

2020  
2021



# LOMBARDO College of Business Annual Report

Millersville University

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**THE LOMBARDO COLLEGE OF BUSINESS** had its first full year as a named college in academic year 2020-21. **Dean Marc Tomljanovich** joined the college on July 1, 2020, and steered the new college as it navigated the challenges stemming from the global pandemic. All of our college's courses ended up being fully online throughout the fall, winter, spring and summer semesters. This decision allowed early and clear communications to our students, helping to set expectations and offer new academic resources. Our faculty all rapidly transitioned to the new modality and participated in college and University workshops to gain new instructional skills and perspectives, and to learn from one another. We also surveyed our business students multiple times during the fall and spring terms to better understand their experiences and challenges, and adjust our teaching accordingly. In this time of great uncertainty, it probably comes as no surprise that communication, flexibility and compassion are all attributes that are highly valued by our students.



*Meet the Lombardo College of Business staff.*

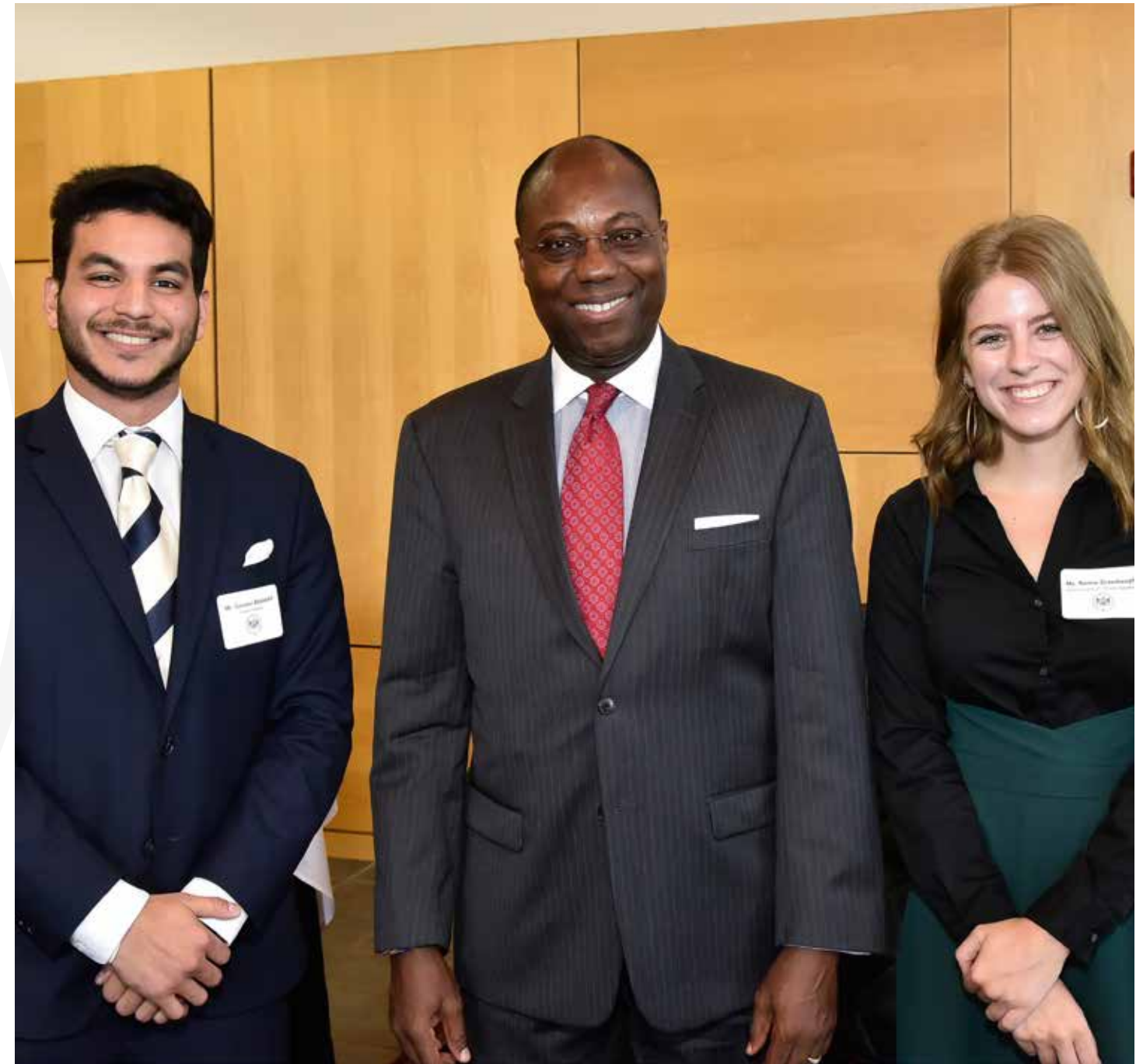


In early fall, we crafted a new college strategic plan. Aligning with the new University Strategic Plan, "Tradition and Transformation," our plan lays out four main areas for improvement and expansion, along with proposed timetables and assessment metrics so we know if we are on track to meet our goals. This plan serves as a beacon to guide our conversations, endeavors and interactions throughout Millersville and the broader business community.

Our college is small and agile, with two departments and 15 full-time permanent business faculty. We are poised for tremendous growth, and our potential to achieve our strategic goals is strong given our University's history, location, community ties and University leadership. As we reexamine existing

programs and build new ones, we are strengthening our student initiatives and retention, and forging stronger connections with the Lancaster region. Our mission is unwavering. We are a business community that fosters life long curiosity, innovation and inclusion, offering programs and experiences to help our students succeed professionally and make a positive impact on industry and society.

Over the past year, here is what we have accomplished across the four main areas of our college strategic plan, and what we are planning for the future.







# Initiative 1

## BUSINESS INNOVATIONS AND GROWTH

One of the big pieces of news in our college is the approval and upcoming fall launch of new Bachelor of Science majors in Accounting, Finance, Management and Marketing. These were previously concentrations within our Business Administration degree; converting them into separate degrees allows us to better tailor the curriculums to workforce needs, more effectively market the programs to businesses, and create a new infrastructure that allows us to craft new concentrations and certificates that align with student and employer interests.

We are currently developing new interdisciplinary majors in Business Analytics and Entrepreneurship. We have had multiple meetings amongst faculty from our four colleges, and now have roadmaps for the program design and upcoming launches of these exciting offerings.

Our business faculty are hard at work developing new concentrations that stem from our four new majors. We are looking to begin offering concentrations in Human Resources Management and Wealth Management in the spring of 2022, and in Healthcare Management in the fall of 2022. We have consulted industry experts, including Millersville alumni,

in the crafting of these programs, and are working to ensure that our graduates have the skills, experiences and training they need to be highly competitive in the local and national workforce.

The pandemic has shown how we are all connected worldwide, and how essential it is to integrate our programs and students with the global community. To this end, we are working on developing programs that will attract students from around the world. And we have begun identifying potential University partners across the globe. Though these agreements have been delayed by the events of the past year, we are eager to build relations and momentum in the coming months as public health conditions improve. ♦



# Initiative 2

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUCCESS

To us, student success stems from the many opportunities we provide our business students during their time at Millersville. The Lombardo College of Business has a strong focus on experiential learning, as we believe real-world applications are an essential way to augment and enhance our students' classroom learning. Internships are a cornerstone of virtually every program we now offer. This past year, we hosted multiple fall and spring evening discussions with business organizations as ways to expose our students to different possible career paths, allowing them to ask questions in a welcoming environment, and provide opportunities to network. Other events built upon our aim to ensure that our business students can integrate their courses with current news and events. For instance, we brought together alumni and business experts to talk about the impacts of the pandemic on their professional and personal lives ("Business in a Pandemic": October 2020), and to talk about the special challenges small businesses and BIPOC-owned enterprises faced during these unique times ("Small Business in a Pandemic": April 2020).

We are looking to engage our students globally as well. Associate Professor Lexi Hutto and Dean

Tomljanovich are planning to take a group of business students to London over our 2022 spring break to study current marketing and finance topics in the UK, and to compare British and American business goals, strategies and corporate cultures. We are working to ensure access and affordability, and during February's [One-Day-Give](#), a number of our alumni and friends generously donated to help defray the costs of this trip.

We have several new student organizations that we're establishing. We have an Accounting and Finance club, and a group of students are creating a Women in Business club. Over the next year, we will be encouraging our majors to compete in several regional and national finance, entrepreneurship and marketing challenges. And a business living-learning community is in the works. Stay tuned for more details about these exciting new prospects as they crystallize! ♦



## Initiative 3

### BUSINESS INVESTMENTS: PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY AND SPACES

After decades of service to our institution and our students, this year brings the retirements of Assistant Professor of Accounting Michael Dillon and Professor of Management Behnam Nakhai. Though it will be hard to replace their experience and institutional knowledge, we will be hiring new business faculty in the coming year to help support our new programs and initiatives. As our college continues to expand, we are working to ensure our faculty are given the resources they need to learn new teaching pedagogies and techniques, and conduct innovative research that adds theoretical and data-driven insights to their fields.

Our superb college faculty members have weathered the stresses of the past year and continued their high levels of student engagement while keeping their research productivity high. Assistant Professor of Management Ankur Nandedkar was just recommended for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Professor of Finance Gary Leinberger was awarded a well-deserved sabbatical for fall 2021. And our faculty scored some quality hits in peer-reviewed journals, including the *Journal of Finance and Accountancy* (Eric Blazer and Brian Trout), *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice* (Ankur Nandedkar), *Pennsylvania CPA Journal* (Brian Trout)

and *Design Engineering* (Minoo Ghoreishi). Also Associate Professor Lexi Hutto advised marketing major Lydia Sokolov on her senior honors thesis, which examined the effects of social marketing influencers on marketing landscapes.

One of the areas in which this faculty development directly helps our college and our students is through online instruction. One silver lining of the pandemic is that our business faculty now have more experience and confidence in teaching remotely. Our offerings are increasing this fall. First, we have expanded online options for our students who may be limited by geography or work demands. Second, we have a very successful online degree completion program in business administration and are adding one in marketing for fall 2021. We will be adding analogous online programs in accounting, finance and management in the near future. These new delivery mechanisms give our students additional choices, which allows for more of our students to stay on track to complete their degrees and launch their careers. ◆



## Initiative 4

### ENGAGING THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Though pandemic restrictions have hampered our vibrant in-person interactions, we have nonetheless begun to work with local organizations as we raise awareness about our new college and focus on workforce needs. The first formal arrangement is a partnership with Clark Associates, starting this fall, that will give our students employment and scholarship opportunities. Our aforementioned fall and spring forums on leading businesses through a pandemic were paneled and attended by local organizations that included Emerald Asset Management, RKL, Brandilly, ASSETS Lancaster and The Candy Factory. This coming year we will be making up for lost time and fostering many more of these connections.

Our college's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives have centered on a few key areas. First, we have helped to start a financial literacy program group, part of the University's strategic plan, with the ultimate goal to ensure that ALL of our students at Millersville are financially literate by the time they graduate through a collection of academic and cocurricular initiatives. Second, our spring forum, "Small Businesses in a Pandemic," emphasized the additional challenges faced by BIPOC-owned

enterprises and included a number of important local voices from the Lancaster and Harrisburg communities, including A Concrete Rose and There She Glows Day Spa.

A tangible outcome of the financial literacy program group occurred spontaneously this spring. The group, comprised of staff, administrators, faculty and PSECU members, were talking about the latest round of federal stimulus money that Millersville was about to receive, and how students were due half of these funds. We began talking about how this money could be spent by our students, and from this discussion we came up with the plan to host a Money Matters Town Hall. Its goal was to ensure that our students would have as much information as possible by the time they received these funds so they could make informed financial choices concerning their futures. Speakers included Financial Aid staff, business alumni, Assistant Professor of Accounting and MU alumnus Brian Trout, and officials from PSECU. ◆





◀ A digital rendering of the New Home of The Lombardo College of Business.



▲ Marketing professor **LEXI HUTTO** helping her students.

▼ **GASSER ABOUSAIF**, class of 2020, with President Wubah. His class was the first to graduate under LCOB.





Our future is inexorably intertwined with our students, who upon graduation become our alumni. It is imperative that we build stronger relations with Millersville alumni, as their passions, talents and experiences can help our college thrive. From offering advice on the skills and experiences they value in new hires to devoting their time in our classes and evening events, from their willingness to act as mentors to the priceless networking opportunities that they offer, our alumni are the lynchpin to the long-term success of the Lombardo College of Business. We have begun strengthening connections with our business alumni over the past year, and these opportunities will accelerate in the coming year. Stay tuned for several fall alumni events we are already planning in Lancaster and the East Coast.

Our Business Advisory Council transitioned from working with President Wubah to Dean Tomljanovich this fall. With a new set of roles and responsibilities, and a new president (Brian Gladden) and vice-chair (Craig Kauffman), this group of committed and talented business professionals will play an active role in lifting us closer towards the realization of our strategic goals. Read more about our council's individual accomplishments on our [BAC webpage](#).

Finally, we have thought hard about communication, especially in an era of rapidly changing standards and expectations. We have revamped our college's website and have a Lombardo College of Business [Instagram](#) page. Dean Tomljanovich also posts regular college updates on his [LinkedIn](#) profile. We will be adding more social media outlets in the coming year as well!

In short, we have used this year to define a path forward for the new Lombardo College of Business. As busy as this year has been, and as much as we have accomplished, next year the real work begins. Our strategies and innovations are set for now, and it is time to act! We cannot wait to welcome back our students in person, and continue to propel our students towards their aspirations and dreams.



Dean Marc Tomljanovich  
*Lombardo College of Business*



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