

**33,000 Square-Foot Building Construction Under Way**

**UH Breaks Ground for Michael J. Cemo Hall**

A robust summer breeze and construction activity from a nearby University of Houston campus building site complemented a celebration of the groundbreaking for yet another new addition to campus, Michael J. Cemo Hall.

The ceremony was a tangible step toward Chancellor and President Renu Khator's vision of UH achieving top-tier university status, as well as a celebration of the generosity and support of UH alum and Bauer benefactor Michael J. Cemo.

"Improving our facilities and enhancing the student experience at the University of Houston are key components in reaching top tier national status," Khator said. "And although we are



UH Board of Regents Chair **Welcome Wilson, Sr.**, UH President **Renu Khator**, UH alumnus **Michael J. Cemo**, and Bauer College Dean **Arthur D. Warga** "turn the dirt" at the groundbreaking ceremony for Michael J. Cemo Hall.

well on our way, I envision a lot more construction taking place."

Cemo Hall, a 33,000 square-foot building, will house Bauer's rapidly growing Global Business Minor program and the Rockwell Career Center. The two-story building will have classrooms, a lecture hall and auditorium.

Construction of the building "should be very special to us all and something we should all feel proud of," Khator said. "Not only because

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**PHOTO FINISH**

*Recent Happenings around the C. T. Bauer College of Business*

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**Bauer Team Claims National Victory, Tops MIT & Carnegie Mellon**



Global Winners: John Keeton, Joe Corkin, Quyen Nguyen and Mauricio Franco 'wowed' CFA heavy hitters.

The Cougar Fund at the University of Houston C. T. Bauer College of Business is now home of the best stock analysis team in the nation and third in the world, as determined by the Chartered Financial Analyst Institute.

A team including **Joe Corkin**, **Mauricio Franco**, **John Keeton** and **Quyen Nguyen**, all graduate students in Bauer College of Business's Finance Department, ousted Carnegie Mellon University and MIT before making it to the final five of CFA's Global Investment Research Challenge. The Bauer team was the only American group in the top three of the competition.

"We are all way past simply being proud of these students," said **Tom George**, professor of finance and Director of the AIM Center for Investment Management

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## Cemo Hall Groundbreaking *continued from page 1*

we've reached another milestone in our journey toward top tier national status, but because, similar to the Calhoun Lofts, this project provides visual evidence that we are truly 'building our future' at the University of Houston."

"Your generosity, commitment, and passion toward this university will never be forgotten," she told Cemo and other donors, including the Houston Endowment, the Stubblefields, the Moores and the McNabbs. "I also envision many more generous donors assuming the charge and helping to lead the way toward excellence."

Cemo, a former regent, was instrumental in connecting his one-time boss, the late Ted Bauer, to the college that took his name after a remarkable \$40 million donation in 2000. He also played a role in launching the AIM Center for Investment Management, home to a student-managed private investment fund now worth around \$8 million and some of the world's best fund managers.

Cemo spoke to the window of opportunity that exists now for other alumni to pledge their financial and political support. "Great universities are judged by the greatness and support of their alumni," he said. "That's why it's so important that all UH alumni come to the aid of the Chancellor if she is to be successful.

"Chancellor," he continued, "we are behind you 1,000 percent." Cemo thanked other donors who helped to fund Cemo Hall as well as Ted Bauer, "whose spectacular gift really moved this university forward."

Bauer Dean Arthur Warga said Cemo's "passion and enthusiasm" are contagious. "Whether as a business leader, alumnus, regent, or friend, Mike has this innate gift to build consensus, excitement, and collaboration for the entire university," Warga said. "That's why others have joined him."

As Bauer has evolved into one of the nation's finest

business schools, rich in diversity and academic success, "Mike's generosity is elevating global education to even higher standards," Warga said.

"Mike's support creates excitement among our alumni and students. His and Ted's style of philanthropy have created a new model for giving that's based solely on making a difference in the lives of people."

Board of Regents Chair Welcome Wilson ('49) told Cemo and others gathered that "You have set a wonderful standard for us as UH alumni and regents. I have tremendous respect and admiration for the generous gift you've made to our institution. Our students and faculty will be the beneficiaries for many years to come."



The University of Houston and Bauer College community recognizes **Michael J. Cemo**, right, who is seated with his son Jason, daughter Stephanie, wife Rebecca and Bauer College Dean **Warga** during the groundbreaking ceremony.

## Stock analysis team *continued from page 1*

at Bauer. "This team is representative of the spirit we see in so many Bauer students who leverage their education experience here into amazing achievements."

This was the first year Bauer participated in the challenge. After beating teams from the University of Texas, Rice University and other Texas schools, the Bauer students traveled to New York City for the global competition.

The team began analyzing Men's Wearhouse less than three months before the competition. Working with assigned mentor **Pearce Hammond**, with Simmons and Co., the students put more than 100 hours into a written analysis and presentation.

"All four of us worked extremely hard in putting our analysis and presentation together," said Keeton. "We are a team of detail oriented perfectionists. Each one of us played such a vital role for the team's success in the entire process, from the beginning analysis of the company, to the final presentation."

Keeton said the experience of competing against other teams and advancing to the worldwide level of the competition was something he will never forget. "I believe all of us have taken a step forward in our business lives," said Keeton.

One of Bauer College's strengths—showcased during

competitions such as this—is that most students work while going to school, George said. "Our students work full-time and have more business experience and a clearer world view than many students do. They've got to juggle the demands of working and going to school and it takes a lot of maturity to do that."

"There really is an advantage to having people work and go to school part-time and it creates significant value added for a degree program like ours," George added.

Keeton also credited the value of participating in the AIM Center's Cougar Investment Fund, a private, multi-million dollar fund managed by Bauer graduate students.

"This competition meant a great deal to us," Keeton said. "With all of us being in the Cougar Fund (a private, multi-million dollar fund managed by Bauer graduate students), we have all had experience in analyzing the valuation of companies. What we learned will help us to advance our careers in the investment/securities industry.

"We wanted to show everyone that the University of Houston can represent itself well, not only among the top schools in the state, but in the nation and the world."

In addition to funding their trip to New York City for the competition, the CFA Institute will waive team members' fees for the Level I Chartered Financial Analyst exam.

## Fast-Paced Fun, Real-World Experience

# UH Bauer College Students Come Out On Top At High-Stakes Open Outcry Competition

**UH** Bauer College students showed their market savvy at the NYMEX Open Outcry Competition in April. Of 75 competitors from universities in Texas and Oklahoma, some on the graduate level, Bauer College of Business undergraduate students **Ana Lucia Chaverria** and **Rieza Marukot** took first and second place, respectively. Seven out of 17 finalist positions went to Bauer College students as well.

The competition was held in Melcher Hall on UH's campus, home to Bauer College, and coordinated by members of the Finance Association, a student organization at Bauer. Twenty-two companies, including Conoco Phillips, Merrill Lynch Commodities and Shell, helped to sponsor the competition.

For the past four years, the event has been a Bauer College mainstay. The outcry is an intense simulated trade competition with two phases—in the first phase, participants worked in groups and did table trading. Out of 29 teams from 22 universities, the graduate team from Bauer placed 12th, and the undergraduate team placed 14th.

The second phase centers on the age-old method of "open outcry," using shouting and hand gestures to buy and sell stocks. Students must also adapt to news information that may change the price of the stocks.

"The open outcry session was very competitive. These concentrated trading rounds mirrored the crude oil futures pit on the NYMEX during the Gulf Wars," said **Brad Banky**, vice president for financial trading at Shell.

With everyone shouting, pens flying and hands in the air, students were intense about trading oil futures. "The hardest part of the event was maintaining composure amongst all the chaos," said senior finance major and NYMEX Open Outcry winner Chaverria. "The competition requires multi-tasking,



ENERGY TRADING IS BACK—Bauer College has hosted the intense, high-stakes NYMEX Open Outcry Competition for the past four years.

paying attention to both sellers and buyers, the prices and not violating the bid or the offer, because that can really count against you."

Corporate representatives were impressed with the high level of skill demonstrated by Bauer students, as well as the amount of preparation put in by Finance Association members who organized a panel discussion that preceded the competition, Banky said. Ten panelists from companies including NYMEX, Shell and BP answered questions from outcry participants.

"The panel discussion prior to the open outcry challenge was an excellent opportunity for industry professionals to address many poignant questions," Banky said. "I believe this Q-and-A session delivered real-world answers for students to combine with their academic experiences."

Learning from industry professionals and putting those skills to use was valuable for competition winner Chaverria, who said the competition was the best experience she had in college. She added that she went in with no expectations but wanted to do better than she did in 2006 when she placed 4th.

"Challenges exist not to hold you back, but to show you your true potential," Chaverria said. "This competition can be intimidating because of the nature of the exercise. However, sometimes you just have to put yourself out there and you might surprise yourself and others."

Last year, a Bauer student claimed the top spot as well. Finance and accounting graduate **Saeeda Jamaluddin** ('07) placed first and received a coveted, all expenses paid internship with NYMEX in New York. She is now part of the trading team with Conoco Phillips and attended this year's trading competition.



**Ana Lucia Chaverria** receives a scholarship check from **John L. Lemkan** of the New York Mercantile Exchange after winning the NYMEX Open Outcry Competition.

## An ‘Outstanding Educator’

# Accounting Professor James Pratt Relishes Student Success

The University of Houston C. T. Bauer College of Business didn't exist when **James Pratt** ('66, MBA '68), the PricewaterhouseCoopers Professor for Accounting & Taxation, began attending the university in 1961.

Charles “Ted” Bauer’s generous, transformative gift was decades away. The UH business school was part of a private, not public institution. Yet Pratt’s student years embodied the essence of a typical Bauer student of 2008—he was the first in his family to attend college, and he worked his way through college, never able to take more than 12 hours of classes at a time. Years later, he has been recognized for his ability to inspire current and former students, fellow teachers and world leaders in the accounting profession.

When Pratt received the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Accounting Advisory Board, it was the culmination of many years’ contributions to the business school.

“I’m obviously very pleased and honored, but for me, the award is getting to meet students and watch them grow and indirectly receive some credit for their success,” Pratt said.

Of the tens of thousands of students he taught or worked alongside during four decades, there are standouts. Pratt taught **Fran Keeth** (MS ACCY '80), the retired president of Shell Chemical LP, a commencement speaker at graduation this spring, and he got to know **Samuel DiPiazza** (MS ACCY '73) when DiPiazza was a student. The Global CEO of PricewaterhouseCoopers holds one of the top accounting positions in the world, and sent his congratulations to Pratt in time for the awards banquet, calling him an “outstanding educator as well as a wonderful person. The skills and business values I employ each day were further shaped in Jim’s classes. Jim Pratt is truly an asset to the University of Houston as well as the accounting profession!”

Pratt can't pinpoint why he wanted to be an accountant, but since becoming involved, he has never grown weary of the profession. After earning a Ph.D. at the University of Southern California, he returned to UH to teach.

“Probably the most important thing that’s happened (during Pratt’s tenure at UH) is Mr. Bauer’s gift,” Pratt said. Another positive change over the years has been the influx of women into the profession, Pratt said, recalling that there was only one female in his own classes.

“Our students come to work with a work ethic; it’s not something that has to be developed,” he added. “Most have been paying some or all the cost of school. And the diversity of the school helps our students develop an appreciation for all different kinds of cultures. I think they’re going to be much better suited for international business.”

Pratt is also proud of Bauer’s Beta Alpha Psi chapter, and the Professional Program in Accounting, both of which he helped to start. But Pratt insists on sharing the credit with



(From left) Professor **Jim Pratt**, PwC Partner **Simon Tait** and PwC Global Chief and Bauer alum **Samuel DiPiazza** catch up. Pratt and DiPiazza have forged a lasting friendship over three decades.

other members of the accounting department, deflecting the praise that comes his way.

“I often tell my colleagues that their personal legacy will be measured not by the clients they serve or the engagements they win, but instead by the impact they have on those around them—the people they mentor, teach and develop,” said **Paul Peacock**, '81, a partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers. “By that measure, he has had a tremendous impact on so many of us who passed through the halls of the Bauer College of Business.”



**Robert Whitaker** ('03, MBA '08) received his C. T. Bauer College of Business MBA and a master’s in public health from Yale University in May. He has secured a position with Health Management Associates, a 58-hospital health care system. His position is part of the management

training program, “CFO Executive Development Program,” and Whitaker said having his MBA from Bauer College of Business played a significant part in getting this position.

Whitaker also founded a small private foundation named after his parents, the Donald and Mary Whitaker Foundation, providing a scholarship to an undergraduate at the UH Cullen College of Engineering and grants to elementary schools in low-income areas in east Houston to support extracurricular activities.

## Accounting Prof is Celebrated with a Trio of Awards

Good news came in threes this semester for **Ron Lazer**, an assistant professor of accountancy and taxation at the UH C. T. Bauer College of Business, who was honored with a trio of awards for excellence in teaching. Lazer's recognitions came from University of Houston administrators, colleagues and students.

He was lauded by the University with its Teaching Excellence Award for 2008, as well as Bauer College, which named him Outstanding Faculty of the Year. In addition, Lazer was given a teaching award by the Accounting Advisory Board at its annual banquet in April.

"It feels great to be recognized as a teacher, both by the University and the students themselves, after all of the hard work that I have invested in my courses here at Bauer," Lazer said about winning the awards.

That hard work hasn't gone unnoticed by the Bauer College students who nominated Lazer for the Faculty of the Year Award, which is given each spring to a dependable professor who demonstrates hard work and involvement in the college, provides advice and exemplifies the qualities of a role model. "Ron Lazer is the type of teacher students will visit after they graduate. He teaches an introductory accounting course, but for me, the lessons students learn there guide us throughout our career and education," one student said in the nomination package for the award.

"Not only is he an excellent teacher, he is there for his students for direction and guidance. He is a wonderful professor who truly cares about education and his students' futures," the nomination cited.

The UH Teaching Excellence Award is awarded annually to four faculty members University-wide. In 2007, Director of Professional Accounting Programs for Bauer College **Michael Newman** (Ph.D. '08) won the award and chose this year to nominate Lazer. "His teaching style goes beyond the classroom setting. Ron takes an interest in each student who comes to see him and gives them quality time and tutoring/advice. He is also extremely reliable in following up with them if needed," Newman said.

Despite obtaining accolades for instructing students, Lazer said his job as an educator isn't finished. "Nowadays, teaching tends to be underrated as a profession and yet, it is crucial that we focus on helping the next generation get the best possible education," he said. "It feels great to be recognized as a teacher, both by the University and the students themselves, after all of the hard work that I have invested in courses here at Bauer."

Lazer said students seek him out after taking his courses. "Students approach me years after completing my course



Accounting professor **Ron Lazer** with **UH President Khator**

and tell me that my course inspired them to major in accounting," he said. "Even more heartwarming are those students who tell me that they dreaded Introduction to Financial Accounting and yet, it became their favorite course during the semester."

With a BA in Accounting and Economics and an MBA in Finance and Accounting, both from Tel-Aviv University, and a Ph.D. in Accounting from NYU Stern School of Business, Lazer brings expertise and a global knowledge to the classroom. He has contributed his expertise to various top accounting research publications.

Newman said Lazer sets a good example to his students. "He combines just the right amount of compassion and firmness in his pursuit of his goal, which is to see students succeed by fully understanding the materials he teaches," he said.



Co-president of the Greater Houston Business Ethics Roundtable **Elizabeth Maraist**, right, hands a check donation to Corporate Director of Development **Sharon Lutz** and Development Coordinator **Aracely Villalpando**. The donation will go to the GHBEB Bette Stead Scholarship, named after Bauer professor emeritus **Bette Stead** in 2006, and is awarded to business graduate students earning an MBA degree. The GHBEB, which was founded at the C. T. Bauer College of Business, aims to uphold ethical business practices.

## KEETH, MOORE SHARE, EXUDE UH PASSION AT GRADUATIONS

# University of Houston Bauer College Commencements Feature Alumni Turned Corporate Leaders

The University of Houston C. T. Bauer College of Business welcomed two of the country's foremost business professionals at its Spring 2008 commencement ceremonies. **Fran Keeth**, retired CEO of Shell Chemicals, Inc., gave the keynote address at the graduate commencement ceremony on May 9, and Cameron CEO **Jack Moore** addressed undergraduates on May 10.

Both Keeth and Moore are Bauer College of Business and University of Houston alumni. Keeth received her bachelor's degree in '77 followed by her master in accountancy in '80 and finished her doctorate of jurisprudence in '88, while Moore received his bachelor's in '77. Additionally, both speakers honed in on a similar subject in their addresses, one that has become an integral part of curriculum at Bauer leadership.

"You can be a leader," Keeth told graduates. "A leader is not just a CEO or head of a company. It can be anyone at any level. Let your love of your work and what you do in life define your success and nobody else. It's the positive difference that you make in the lives of others that is the most important part of leadership."

Moore echoed that sentiment and identified the characteristics of great leaders as being willing to take risks, having passion, being successful and having a strong

character. "It's OK to take risks," he said. "One thing all leaders have in common is the lack of fear of failure. If you pursue your dreams, they will become your passions. Great leaders realize that while failure can be contagious, success can be infectious."

The leader of Bauer College embodies those characteristics,  
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*UH alumna and former Shell executive **Fran Keeth** offers advice to students at the Graduate Programs Commencement.*



*UH alum and Cameron CEO **Jack Moore** shares his leadership lessons with Bauer students in the Undergraduate Programs Commencement.*



*Bauer students walk into Hofheinz Pavilion, ready to become UH Cougar alumni and college graduates, during the Undergraduate Programs Commencement.*

## Keeth, Moore Speak to Grads

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Moore pointed out to students. **Dean Arthur D. Warga** has guided the college through its greatest successes despite having been diagnosed with brain cancer in 2005. "For most of us, that would have forced retirement, but not Arthur. He never skipped a beat in his determination to make Bauer a great business school," Moore added.

Both speakers also noted the importance of family in graduates' lives. "My father taught me honesty, integrity and how to do the right thing," Moore said. "Those are principles I apply every day in leading my business. Look no further than this room to find those people in your lives. Listen to them, and learn from them. Today is your time. Begin your journey as a leader."

Keeth and Moore were the perfect choices to provide words of wisdom to graduating students, Warga said. "With Fran and Jack we are again fortunate to have two exemplary individuals in our commencement ceremonies," he added. "They are both not only very passionate about the experience they had at the University of Houston and at Bauer, but they are also strong supporters of the University. That level of commitment always translates into an inspiring message for our graduates. Further, Fran and Jack are an embodiment of exemplary leadership qualities in their professional and personal lives."

Moore joined Cameron's Drilling and Production Systems in 1999 and was appointed to his current position in April 2008. He is also a longtime friend of Bauer, serves on the Dean's Executive Board and is former chairman of the Houston Alumni Association. Keeth spent 37 years with Royal Dutch Shell, plc, and was the first female CEO of a petrochemical company. She is a member of the Boards of Directors of Verizon Communications, Inc., and Arrow Electronics, Inc., and gives back to the community through her work with Child Advocates, Inc., and participation in the ARP Taxaide Program, both in Houston.

Students were also recognized at both commencement ceremonies for their outstanding work. Outstanding student awards were given to **Robert Wilson**, Outstanding Executive Master of Business Administration Student; **Kristen Senechal**, Outstanding Master of Business Administration Student; **Marsha Dhingra**, Outstanding Master of Science in Accountancy Student; and **Ron Kremer**, Outstanding Master of Science in Finance Student. Accounting and management undergraduate **Jessica Fung** was honored as the Outstanding Undergraduate for Spring 2008.



**Jessica Fung**

UH President and UH-System Chancellor **Renu Khator** congratulated graduates at both ceremonies on their achievements and encouraged them to become active alumni. "Cougars are everywhere," she said. "They make Houston one of the greatest international cities of the 21st century. You represent the 'can do' spirit of Houston."

## Pre-Grad Ceremonies Recognize Students



**Melvyn Wolff** ('53) told graduates and inductees of the Cyvia & Melvyn Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship at their annual banquet that they'd "won the lottery" by choosing the program and urged them to give back to the college after becoming alumni, as he did.



Houston Astros mascot **Junction Jack** entertained guests at the Accounting Advisory Board's annual banquet held at Minute Maid Park in April, including Professor **Kaye Newberry**. The banquet recognized faculty, students and staff for extraordinary achievements over the last year.



**James B. Quade**, associate vice president and director of Field Sales Operations US for Liberty Mutual, speaks at the Program for Excellence in Selling banquet in May. The program honored students and faculty for their efforts in selling sponsorships, advertisements and partnerships.

## 26TH DOCTORAL SYMPOSIUM

# Doctoral Students From Universities Across the Nation Converge at Marketing Department's 26th Annual Doctoral Symposium

The C. T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston welcomed doctoral students from leading schools around the nation as its marketing department hosted the 26th Annual Doctoral Symposium at the UH Hilton.



Keynote speaker **Barton Weitz**, professor, University of Florida, at the symposium

The event gave marketing doctoral students the chance to compare research and network with doctoral students and faculty from other leading schools, said Marketing & Entrepreneurship Department Chair **Ed Blair**. "We do it because it is useful for our doctoral students and because it is fun," he said. "We, and the participants, found it to be enjoyable and a professionally valuable event. Also, the participating students, who come from other first-class doctoral programs, leave with very positive feelings about UH, and many of them apply for faculty positions with us when they graduate."

The symposium is well-known in the academic world



**James Hess**, professor of marketing science and marketing Ph.D. coordinator for Bauer College with symposium attendees **Sunaina Chugani** and **Son Lam**.

and makes the department an important player in doctoral education, he added. Students from doctoral programs at the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, University of Colorado, University of California at Los Angeles, University of Florida, University of Southern California, University of Texas at Austin, University of Texas at Dallas and Texas A&M University attended the event.

"It's an honor to get chosen to attend the symposium," Arizona State University student **Nancy Sirianni** said. "I appreciate the opportunity to meet other students, gain exposure to other research and to put faces with names of the people we have read."

The symposium is more relaxed than other symposiums, so it is more conducive to networking, doctoral student **Demetra Andrews** said. "I'll be on the job market this year, so it's really important to connect with faculty who will soon receive hundreds of resumes. If I've met them, it helps me stand out," she added.

Professor **Barton Weitz** from the University of Florida gave the keynote address titled, "Selling in the Relationship Marketing Era: The Evolving Role of Salespeople." The symposium closed with a panel discussion and plaque presentation from Blair.

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## Savvy Alumna Birgit Kamps Driven by Compassionate Approach

As CEO of HireSynergy, a \$10.6 million executive placement company, **Birgit Kamps** is well-known as a savvy businesswoman who has garnered accolades for her business, including being named to Houston Business Journal's "Best Places to Work" list for several years running.

Kamps, who graduated from C. T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston in 1988, has also earned a reputation for leading with her heart, rather than viewing business opportunities strictly from a bottom-line perspective. In the aftermath of the Enron collapse and demise of Arthur Andersen LLP in 2001, Kamps' business reached out to displaced employees by helping them brush up on their interview and resume writing skills at no cost.

The generous offer came in the midst of an economic downturn when many of HireSynergy's competitors were going out of business. Kamps' decision to assist those in need ultimately paid off, helping to expand HireSynergy's services to include consulting, resulting in referrals, as well as considerable goodwill from the business community. Kamps' compassion also extends to her own employees. Adopting a "servant leadership," approach, she makes sure her employees' needs are met—offering on-site wellness classes, communication coaching, educational opportunities and more.

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## Alumna Kamps *continued from page 8*

Kamps, a former tax accountant with Arthur Andersen, has also allowed compassion to drive her relationship with Bauer. Though it might have made more business sense to strengthen her involvement with Bauer academic departments that more closely intersect with HireSynergy, Kamps instead chose to fund Student Leader Scholarships for graduates of Charter schools like YES Prep Academy, which prepares low-income students for college. "My heart goes out to people who want to do so much in life and are very interested in growing themselves but just don't have the resources," Kamps says.

Kamps previously extended her company's services to Bauer Accounting students at no charge. When she returned to the U.S. after working abroad, she reconnected with Bauer through UH Board of Regents member **Jim Wise** ('66). Since becoming involved, Kamps has seen Bauer's reputation grow. She points out that one of its biggest strengths is in "helping people connect."

As a student, Kamps transferred to UH from the University of Texas during a family crisis. She found it transformative to attend school with people whose life experiences were so diverse. "The education was so much richer for me," she says, "and very powerful." Opportunities for growth at Bauer have only increased since those days, Kamps says.

"Students have the ability to cross over disciplines, to network, and it's all woven very well together. In life that is really what it's about, the relationships you build, seeing things from different points of view," she says.



**Birgit Kamps**'s company, HireSynergy, is one of Houston's most admired.

## :30 SECOND PITCH Wolff Center Students Continue National Business Plan Winning Streak



**Brian Heitz**, left, and **Matthew Clark** are two students in a long line of those from the Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship who have won national business plan competitions.

The tradition of putting lessons learned in the classroom to practical use has continued for students in the marketing & entrepreneurship department of the C. T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston.

**Brian Heitz** and **Matthew Clark**, students at the Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship, recently won awards at two national business plan competitions. The team placed third in the business plan competition and first in the "elevator pitch" competition at the Northwest Venture Championship Competition in Boise, Ida.

An "elevator pitch" is a quick, concise overview of an idea or product that can be pitched in the time span of an elevator ride. The students also placed third in the Nascent 500 Business Plan Challenge at Ball State University.

"The secret to winning these competitions is preparation and knowing your business," Heitz said. "WCE gives you exposure for the type of thinking and thought processes needed for starting an entrepreneurship venture. And they provide the mentors for the competition process."

Clark agreed, noting that the courses offered through the Wolff Center provide the perfect platform for honing the skills it takes to win such competitions. "You have to have a business you believe in and make it as real as possible before the competitions," he added. "WCE provided us with the resources both inside and outside the University of Houston to research and solidify our business concept."

Bauer College of Business WCE students have won 14 awards in national business plan competitions over the past 7 years, surpassing any other college. "The fact that we have won so consistently tells you two things: first, that we have great students, and second, that we have a great program that consistently prepares them to compete," said **Ed Blair**, chairman of the Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship.

## Bauer Alumni Tee Up for 100 Scholarships



Left to right: **Trey Wilkinson**, **Oscar Gutierrez** and **Kimberly Wilkinson**

Members of the Bauer Alumni Association raised more than \$50,000 for student scholarships at the annual Ted Bauer Golf Classic on May 19. More participants than any other tournament to date—34 foursomes—made this year's event a milestone for organizers, which included Bauer 100 Chair **Oscar Gutierrez** ('79, MBA '94) and Bauer Alumni Association board members **Trey Wilkinson** ('92, MBA '02) and **Kimberly Wilkinson** ('93).



Administrative president **Richard Rawson** ('72), far left, led his foursome throughout the course at Champions.

For the first time, the group also held an online auction in conjunction with the golf tournament to raise additional scholarship funds. The auction brought in more than \$9,000 for items such as sailing trips, autographed baseballs and footballs, and artwork.

### FROM BURGERS TO B-PLANS

## Entrepreneurship Students Fire Up Grills, Spark Ideas at Annual BurgerFest



Students from the C. T. Bauer College of Business grilled their way to success at the annual Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship BurgerFest in April. Entrepreneurship seniors split into four competing companies that operated and managed food stands selling to students, faculty and staff from across the University of Houston campus.

With a dash of marketing, a helping of fundraising and sponsors, and a heap of cooking, the teams competed for their grades. Each company was charged with first electing a CEO and developing a complete business plan, including guidelines for branding, menu options, pricing and design, before executing their strategies at BurgerFest.

"It is the culmination of 18 months and implementation of everything they have learned in their classes," said **Rosalinda Travis**, program manager of the Wolff Center. They are graded on revenue, cost, capital, leadership guide and a business plan as if they were taking it to a bank in the real world, she added.

Part of the competition is attracting students and visitors to each venue through design, menu options and marketing. Teams chose their own names and decorated their booths to fit with the various themes.

"We have to utilize the information we learned before BurgerFest. You can plan all you want, but the unexpected, like running out of food, will happen. It is about overcoming adversity," said **Scott Beckham**, a marketing and entrepreneurship senior that was a member of the "Grill It" team.

Two teams, McLovin BBQ and Bourbon St. Crawfish, proved that they had good business sense after they merged and became the winners of the competition with the highest total sales. The members of Grill Team were recognized as the team that raised the most cash through BurgerFest sales and donations.

Although the event's name suggests only one menu item, some BurgerFest teams thought outside the bun this year. "Grill It" offered hotdogs, tacos and fajitas to add some spice to their menu, and the Bourbon St. Crawfish team was on fire selling crawfish, potatoes and corn.

The idea of BurgerFest is fun, but also serves as a culmination of what entrepreneurship students learn in their classes and also replicates the planning and quick thinking required in the real world, Travis said.



## BAUER HAS UH'S YOUNGEST GRADUATE

# Accounting Grad Credits Bauer for Business Success Preparation

Students from the C. T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston consistently break records and set high standards for their peers. Accounting graduate David Walker Grimes is no different as the youngest student to graduate from UH this spring at 19 years old.

Grimes earned his bachelor's degree in accounting through the college's Professional Program in Accounting in two years. His education at Bauer has given him the opportunity to succeed in business, he said.

"Bauer has provided me with a business perspective and made me much more professional in my dealings with companies and people in general," he said.

In April, Grimes was one of four students recognized by the Accounting Advisory Board at Bauer College. "I was very honored to receive the Department of Accountancy and Taxation's Academic Excellence Award for undergraduates," he said. "Winning the award has inspired me to continue to work diligently, and it gave me the feeling that my hard work has not gone unnoticed."



Recent Bauer grad **Mario Cantu's** (center) wardrobe will include Italian chic when he receives a custom made suit from Lucho. **Hector Villarreal** and **Patricia Sturion** ('03), owners of upscale men's boutique Lucho, are presenting the two recipients of the Ted Bauer Outstanding Leadership Award, Cantu and **Chrystal Osborne** (not pictured), with custom made Lucho suits. Both Cantu and Osborne led student organizations at Bauer. Cantu served as president of the student chapter of the American Marketing Association. Osborne was president of the National Association of Black Accountants. This represents the first time Lucho has presented Ted Bauer Outstanding Leadership Award recipients with suits and inaugurates a new tradition for the company who plan to make it an annual contribution, said Sturion.

Grimes graduated from Memorial High School in May 2006 and completed his BBA requirements in two years. Grimes said he attended UH and Bauer not only because his parents are alumni, but because of the college's visibility as one of the nation's top business schools.

"I noticed how Bauer was up-and-coming in the public business school rankings, and we are now in the Top 40 on BusinessWeek's list of the best public undergraduate schools," he said.

Grimes, a member of the Accounting Society at Bauer, said he enjoyed getting to know members and alumni, because they are willing to help or share experiences.

He credited Bauer professors, specifically Ron Lazer, George Gamble, Edward Nathan, John Green and Samuel Goble, for their help in his success, and said the professors have made classes a delightful experience.

"I remember talking with him about majoring in accounting after noticing his excellent performance in my class," Lazer said. "I could see what a brilliant young man he is but also a hard working student. I'm sure he is in the beginning of a great career, and he will be an excellent representative of Bauer."

Grimes plans to return in spring 2009 to complete a master's degree in accounting through the department's Professional Program in Accounting. The program will allow him to earn a Master of Science in Accountancy in a year, when Grimes will turn 21.

Grimes is currently interning with the Deloitte audit group and the PricewaterhouseCoopers tax group, two companies with longstanding ties to the Accountancy and Taxation department at Bauer.



David Walker Grimes, the University's youngest graduate for Spring 2008, receives an Academic Excellence Award from board member Kenny Grace ('85) at the Accounting Advisory Board Awards Banquet.

## STUDENT ORG HITS A HOMERUN

# “Double Play Day” Isn’t Just Another Day at the Ballpark for Beta Alpha Psi

Beta Alpha Psi, an accounting honor society for students at Bauer College, hit a homerun with their “Double Play Day” event at the Houston Astros game on April 18. The event provided a networking, community service and social opportunity for members and their corporate sponsors.

Sponsors from different firms including Deloitte, Shell and PricewaterhouseCoopers helped finance the event and had representatives present at the game. “This is really the first event that ties together the three legs of the organization — professional, community service and social,” said **Jim Stinson**, accounting professor and Beta Alpha Psi faculty advisor.

Before the game, members of Beta Alpha Psi listened to a lecture from **Pam Gardner**, President of Business Operations for the Astros and the highest ranking female executive in professional sports.

Firm representatives and students then had a chance to mingle, eat and network in the Champions Room at Minute Maid Park before cheering on the Astros during their home game against the Colorado Rockies. The organization also accepted used baseball items for RBI Houston, a non-profit group that holds clinics and provides equipment and scholarships to underprivileged youth in the Houston area.

“This is really terrific,” said **Brett Hobby**, assistant director of employer services and recruitment for Rockwell Career Center. “This says a lot about a student organization. It is

unique because students are mixing and mingling with corporate partners the whole time.”

With a combination of networking, a good Houston Astros game and catered food, the sponsors agreed that Beta Alpha Psi hit it out of the ballpark. “This is a good opportunity for firms and students,” said **Ryanne Kennedy**, a senior auditor for Deloitte. “We are able to network but at the same time connect on a social level.”



Beta Alpha Psi members meet **Pam Gardner**, President of Business Operations for the Astros, at the organization’s Double Play Day.



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