Alumni Success Story: Mario Vicari ’83

Reflecting on my education at DeSales University and the impact it has had on my career has been interesting because my time at the University had such a significant influence on me.

A liberal arts education creates well-rounded students who know how to think. This is an invaluable component of my education. I can’t count the times when my liberal arts background has helped me make decisions at work and in life.

Additionally, the DeSales community made all the difference in the world to me as a student. The closeness of the campus community and the relationships I forged with the faculty and administrators was (and still is) incredibly valuable. I was never a number when I was a student and don’t feel that I am a number as an alumnus. I am glad to say that the faculty and administrators was (and still is) incredibly valuable. I was never a number when I was a student and don’t feel that I am an alumnus. I am glad to say that I continue to maintain many of the relationships I developed as a student.

My understanding of what it means to be a Christian humanist in the DeSales tradition guides many things I do in my career and my life. I laugh when I see that many corporate executives have to go to training to learn how to be ethical. Graduating from DeSales means you already know how to behave when you leave—it’s part of who you are.

When I graduated from DeSales, if you would have told me if I would be at the same firm 27 years later, I wouldn’t have believed you. In 1983, when I started working for Kreischer Miller, I was the 18th employee and the company was a small-but-growing local accounting firm in the Philadelphia area. I accepted this position over a job with a Fortune 100 company that offered more money because my goal was to work with business owners and become one. I have never regretted that decision. I don’t believe it’s a good idea to let money drive your career decisions. In my experience, if you focus on your goals and on developing yourself so you can add value to your organization, the money will follow.

I obtained my CPA in 1985 and worked my way through the ranks of our firm. One of the most important things along the way was finding my mentor in Jack Kreischer, the firm’s founder. Jack is a true entrepreneur and took the time to coach and challenge me in many ways. Great mentors can be critical to your career, and I was lucky to work with mine for more than 20 years.

Our firm was growing and taking on far more complex work, and I had the advantage of being pushed to take on very complicated things long before I thought I was ready. The best way to grow your skills is to take on challenges that take you out of your comfort zone. I made plenty of mistakes, but taking risks and making mistakes is the price you pay for great experience.

I invested capital into the firm in 1995 when I became a partner. Since that time, we have continued to grow and I have been fortunate to contribute to that growth. Today we have more than 175 people and are one of the leading regional accounting, tax, and business advisory firms in Eastern Pennsylvania. I serve on our executive committee and oversee our construction and family business practices. Most of my time is spent doing work I enjoy—advising private company owners and developing new businesses.

There are a handful of things that matter in developing a successful career. Find work you really like, work with people you like to be with, and find an environment that allows you to continually learn, grow, and develop. You also need a little luck—mine started when I arrived at DeSales.

Dining for Success

By Matthew G. Powell ’12

In November, business students gathered in the Hurd Room of the University Center for dinner. But rather than just dining on delicious foods, the students were instructed on dining etiquette. The event was organized by Elizabeth Rosa, professor of business, and Kristin Eicholtz, director of career services and internships. Bradley Barnhorst, assistant professor of finance, also joined the dinner.

The evening began with an overview of table settings, with Eicholtz showing students utensil placement, appropriate use of a napkin, and other etiquette tips. Students were also advised on socializing with clientele and colleagues at the dinner table. While students ate, Eicholtz, Barnhorst, and Rosa walked around the room answering questions and helping students with etiquette. The students gained a valuable lesson from that night’s experience—one that will serve them well in their careers.
Export University is Coming to DeSales

by Charles G. Jobs, Ph.D.

The DeSales Business Division has entered into a partnership with Export University to deliver seminars that will result in an export certificate to the local business community and DeSales students. Export University is a series of non-credit courses on exporting designed by the District Export Council (DEC), a volunteer non-profit organization associated with the U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Export University’s objective is to help American companies begin an export initiative and gain skills and innovation in expanding international sales. Courses are designed in three series to provide new or experienced exporters with the tools they need to effectively organize their export operations. Topics include a regulations overview, international logistics, risk assessment, promotions, trade agreements, export documentation, adaptation to standards, intellectual property protection, labeling, and taxes.

One of the benefits of this partnership for DeSales is community outreach to local businesses, which generates goodwill for the school. Additionally, selected DeSales students will have an opportunity to network with local businesses that are either already global or planning to be global in the future. Finally, all attendees will receive a certificate from the U.S. Department of Commerce documenting their completion of the program. Because the program will feature real businesses with real export and trade situations, this is a valuable experience for any student.

All of the series are open to DeSales and LVAIC students on a selective basis, and the program will have two business attendees for every student registered.

Export University presenters are international trade practitioners who are associated with or recruited by members of the DEC, a group of private-sector individuals appointed by the Secretary of Commerce to provide mentoring on exporting. They will present the course material drawing from their extensive expertise in international trade. The presenters include international trade attorneys, CEOs of companies reliant on exporting, and ranking government officials.

The first seminar will be on March 17, 2011, with 30 companies expected to attend. Subsequent sessions are planned for early June and Fall 2011. Each seminar runs one day only, with a $45 participation charge for business attendees. DeSales students and faculty attendance is free.

If you are interested in attending and for registration information, e-mail charles.jobs@desales.edu or tahereh.hoijat@desales.edu.

Student Performance Attracts Prospective Employers

During the last few years, a weak job market dampened the dreams of many college graduates. Students planned internships, prepared resumes, and pursued job interviews only to learn that the job market was more competitive than they expected. Graduates also encountered more experienced job seekers competing for the same job. High-paying salaries were less available.

On the other hand, in Fall 2010, DeSales business faculty observed an increase in prospective employers who offered to visit DeSales and network with business student groups. Campus presentations were held by business recruiters and alumni. These employers also expressed interest in locking in potential candidates early. For the 2011 class, brighter days are coming.

Morning Call writer Carolyn Bigda described an optimistic outlook for this year’s graduates in a November 2010 article. She based her opinion on a survey released by Michigan State University’s Collegiate Employment Research Institute, which indicated that employers plan to hire 10 percent more undergraduates this year. While job searches will still be challenging, this survey lends hope to upcoming graduates.

Furthermore, 2011 graduates will see more job opportunities as graduation nears. Employers who responded to a Job Outlook 2011 Fall Preview survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers indicated that they will hire 13.5 percent more new graduates as compared to last year.

So what entices employers to seek DeSales alumni? Not only are prospective employers drawn to the many DeSales students who have completed an internship and gained preliminary work experience, but the experienced business faculty, combined with DeSales’s excellent reputation, inspire employers to seek our graduates. When business students leave Center Valley, they are equipped with excellent skills and a quality education, and they are supported by successful alumni.
by Joyce C. Rhoads ’02

Throughout the fall, the Business Division welcomed representatives and alumni from six business organizations and introduced them to DeSales business students. Dr. Sue McGorry, moderator of the American Marketing Association (AMA), invited Automatic Data Processing, LLC and PPL Electric Utilities to speak to students. Dr. Christopher R. Cocozza and Bradley Barnhorst, co-moderators of the Accounting & Finance Club (AB & FN), invited Mars Co.; Becker Professional Education; Concannon, Miller & Co., P.C.; and Gary Kochubka ’84 of Standard & Poor’s to campus.

Each business focused on important topics such as resume writing, CPA exam preparation, interviewing, job flexibility, business and social networking, summer internships, and employment openings. In the end, students walked away having gained valuable information for their future careers.

The Mars Company visited DeSales in September to kick off the AB & FN Club’s fall activities with a resume writing workshop. Mars customer logistics representatives Steven Stackhouse, Tom Morris, and Althea Georges presented background information and facts about their firm. They also created a snapshot of what it is like to work for Mars by describing their responsibilities.

Aware that the fall semester is an important time to apply for jobs and internships, the Mars representatives discussed what qualities make a good resume and what to avoid in resume writing. Students felt the presentation was timely because it provided valuable knowledge about what sections to include and exclude on a resume and what entices employers to give the resume a second look. Also, this was a great way for seniors interested in a Mars career to network and present their resumes to company representatives.

At the first AMA chapter meeting in October, McGorry introduced Automatic Data Processing, LLC guest speakers Melissa Hess, a corporate recruiter and a current ACCESS student, and Giselle Russ ’08, national accounts manager. Automatic Data Processing is a Fortune 500 company based in Roseland, N.J., and one of the largest providers of outsourcing solutions, with sites in more than 50 countries.

Hess and Russ spoke about social networking tools and began their presentation by explaining the proper networking rules for Facebook. They emphasized how students should keep Facebook pages professional, because many companies access the site for information on employment candidates. Users should never have questionable information, pictures, or wall posts that could jeopardize a job. Employers need to identify prospective employment candidates so they suggested that Facebook users have a real photograph at their site.

The second social networking tool they discussed was LinkedIn—a corporate version of Facebook often used by Fortune 500 CEOs. Keeping this in mind, Hess and Russ said that LinkedIn is strictly professional; therefore, users’ information should pertain specifically to their careers and networking, not their personal life. Hess and Russ suggested that students create a LinkedIn page to use as a recruiting and networking tool, but they warned students not to mention job hunting on their LinkedIn page if they were already employed so as to avoid job repercussions. Hess and Russ kindly accepted student resumes for consideration for potential employment.

Jen Rodriguez from Becker Professional Education attended the October meeting of the AB & FN Club to help explain the importance of the certified public accounting exam. Becker provides review classes and materials live, online, and through self-study training to help accounting students pass the CPA exam.

Cocozza stressed the “3 Es” to becoming a CPA—education, exam, and experience. More fully, this means that each student must have an accounting degree from an accredited university, must take and pass the CPA exam, and must show relevant accounting experience. He explained that the Pennsylvania licensure requirements changed for seniors in 2012 from 120 hours experience to 150 hours.

“Many students who don’t pass tell me that they didn’t have enough time to complete the sections,” said Cocozza. “Students must be able to budget their time and not get caught up in one problem.”

Rodriguez continued with an explanation of how the exam is organized and the four parts of the exam that students will be tested on: finance, auditing, regulation, and business. More information is available at www.becker.com.

Concannon, Miller & Co. Senior Accountant Andrea Sterner ’07 and colleagues Emily Miller and Jon Ritter spoke to the AB & FN Club in November for a presentation entitled “Acing the Interview.” The presentation covered the dos and don’ts of interviews and what to expect during an interview.

To prepare students for interviews, Sterner discussed appropriate clothes, preparation, and leaving a good first impression. Sterner and her colleagues also discussed their past experiences as interviewees as well as interviewers to give students perspective from both sides of the interview table.

Also in November, the AMA welcomed Courtney Phillips ’09, who described her career at PPL Electric Utilities as well as PPL job offerings and internships. She was joined by marketing student Christina Colón ’11, who discussed her summer internship experience. Phillips described her career path, and at the end of the presentation, she accepted employment applications from attendees for potential PPL opportunities.

Barnhorst introduced alumnus Gary Kochubka ’84 to members of the AB & FN Club on November 4. Kochubka works as director in the structured finance department...
Save the 2011 Dates

Admissions Academic Scholarship Competition
1/29/11 • 12:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Dooling, Hurd, Labuda, University Center,
Residence Halls

Volunteer Income Tax Program
1/31/11 – 4/8/11
DeSales University Center Valley Campus.

Kappa Xi Induction
2/2/11 • 5:00 – 5:30 p.m.
Trexler Room, University Center

10th Annual Lehigh Valley Collegiate Career Expo
2/16/11
Holiday Inn Conference Center

Export University
3/17/11 • 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Commonwealth Room, University Center

Fleming Ethics Bowl Competition
3/28/11 • 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
White Pavilion, University Center

Business Division Senior Awards Dinner
4/27/11 • 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Trexler Room, University Center

Admissions Spring Open House
4/30/11 • 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Billera, Dooling, DUC, Labuda, Trexler, Hurd,
& Residence Halls

M.B.A. Fall Information Sessions
1/31/11 • 6:00 p.m.
Easton Campus

Networking continued

at Standard & Poor’s on Wall Street. He is
responsible for rating international future flow and mortgage- and asset-backed securities in the Latin American structured finance group.

Kochubka described his career experiences since graduation up to and including his position at Standard & Poor’s. His presentation focused on two key factors for a successful career—job flexibility and networking. He performed a networking exercise with the students to show them what they should do now and in the future. His visit gave students the chance to learn about global business through the experience of an alumus.

DeSales business students had great opportunities to learn from industry recruiters and alumni last semester. They learned about interview strategies, careers at PPL, and a first-hand perspective of life on Wall Street. The DeSales Business Division greatly appreciates the time and effort our guest speakers took to inform current students about various business-related topics.

Student-Athlete Awarded Academic All-American

Congratulations to accounting and finance major Aaron Gildner ’11 on being named an Academic All-American and a member of the ESPN Academic All-American Men’s Soccer College Division First Team. Gildner is the sixth athlete from DeSales to ever receive this award.

Alumni Get Second Place in National Contest

Business Week conducted a contest in October 2010 that asked readers to vote on 25 businesses run by entrepreneurs ages 25 and under. We are proud to announce that two DeSales alumni—Andrew Marshall ’09 and Stephen Thompson ’09—placed second in the contest, having received 990 votes.

Marshall and Thompson founded Pyknic, a clothing company now based in Robbinsville, N.J., which they developed while students at DeSales. Pyknic has drawn strong sales from abroad and they expect $500,000 in revenue this year. Voters selected Pyknic because it showed a positive cash flow.

New M.B.A. Program Concentration

Dr. David M. Gilfoil, M.B.A. program director, has announced the approval of the new Human Resource Management (HRM) concentration for the M.B.A. program. M.B.A. students may contact their advisors to discuss the HRM concentration.

2011 Fleming Ethics Bowl Competition

Students from LVAIC and other area institutions will compete in the second annual Fleming Institute Ethics Bowl Competition on March 28, 2011, in the University Center. The ethics bowl competition focuses on promoting good business ethics practices in everyday business environments. At the competition, student teams will receive preliminary case scenarios and present their viewpoints to a panel of judges.
Sports Management Society Opens Official Team Shop

By Joyce Rhoads ’02

When you attend your favorite sporting event, don’t you like to wear your team’s logo? Students in the Sport Management Society (SMS) accepted a challenge to develop the Official Team Shop (www.dus teamworkshop.bigcartel.com) for DeSales University Athletics to help us all support our favorite DeSales athletic teams.

With guidance from Dr. Martin Brett ’98, sport management program director, Dr. Daniel Kelly, assistant professor of sport management, and members of the athletic department, four students laid the groundwork for the Team Shop. SMS members purchase, promote, and sell University team apparel to five target markets—students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumni—to give customers access to the same gear the teams wear.

Laura Flynn ’11, a sport management major and soccer team assistant, took the preliminary steps in Fall 2009 by investigating inventory and researching companies that help organizations set up websites to sell products. Her research ended with a decision to go with Big-Cartel.

“We needed something that would allow us to sell the team gear online, grow with us, and keep our overhead costs low. Big-Cartel meets all of those needs very well,” Flynn said.

In Spring 2010, Patrick Clifford ’11, sport management major and basketball assistant, Chad Schnecker ’11, and Kevin Lawrence ’10 joined Flynn by organizing the merchandising, website, operations, and marketing. They collaborated on the effort and submitted their results in a paper to Kelly for the SS 420, Sport Administration class.

“Within the Freedom and Commonwealth Conferences, there are only a few schools that sell athletic merchandise through their bookstore or through a separate system,” said Brett. “However, none of them sell the same gear that the players and coaches are wearing for training, travel, and competition. We are very excited to partner with the athletic department to provide this merchandise to the DeSales community.”

One of the primary reasons for developing a team shop is to make DeSales team apparel available. The Campus Store sells clothing, but it doesn’t market team sports. The Team Shop hopes to fill that niche by selling team apparel for all DSU teams.

Beginning with the Homecoming and Reunion Weekend 2010 soccer game, Brett and Kelly joined SMS members in selling t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, and other gear featuring DeSales soccer. It not only gave fans a chance to buy team shirts, but it was a terrific way for alumni to reconnect with DeSales by supporting their team.

The Team Shop was also visible at two other double-header soccer games. “The athletes’ families are the most enthusiastic customer base, followed by students and alumni,” the students said.

Flynn and Clifford were excited with the sales response and are expecting strong sales in the basketball season.

“Pat and I attended basketball games over the Christmas and winter break and have started to assemble a staff to assist us with the Team Shop going forward,” said Flynn.

SMS members continue to meet with athletic coaches to decide on quantities. Sometimes products are sold from last season, and at other times there are new products for the upcoming season—such as DeSales athletics-branded golf bags. Ultimately, the Team Shop plans to provide products from each of the University’s 14 teams. Throughout the year, customers will be able to purchase from a variety of merchandise including hats, sweatshirts, t-shirts, long-sleeved shirts, polos, and scarves.

Kate Gier ’12 and Andrew Hanchick ’11 joined the effort in the fall semester. They sold merchandise at the soccer matches, managed inventory, and helped with the orders and shipping. Looking ahead to the spring and summer breaks prompted Clifford’s suggestion “to involve more members to help with online orders and shipping.”

“Funds raised will help subsidize operational expenses and career fairs,” said Kelly, “as well as field trips for sport management students. Each student’s association with the Team Shop will leave a lasting legacy.”

Looking back on the magnitude of this project, Flynn said, “It is a definite learning experience and a resume builder.”

“The Team Shop has allowed us to apply what we’ve learned in our classes before we even graduate,” Clifford said, “Frankly, it takes time to pilot a project of this magnitude, and with time and help of additional members, we hope to see the Team Shop grow.”
Angel 34 Receives Help from DeSales Student Teams

By Corey Purcell ’14

Business Matters readers are familiar with the fundraising projects created by students in Dave Woods’ principles of management classes—in the past, students have raised money for Habitat for Humanity, The Barn, and Camelot for Children. Last fall, management students turned their attention to Angel 34, a national organization united in the fight against childhood cancer and dedicated to finding cures.

Early in the semester, students learned that their group projects would consist of using the skills they learned in class to raise at least $500 per group, and these funds would be donated to Angel 34, a charity based in Nazareth, Pa.

DeSales students bonded with team members and created some exceptional fundraising events, including a speed dating night, fundraisers at local restaurants, a 5K race, and a “Cabaret for a Cause” talent show.

One positive aspect of these collaborative projects was that students applied management skills and concepts learned in the classroom to real life. Many management students felt that this opportunity left them with some great college memories.

When the funds were tallied, it was apparent that the recent teams surpassed fundraising projects from previous semesters. We are proud to announce the 2010 management classes presented Doug Sherriff, president of Angel 34, and the organization’s board of directors with a check for $9,521.

To view the project presentation, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldj70eouunk.

To learning more about Angel 34, visit www.angel34.org.