former opinion editor of the Daily News, revolved around those two events.

Several dozen Western students, plus a few attorneys, professors and interested citizens gathered for the talk, hosted by the Gordon Ford College of Business in Grise Hall. It was part of a week-long series of university events sponsored by various departments in celebration of Constitution Week.

Several students, by saying she knows that eminent domain can be a very emotional issue, and that opponents of its use often try to portray it starkly as "big government" forcibly taking property from the poor, and handing it to developers who will make huge profits.

But that's a simplistic and inaccurate portrayal, Walker said. In reality, using eminent domain is very complex and under many constraints, she said. Kentucky law is different from the federal standard established by the recent U.S. Supreme Court case, Kelo vs. New London, Walker said.

In this state, eminent domain can only be used for strictly public projects such as roads and schools, or revitalize depressed areas, as Bowling Green is doing downtown, she said.

It can't be used just to replace one business with a more profitable (and thus more tax-producing) one, if the area is in need of such a change, Walker said.

But it can be used to improve deteriorated areas with redevelopment projects, she said.

The U.S. Constitution allows the use of eminent domain for public projects, Snow said. But its use was specifically limited to that, and not left to the momentary desires of either a single person or to a simple majority of citizens.

The Kelo decision makes a return to arbitrary choice by saying cities and states can declare economic development to be a "public purpose" and thus an appropriate use of eminent domain, he said.

Thiel urged listeners to examine the debate over eminent domain thoroughly; it's a complex issue, not a simple one.

See DOMA, 6A

Snow said that when a baseball stadium was proposed in downtown Bowling Green, he was as concerned about the cost estimates as any commissioner would be about the condemnation of property for it, and a higher price if they wouldn't.

That gave him the impression that eminent domain would be used as a "tax" tool, just to get property cheaper, he said.

He doesn't think current commissioners would do that, but the use of eminent domain to acquire nonprofit or blighted area "blighted" shouldn't be in local hands at all, Snow said.

"All downtown is blighted, according to the official definition," he said.

That means thriving businesses such as Booth Fire & Safety are vulnerable to eminent domain because other buildings down the street are in disrepair, Snow said.

One commissioner called the "cynicism and misinformation" about government use of eminent domain.

"When we really think about it, the government can't condemn a property, but then it can say it's "blighted" and be in there," he said, looking around the room.

State law defines a long list of factors that contribute to the declaration of blight, and that will probably be tightened further, Thiel said.

The Constitution does require that just compensation be paid for any condemned property, as determined by independent appraisers, but not whatever governmental eminent domain wants to pay for it, he said.

Waters said he doesn't question the motivation of local policymakers, but that the law shouldn't open the door to use eminent domain for the benefit of private developers at the expense of current property owners.

Already in Newport, the city manager knows that their decision will make eminent domain easier in Kentucky, according to Waters.

Kelo means that "anything with definition of what can and can't be declared blighted must be clarified," he said.

Snow added that to him, anything that allows an agreement between buyers and sellers is not "just compensation."

Walker urged the audience not to believe that local officials ever take condemnation decisions lightly.

"If that's what your local government is doing, you should vote them out," she said. "And guess what? You did last time."

It was a "reinforcement" to say that Bowling Green uses eminent domain with any regularity, Walker said.

"We are going to avoid every possible way of using it, if it doesn't need to happen, I want that tool to be available," she said.

But the very existence of a redevelopment district where eminent domain can be used constitutes a condemnation of downtown property owners, Snow said.

"If you don't believe me, go ask some of those business owners," he said. "You would support repealing the current revitalization plan."
Taking notes
A look at what’s going on in the field of education.

Bridgestone CEO to give lecture at Western

Mark A. Emkes, chairman and CEO of Bridgestone Americas Holding Inc., will visit Western Kentucky University’s Gordon Ford College of Business on Nov. 29.

As part of the Hays Watkins Visiting CEO Lecture, Emkes will discuss “The Thrill of International Business” at 11:15 a.m. at Grise Hall, room 235.

Emkes began his career with Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. as an international trainee near Houston, where he was named store manager by 1977. From 1979 to 1997, he held various management positions in the United Arab Emirates, Spain, Brazil and Mexico, and became president and managing director for Bridgestone Firestone in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

He was promoted to executive vice president of Bridgestone Firestone Inc. and elected to a seat on its board of directors in 1999. In 2000, Emkes returned to the United States and was named president of Bridgestone Firestone Latin American Operations.

In 2002, he assumed his current role of chairman and CEO of Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC and in 2004 became chairman and CEO of Bridgestone Americas Holding Inc.

Emkes received a bachelor’s degree in economics from DePauw University and an MBA from the Gavis School of International Management in Phoenix.
CEO gives students career tips

By BRIAN WHITE
The Daily News

Mark Emkes understands that many people don't have a high opinion of Bridgestone's main product: tires.

"We know that most people think of tires as black rubber doughnuts," said Emkes, CEO of Bridgestone's Americas division, which is based in Nashville.

Emkes, who began a career with the company as a store manager in 1977, gave a lecture Tuesday at Western Kentucky University, as part of the Hays Watkins Visiting CEO Professor Program.

He spoke to about 100 students and faculty about his keys to a successful business, and his international career.

As Emkes moved up the management ranks at Bridgestone, which has its global headquarters in Tokyo, he worked at locations around the world, including the United Arab Emirates, Spain, Brazil and Mexico.

He said the key to success in international business was respect. "Respect the people, respect the culture and respect the work environment.

"This is important because no matter where you come from, you are often outside your home country and your comfort zone when running an international business," Emkes said.

Bridgestone Americas is getting ready to release a new slogan for its Firestone tires, and though Emkes wouldn't reveal it, he said, "We did spend a lot of time testing if our tagline translated well into French, Spanish and Portuguese."

"It is important to recognize the cultural differences that exist in our markets," Emkes said.

Emkes spent most of his lecture discussing ways to be successful in any business, international or not. He focused on relationships between the company and its customers, the government and its own employees.

"We have to respond to customer wants, not just customer needs," he said.

He pointed toward the trend of bigger wheels on large and luxury vehicles as an example. While traditional wheels tend to be 13 to 14 inches in diameter, some luxury cars take wheels more than 22 inches across, he said.

Emkes said he learned of the importance of communications after Bridgestone began allowing employees to evaluate their supervisors while Emkes was managing the company's Mexico operation.

"Emkes wasn't worried. 'We all think we are pretty darn good,'"

"But the employees said that wasn't always true.

"One of my weaknesses, they told me, was communications. 'You're not telling us what is going on,'" Emkes said.

Since then, Emkes has instituted a wide variety of communications policies, including newsletters and other publications.

Emkes also emphasized the importance of ethical behavior. He said that is the one thing about business not influenced by outside factors, unlike weather, raw materials shortages or economic downturns.

"Each and every one of us has complete control over our character and integrity," Emkes said.

The Hays Watkins Visiting CEO Professor program is named for the former chairman of the CSX Corp., who funded the program. It pays to bring CEOs from around the country in to lecture at Western.
College of Business hires new dean

BY ANDREW McNAMARA
Herald reporter

Supporting students' success was the focus of William Tallon's award-winning career at Northern Illinois University. Now Tallon is bringing that same support and focus to the Hill.

Tallon was appointed dean of the Gordon Ford College of Business during the Board of Regents meeting in Frankfort on Jan. 18.

Former Dean Robert Jefferson retired last July after a 40-year career in academics, nine of which were on the Hill as the business dean.

Tallon will officially take the position on July 1 after his contract with Northern Illinois ends at the end of June.

Tallon is currently the interim dean of the college of business at Northern Illinois. He was also the associate dean of the college of business for four years and the department of Operations Management and Information Systems chairman for nine years.

"I felt really honored and very proud when Western asked me to come and join their family and be a part of all that they stand for," Tallon said.

The faculty and staff in Western's business school are very excited to have Tallon lead the school, Interim Dean Robert Reber said.

Reber said Tallon will bring a lot of support and be a positive influence and good representative for the school.

When Tallon visited Western in November, he said he knew immediately the school would fit him perfectly.

"I wouldn't have moved for any other university," Tallon said. "I've had offers to work or apply for other similar positions and I always turned them down."

Tallon said he could tell there was a lot of focus on students' needs and that the faculty worked closely with them.

"That kind of attention is really important to the business community because it properly prepares students for success after they graduate," he said.

Tallon said he doesn't have plans for Western's business school yet because he wants to learn about the school and its needs first.

Jack Marchewka, associate business professor at Northern Illinois, said Tallon is a student-oriented and supportive dean who gets excited about what he does.

"Western is really lucky to have gotten such a great man to lead the business school, and I'm sorry he is leaving here," Marchewka said.

Marchewka said Tallon does a great job of implementing ideas and is very dedicated to working with students and making sure they succeed.

Tallon is very easy to work with, and he really believes in having people do quality work, said Charles Petersen, associate business professor at Northern Illinois.

"He is really going to make Western better with his work philosophy, and we're really going to miss him," Petersen said.

Reach Andrew McNamara at news@wkherald.com.
Global auto conference leaving Bowling Green

BY AMEERAH CETAWAYO
The Daily News

For the first time in seven years, Bowling Green will not host the Global Automotive Conference, a high-profile gathering of international and national representatives from all facets of the industry.

This year, the conference, which starts Tuesday, will be in Lexington.

In the past, Western Kentucky University's Office of Global Business administered the conference.

Last July, that group became the Global Advanced Leadership Center, a nonprofit organization now located on 11th Avenue in Bowling Green.

The change in location is a reflection of the significant interest expressed by Toyota and other companies in the Lexington area, as well as new benefits gained from organizational changes for the group that runs the conference, according to Bill Parsons, managing director for the Global Advanced Leadership Center.

By becoming its own entity, the center can network with WKU and other universities, along with companies nationwide, to administer the conference.

"We have great support from General Motors and continued support from them, but it was an opportunity to visit another part of Kentucky and show the importance of the automotive industry from another part of Kentucky," Parsons said. "So we felt it was not only a Bowling Green event, but a Kentucky event, since we bring people in from seven to eight surrounding states as well as 10 to 20 international countries."

Thus far, the conference has 300 registered participants.

"This conference plays a significant role, helping to spotlight the changes that need to be (in the automotive industry), as (companies) go through the pain of restructuring," Parsons said.

The conference will feature a first-time minority business exchange, which puts small to mid-size companies which hope to act as suppliers to automotive companies in the same room with national companies, in efforts to stimulate dialogue and networking between both groups.

"We will continue to have a series of these events throughout the year as a continuation of the conference," Parsons said.

Scheduled participants for the minority business initiative include Sumitomo, General Motors, Toyo in Franklin, Bowling Green Technical College, New Mather's Medals and Bando.

Angela James is president and chief financial officer of Assessment Services of Kentucky, based in Glasgow, a 6-month-old company that gives third-party inspections and ensures companies have quality parts for production with audits, inspections and consultation. She will participate in the conference's matchmaking by distributing promotional materials at the conference and solicit more business.

"What we hope to get out of that conference is to develop a relationship with the automotive suppliers so we can provide them with services," James said.

"We feel that attending the conference is very important for the future of our business."

The Global Advanced Leadership Center previously considered Nashville and Louisville as options for conference cities.

"We're sorry to be losing it this year, but we understand that the conference is supposed to rotate around the state; we look forward to bringing it back," said Vicki Fitch, director of the Bowling Green Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, mentioning that the event doesn't produce a "huge amount" of hotel room nights for Bowling Green.

— For more information about the Global Automotive Conference, visit www.gac.ky.net.
WKU teams tops in business again

For the second straight year, graduate and undergraduate teams from Western Kentucky University's Gordon Ford Col-
lege of Business swept first-place awards in the annual International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition.

In the competition, students run a simulated company for 10 weeks. They make all the marketing, production, finance and human resource decisions for their company and compete against other companies in their division. Seven undergraduate students and 21 graduate students participated at WKU.

For the first nine weeks, students send their decisions via the Internet. On April 6-8, students traveled to San Diego for an intensive phase, making nine decisions in two days and presenting a report to a Board of Directors. Teams were ranked for their company performance and excellence in their presentations, annual reports and business plans.

Members of WKU’s undergraduate team that competed in San Diego were Matt Burke of Louisville, Ross Richey of Central City and Joshua Knight of Bowling Green. Faculty adviser is Gabe Buntzman.

Members of the MBA graduate team were Jackie Newman of Franklin, Lance Dement of Madisonville and Fabian Novoa, Hung-Jung Wang and Ben Mahaney, all of Bowling Green. Faculty adviser is Linda Parry.
Gordon Ford holds dinner of recognition
The Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University held the ninth annual Student and Faculty Recognition Dinner on April 28 at the Knicely Institute for Economic Development.

Faculty and staff receiving recognition for the 2005-06 academic year included: Craig Martin, Outstanding Teaching Award; Sam Thapa, Outstanding Research Award; Brian Strow, Outstanding Public Service Award; Jerry Bennett, Outstanding Student Advisement Award; Jan Colbert, Outstanding MBA Teacher; Sheri Henson, Prida Student Service Award; Ruthene Glass, Anne and Dan Greenwell Support Staff Award; Harold Little, Gordon and Glenda Ford Faculty Award for Faculty Excellence; and Leo Simpson, the Vitale Award for Initiative, Innovation and Leadership.

Carole Ledbetter was recognized upon retirement for her outstanding service to the college and university.

Two awards were given to acknowledge achievement by Gordon Ford College of Business alumni. Lee Goodpaster Knight was recognized as the 2005-06 Outstanding Alumni for the Ford College. Knight, a 1974 accounting graduate, serves as the director of the Accountancy Program and the Delmer P. Hylton professor of accountancy at Wake Forest University. Alan Taylor, a 1995 MPA graduate and partner with the regional CPA firm of BKD, LLP, was the 2005-06 Recent Alumni Award recipient.

Students receiving presentation awards were as follows: Jessica Malloy of Bowling Green (first place), Ashley Schonhoff of Bowling Green (second place) and Wayne Jackson of Park City (third place) for the Ramsay Best Paper in Economics Award; Lauren Hilgadiack of Portland, Tenn., Eaton Student Leadership Award; Leah Shiloh Pendley of Rochester, Delta Sigma Pi Golden Key Award; Ashley Schonhoff of Bowling Green, The Wall Street Journal Award in Economics; Chris Staley of Bowling Green, The Wall Street Journal Award in Finance; and Ashley Pinson of Franklin, the Leon Page Scholar.

The Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation recognized David "Seth" Burkhart of Woodlawn, Tenn., and Christopher D. Upchurch of Edmonton with Entrepreneurial Spirit Awards for their participation and leadership service with the Students in Free Enterprise Program at WKU.

The Gordon Ford College of Business recognized the following as outstanding students for the 2005-06 academic year: Jin Wang of Bowling Green, Outstanding Junior in Accounting; Cora Newsom of Jasper, Ind., Outstanding Junior in Economics; Rebecca Jewell of Bartlett, Tenn., Outstanding Junior in Finance; Shane Bradley of Bowling Green and Megan Cleveland of Glasgow, Outstanding Juniors in Information Systems; Michael Lee Meredith of Brownsville, Outstanding Junior in Management; Lauren Hilgadiack of Portland, Tenn., Outstanding Accounting Senior; Leah Shiloh Pendley of Rochester, Outstanding Economics Senior; Juraj Lord of Bowling Green, Outstanding Finance Senior; Joshua Knight of Bowling Green, Outstanding Information Systems Senior; Melissa Shields of Glasgow, Outstanding Management Senior; Jennifer Hutton of Villa Hills and Elizabeth "Kristin" Land of Richmond, Outstanding Marketing Seniors.

Millie Mathew of Bowling Green was recognized as the Outstanding MBA Student for 2005-06. Jennifer Hutton of Villa Hills received the Robert W. Jefferson Award for the Outstanding Gordon Ford College of Business Senior for 2005-06.
WKU finance students react to twists and turns of market

By AMEERAH CETAWAYO
The Daily News

While the stock market stabilizes from Feb. 27’s sharp recession, students at Western Kentucky University are getting a taste of what investing with a long-term perspective is all about.

For senior financial planning student Chris Staley, 32, of Bowling Green, it’s an overwhelming experience.

“I wake up every day and I think I have a good handle on where the market is headed. And by the end of the day I have a different opinion,” Staley said. “And according to my professors, that is how it works.”

Staley acts as lead analyst for a class of nine other students who manage a portfolio worth $700,000, which has been funded by the Tennessee Valley Authority for nine years.

Western Kentucky University participates in the Investment Challenge Program, which is coordinated with 25 schools in the TVA service region, according to finance professor Indu Deep Chhabchi, who is the director of the program and chairman of WKU’s finance department.

“Typically we have 10 to 12 students every semester, fall and spring, and then five in the summer,” Chhabchi said.

Staley said the class has given him an appreciation of the markets as he realizes the inability to plan what will happen.

“This experience is the crown jewel of the business department up here. Every day is a test,” Staley said. “This is the real marketplace. This is by far the most valuable experience because it is real and it’s not out of a book.”

Chhabchi said the application-only class is structured so that students make decisions for the long-term instead of paying attention to the daily shocks and fluctuations in the market.

“If you’re here for the long haul it doesn’t make a difference what the markets are doing in the week,” Chhabchi said. “They may have that in the back of their mind, but for the most part we don’t react to it.”

Staley said the there may be talk shows that scream out opinions and advice about stock picks and where the market will go, but he classifies it as noise.

“We’re trying to tailor our investment policy to that larger economic picture,” Staley said. “My macro take on this last week is that it was a necessary correction and I think it’s a wake-up call of a year of slowing growth, that is not necessarily to the point of recession, but definitely to a contracting growth rate.”

Joe Myers is an independent investment advisor with a main office in Glasgow and an office in Bowling Green who has 18 years of experience dealing with the stock market.

For Myers, last week meant getting out of emerging markets and highly volatile asset markets — the risky investments, he said.

“Markets were extended. They were substantially overbought. Markets work like a rubber band. They only get pulled so far before they get pulled back,” Myers said.

To Myers, capital preservation is key.

“For most people it’s buy, hold and pray everything goes OK. I think it’s more important to buy, hold and manage the risk,” Myers said. “It’s a balance.”

Staley said when he graduates in May, he plans to relocate to South Florida to begin a career in the financial planning industry.

“In good times people underestimate or ignore risk until they’re reminded of it. That’s what I think what happened Tuesday,” Staley said.
Wolfe reveals small biz pointers

Sponsored by the Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University, as part of its Hays T. Watkins Visiting CEO Lecture Series, Richard Wolfe spoke Thursday on how to position yourself to succeed and revealed why he thinks most small businesses fail.

Here are some of main points he made about success:

* Bring in the best people.
* If you treat people well, pay them well for top performance, there will be loyalty there that will help you in business,” he said.
* Value employees’ input.
* “There’s no limit to what you can achieve if you’re willing to give other people the credit,” he said.
* Have a life outside work.
* Have a mentor.

Wolfe said you should have someone in your life you “respect, who has been successful, who has connections. Have them share — not their intelligence — their vision and judgment.”

* Take things one moment at a time.

Wolfe said you should ask yourself what you need to do know in order to be successful.

Wolfe, quoting acclaimed former NHL player Wayne Gretzky, said, “A lot of people skate to the puck. I try to skate where the puck is going to be.”

* Know that you will have setbacks in life.

“How you handle those setbacks will determine ultimately if you will succeed,” Wolfe said. “If you allow yourself to be, you can be your own worst enemy.”

Why do small businesses fail?

Wolfe said when a business has a good idea that isn’t as profitable as previously thought, oftentimes, people hurt their margins by not adjusting their business plan.

Wolfe also said a lot of small businesses fail within a relatively short amount of time due to a lack of working capital.

“Think its always good to have more money than you think you need,” Wolfe said.

See WKU, 2B
WKU grad returns to alma mater for lecture

Wolfe, a Louisville native, is a 1973 Western graduate who attended Seneca High School.

After moving to Atlanta, Wolfe graduated from Woodrow Wilson College of Law in 1979 with a degree of juris doctorate.

As a 30-year health care professional, Wolfe is the CEO and chairperson of the board of directors of Subacute Services Inc., a company he founded that offers diversified long-term care and home health care, including the Sunrise Health & Rehabilitation Center — Florida’s largest proprietary long-term care facility with 325 beds.

Sunrise was voted “Best Nursing Home in South Florida” as part of the Florida Medical Business Awards.

Wolfe also served as the CEO, vice chairman of the board of directors and chairman of the executive committee of Comprehensive Care and its successor RehabCare, one of American’s highly successful post-acute care companies.

Wolfe resides in Palm Beach, Fla., and spends summers on Nantucket Island, where he is a member of the board of director of the Nantucket Hospice.

Churchill Downs debuts its own wine

For those of you who are readying your derby hats, here’s some information you will find interesting.

Last week, Churchill Downs unveiled Churchill Downs Wine, a collection the track hopes will bring the Kentucky Derby to a store near you, according to The Associated Press.

The wine series will be available at the track during the Churchill Downs’ spring meet, which starts Saturday.

The wines are available in 12 varieties with prices ranging from $13 to $50 and are placed in three flights: Winner’s Circle, Twin Spikes and Silks.

Bermuda Triangle, the parent company of Churchill Downs, hopes to duplicate the success of the company’s PGA Tour Wines, which debuted a couple of years ago.

— E-mail business reporter Ameerah Cetawayo at acetawayo@bgdailynews.com or call 783-3246.
WKU doles out biz awards at banquet

More than 130 people filled the Regency Room of the Carroll Knicely Conference Center on April 27 to pay tribute to the students, faculty, and staff who received awards during the 10th annual Gordon Ford College of Business Awards Banquet.

Area outstanding seniors honored included:
- Economics: Senad Zlatovic of Bowling Green
- Finance: Christopher Staley of Bowling Green
- Management: Christina Hall of Bowling Green
- Outstanding juniors honored include the following:

Accounting: Heather Andrews of Bowling Green
Information Systems: Robert Sexton of Cave City
Management: Samuel Northern of Russellville
Other student awards were:
- Gordon Ford College of Business Outstanding MBA Student: Peter W. Steiner of Bowling Green
- Delta Sigma Pi Gold Key Award: Senad Zlatovic of Bowling Green
- Wall Street Journal Award in Economics: Senad Zlatovic of Bowling Green
- Alumni Award: Rick Wilson, president, BB&T Bank
- Recent Alumni Award: Tommy O'Brien, manager, Bowling Green Wal-Mart

Faculty and staff of the Gordon Ford College of Business received awards and were recognized for their accomplishments over the past year:
- Teaching Award: Lukas Forbes, assistant professor of marketing
- Research & Creativity Award: Michelle Trawick, associate professor of economics
- Public Service Award: Johnny Chan, professor of finance
- Student Advisement Award: Allan Hall, visiting executive in-residence
- MBA Teaching Award: Scott Droege, assistant professor of management
- Lou Frida Student Service Award: Pat Jordan
- Arm & Dan Greenwell Support Staff Award: Sherry Compton
- Gordon & Glenda Ford Award of Excellence: Roy Howsen, professor of economics
- Vitale Award for Initiative:
Center for selling set at university

With so many jobs that related to sales, task is to provide that training

By NATALIE JORDAN

The Daily News

National studies have shown that students in all levels of education need to be better prepared for a changing workforce and to meet the needs of jobs that don't yet exist.

Recognizing the changing workforce, some colleges and universities have found a particular comfort in centers that build relationships with corporations and prepare students for the workforce ahead. Students are finding a niche that is often overlooked — sales, marketing and entrepreneurship, according to William Talton, dean of the Gordon Ford College of Business at Western Kentucky University.

"Right now, there are 1,500 students that graduate each year from a formal sales program at a place that has a sales major or center," said Lukas Forbes, Western associate professor of marketing. "Right now, businesses are hiring 1.7 million sales representatives. That's a huge gap. So universities need to eventually bridge that gap and fill that need.

Western has plans to add a Center for Professional Selling to the Gordon Ford College of Business's Department of Marketing to help fill that need.

"The initiative, gaining approval from the academic committee during the university's Board of Regents committee meeting, is pending approval from the full board on July 12.

The center, which is aimed at connecting the business and academic worlds, could position Western to be a premiere institution in sales, said Rick Shannon, chair of the marketing department.

"The center brings together a vision. It will set us apart from other schools and lead to donors and companies who would like to invest in such an initiative," Talton said.

Shannon said up to 70 percent of careers in marketing are in sales.

The university has a major in sales, and has recently approved a minor. The major, he said, is for the person who wants to focus on sales as a career, and the minor is for those in other disciplines who want sales experience.

"The center is an extension of that," he said.

Sales is becoming a big part of business across the country, Shannon said.

"It's more than just cutting a deal," Talton said. "There are a lot of skills that come together, such as communications, marketing and computers and companies are looking to encompass all those skills." Forbes said there are three reasons for the center: preparing students for jobs in sales; recruiting more students to Western and building relationships with corporations that are interested.

"It's a win-win-win for everybody," Forbes said.

A large portion of students will get their first or second job in sales, Forbes said.

"People are always in a selling function. There is a sales component to most jobs," he said.

There are 11 Centers for Professional Selling throughout the United States, he said, which would make the pending case at Western the 12th.

"There are four out of 10 (department) faculty members teaching in the area of sales. We

"I think we will get a lot of non-business band major into the minor. We see a real opportunity to bring the sales function to a more professional level," he said. "These centers have all the major companies, and these companies engage the center to find placements, and students in this field tend to be highly sought after.

While there is a growing market for sales, there is also one for entrepreneurship. Talton said the most prominent reason why small businesses started by entrepreneurs.

Western already has a Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, which Talton said could go hand-in-hand with a Center for Professional Selling. He said there is a minor in entrepreneurship at Western, along with about 100 at other colleges and universities.

"These students are involved in creating new business ideas, and the center challenges students to be creative in a business sense," he said. "Another phase is to look at existing businesses and see how you can innovate, how you can make it better — make it stand out and be successful.

"The student demand is there. They want more of an organizational perspective. They want to start their own business." Marketing is still a larger major than sales, and probably will still be a major.

The field is getting stronger, especially in commerce, Talton said. Businesses are looking for those who can add a competitive edge to their organization, he said.

Shannon said the department is not trying to take anything away from the marketing major, but he said they are working to make sales a flagship program in the department.

"It comes down to having a program in sales that will help them in any business career they go to . . . we are all salesmen to some degree in our work," Talton said. "For students, it gives them a higher self-esteem, more poise and it helps them go out into the work force with confidence. "They grow professionally.}
Gift will help WKU teach corporate ethics

By NATALIE JORDAN

The Daily News

A gift from a Western Kentucky University alumnus will help bring corporate ethics to the forefront of business curricula at the university. The $250,000 gift from M. C. Watkins, a long-time supporter of WKU's Gordon Ford College of Business, will help launch a new program, the College of Business Ethics and Corporate Responsibility. The program will provide students with a new opportunity to study ethics and corporate responsibility, and it will be housed in the college of business.

The gift will be given in two parts

Ransdell.

"It will be used to bring in professors to teach ethics courses in the college of business," Ransdell said. The gift is $250,000 to fully endow the Hays Watkins Professorship in Corporate Leadership, said William Hiles, interim dean of the college of business.

A senior full-time faculty member will be hired to lead the initiative, and to sponsor and grow the professorship series, said T. J. M. Donaldson, dean of the college of business, in a press release.

"Before, visiting business leaders would stay for a day or two," Hiles said. "With this, we will be able to keep them here for more than a day or so — maybe a week — allowing them to engage in more interaction with students and other professors, and provide opportunities for community outreach. So it will enhance the lecture series.

Hiles said the other $250,000, which will be made available to the university next year, has been deemed as unrestricted funds that are to be used at Ransdell's discretion for what he considers the university's highest priority needs.

"(Ransdell) said he will make judgment calls on where the money will go as projects come up," Hiles said.

Watkins, of Richmond, Va., is a former chief executive officer and chairman emeritus of CSX Corp., a Jacksonville, Fla.-based international transportation company that operates the largest railroad in the eastern United States. He is a longtime supporter of WKU's Gordon Ford College of Business.

In creating the Hays Watkins Visiting CEO Professorship Program, the college has been able to bring outstanding business leaders to campus who exemplify the same high qualities and standards that Watkins represented in his role as a CEO, Ransdell said. Past visiting CEOs include Warren Buffett, CEO of Berkshire Hathaway Inc., Zuhair Sofia, chairman of Sofia & Co.; John D. Stewart, president and CEO of Triad Food Groups; and Mark Emkes, chairman and CEO of Bridgestone Americas Holding and Bridgestone Firestone North America Tire.

"Hays Watkins has been a leader in the community and a respected leader for many years and we stand out as one of our most distinctive and supportive alumni," Ransdell said. "If we can achieve our vision as a leading American university with an international reach, it will take the support of our most esteemed alumni and friends to create opportunities for excellence such as that of the one Hays and Betty (Watkins) have created." Watkins was not available for comment.

The gift will allow two things, Ransdell said. It will continue to position the college to bring corporate America to Western students and it will emphasize the principles of ethical values both in the minds of students and faculty and in the broader corporate environment.

"This new venture will expose WKU's students and faculty to some of the proven leadership of corporate America," Ransdell said. "And it will highlight the vision, insight and corporate responsibility leaders bring to the business world."
WKU receives $1M gift from BB&T to create professorship in economics to study capitalism

BB&T area executive Rick Wilson talks Tuesday about the $1 million commitment from BB&T that will allow Western Kentucky University to be a leader in moral capitalism during a news conference at the Kentucky Building. According to WKU President Gary Ransdell, this gift will create the BB&T Professorship in Economics for the Study of Capitalism.
Business programs at Western Kentucky get boost from BB&T Bank donation

The monetary support will help create an established curriculum at the university for the study of capitalism — a first for WKU, said William Tallon, dean of the College of Business.

It will allow the Gordon Ford College of Business and the department of economics to provide leadership in the area and deliver new courses, conduct research projects, invite guest speakers, host conferences, develop publications and accomplish other student engagement initiatives, he said.

In addition to creating a professorship, the gift will also go toward creating a Center of the Study of the Ethical Foundations of Capitalism and its relationship to national and global issues. The BB&T Professorship in Economics for the Study of Capitalism, along with the new center, will position the college and the university within an elite set of universities dedicated to the study, research and teachings related to the moral foundations of capitalism, according to a press release.

"Through BB&T's leadership, the intellectual diversity of the university will be enhanced through the sponsorship of visits from leading scholars, researchers, and observers of market systems, allowing students to learn more about their importance to the issues of the day," Tallon said in a press release.

The Gordon Ford College of Business has found itself in a position to increase learning opportunities for their students from sales to research. They've created a minor in sales, a center for professional selling and a professorship in business ethics.

The creation of the study of capitalism will provide a deeper understanding of the morality of the subject and its causal relationship to economic well-being, said John Allison, BB&T chairman and CEO in a press release.

"This contribution will encourage business graduates who enter the workplace to have a firm grasp of the moral principles underlying the free markets, a better understanding of our economy and an enhanced ability to make meaningful contributions to the world," he said.

To date, the gift from BB&T is one of the largest corporate gifts we've received — one of the largest single gifts from a banking institution, said Tom Hiles, vice president for institutional advancement for the university.

"It is a significant leadership commitment by a leadership partner," he said. "We are particularly appreciative of BB&T for this opportunity to create a professorship. We believe support of faculty is a linchpin in recruiting good faculty and students."

The university has received $17.5 million in cash for the fiscal year. The corporate gift will be spread out over a number of years, so it will be counted as it comes in, Hiles said.

WKU will be one of 25 universities to receive similar funding from BB&T.

"They are a role model to other corporate donors and friends the university have across the state and in the community," Hiles said. "This type of gift does help in the investment in the transformation of WKU."

BB&T gives $1M to WKU for new biz professorship

By NATALIE JORDAN
The Daily News
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Western Kentucky University has received a multitude of monetary gifts, and another has just landed in the lap of the Gordon Ford College of Business.

The college received a $1 million dollar gift from BB&T toward creating a professorship in economics.

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WKU major grows by two

Entrepreneurship, plus international business are new concentrations

By AMEERAH CEFAWAYO

The Daily News

The Department of Management at Western Kentucky University debuted two new concentrations for its management major this fall – entrepreneurship and international business, adding to its other options, human resources and business administration.

Management Department head Zubair Mohamed said the new entrepreneurship track was mostly the brainwork of Leo Simpson, a faculty member who helped start the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the Students Engaged in Free Enterprise chapter and the entrepreneurship minor within a 5-year span.

The new concentration is designed for students who want to be business owners or, for those who want to work to make businesses more profitable, according to Simpson. Students will take required courses in entrepreneurship, small business analysis and policy, finance, marketing and five entrepreneurial-related electives.

"We develop entrepreneurship and passion and a desire to be successful," said Simpson, who added that nationally, entrepreneurship majors have sprung up at many universities in recent years.

Fourteen courses throughout the College of Business focus on entrepreneurship and more than 200 students currently have the entrepreneurship minor, Mohamed said.

Simpson said universities are responding to the entrepreneurial movement within the United States, which helps maintain the nation’s economy despite increased global competition.

The Management Department's other new concentration in international business focuses on preparing students for the global economy through sound business skills, geo-political understanding, language skills and cultural and value sensitivity of specific geographic regions.

Mohamed said in light of Kentucky’s expanding global economic role, it’s important to prepare students for new challenges.

"What happens in the business world should be reflected in our curriculum," Mohamed said.

Last year, Kentucky’s exports accounted for 1.7 percent of total U.S. exports, valued at $17.23 billion, which is an increase from 2005’s 1.65 percent, valued at $14.9 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

Kentucky is one of the top 20 exporting states in the nation, according to the DOL.

The Department of Management also received a Business Internationalization Education Grant for $185,000 over a two-year period that will reinforce the university’s mission to be “a leading American university with an international reach,” Mohamed said.

"I have supported the study abroad of over 40 students with scholarships ranging from $300 to $1,800 and the international travel of over 25 faculty in the last two years to present papers and conduct seminars at conferences and universities abroad,” Mohamed said. “The countries our students and faculty have visited include Malaysia, Mexico, India, Portugal, France, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, China and Singapore.”

The trip to India was rewarding, Mohamed said.

"Four students accompanied me and Doctor Doug Fugate from the Marketing Department to India on Destination India study abroad. We went to Mumbai and Goa and our students got exposed to the world’s second most populous (country) and fastest growing economy,” he said. "This was an experience of their lifetime. They saw a wide range of diversity in the socio-economic status of people and how the latest technology is benefiting an illiterate man on the street.

"India is a land of surprises and everywhere around you can find contradiction – an illiterate person peddling the latest technology, such as wireless Internet connection on push carts for people to make long-distance calls and use computers, for example."
WKU gift is over $7M

Alumni couple to contribute trust

By NATALIE JORDAN
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Western Kentucky University announced today it is the recipient of the third largest one-time gift in its history.

A $7.15 million commitment for the Gordon Ford College of Business was made by WKU alumnus D.B. Burchett, 70, and his wife, Lula, 72. The Burchetts' commitment comes in the form of a charitable remainder trust and bequest, said Tom Hiles, vice president of institutional advancement at WKU.

The university gets the legacy gift when the Burchetts pass away.

D.B. Burchett said when his mother died 10 years ago, her estate was put into a trust. Upon the death of the Burchetts, a portion of the estate will be given to WKU. Depending on the economy, when the bequest comes to fruition, the university could receive less than or more than the announced amount, Burchett said. He said to date, the amount the

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Funds will be used by Gordon Ford College

University will receive is $7.15 million.

Unlike some bequests – or endowments – this one is irrevocable, Hiles said. "This gift will have an impact whenever it comes to fruition," he said.

Burchett said he planned to keep his gift anonymous. However, the university found out about his plans after he filed out a survey that asked if he ever thought of giving his estate as a gift.

"I said yes," Burchett said. "From the start, I felt welcome at WKU. It was a place that offered something I could grasp. A lot of schools didn't have the reputation WKU had.

"I feel I owe a great deal to them for giving me the tools to achieve success in life. WKU is very important to me."

The funds can be used by the Gordon Ford College as it sees fit, Hiles said.

Burchett, a 1967 WKU graduate, is a native of Russellville. He first attended WKU for a year after his high school graduation, but found he wasn't quite ready for college. He joined the Air Force and served four years. He then returned to the university to complete his degree while working full time.

At that time, Lula attended Bowling Green Business University – the predecessor of the Gordon Ford College of Business – but dropped out to work full-time so D.B. could finish his degree. Upon graduation, he went to work for Arthur Anderson & Co., an international CPA firm, in Memphis, Tenn. He eventually became the vice president of operations and market development at Terminix in Memphis.

Burchett said he would like the funds to do two things: enhance the college of business' accreditation and create scholarships for students who need financial assistance.

The largest gift in WKU's histo-