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**April 2011**

Monte Ahuja College of Business

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## Dialogue

News from the Nance College of Business

April 2011

### UpFront: The Importance of Partnerships

Driving the global significance, economic vitality, and sustainability of the Northeast Ohio region through business education, research, innovation, leadership, and collaboration—This is the mission of the Nance College of Business. In keeping with our mission, I am pleased to announce two new exciting partnerships:



*Robert F. Scherer, Dean*

The first is a partnership with The City of Cleveland Heights to host a satellite office of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Jim Kraft, our SBDC Counselor will work along with the City's Economic Development Director to aid entrepreneurs with financial planning and business plan preparation.

Our second initiative is a partnership with the Shaker LaunchHouse incubator. The new Shaker LaunchHouse will open in May. LaunchHouse fosters entrepreneurial success and job creation through seed capital, education, and innovation. Students, Faculty, and Staff from the Nance College of Business will work together with LaunchHouse and its member companies to offer market research and support business plan development, among other services. Seminars and other special events will also be offered there, including the *Global Gateway Lecture Series* and a semi-annual Business Idea Competition.

These partnerships are important for businesses and the community at large to thrive. In addition, they are also important to our undergraduate and graduate students who gain hands on experience working with entrepreneurial ventures. We look forward to a long-term relationship that will be beneficial for all of our organizations—and for Northeast Ohio business.

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### Executive MBA Students Place Fourth in National Business Competition

The Executive MBA students from the Nance College of Business Administration placed fourth in the 2011 KeyBank/Fisher College of Business Minority MBA Case Competition. Among the 20 teams that competed in the event, CSU placed above all other Ohio schools in the competition, including Case Western Reserve University, The Ohio State University and Kent State University. The contest's top three winners were University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin and the University of Washington.



*Team Nance, from L to R: Amy Dinsmore, EMBA Program Director and team coach Dr. Elad Granot,*

In the competition, organizers propose a business

problem, and teams are tasked to create solutions through a written thesis. Teams have 30 days to prepare their presentations for a panel of KeyBank executives, who act as judges. *Jennifer Falb, and Aura Lopez.*

"We are proud of the performance of our MBA students in the KeyBank Case Competition. Their ability to analyze real-world business problems and develop effective plans to solve those problems is evident from the outcome of the competition," said Robert Scherer, Dean of the Nance College of Business.

The 2011 KeyBank Case Competition was focused on "the Underserved", those individuals who don't have a relationship with a bank or who don't have access to credit. The scope of the case entailed evaluating KeyBank's current products and services, the competition, and understanding the Underserved in order to create a solution that would provide them with mainstream banking services and increase market share.

Under the coaching and supervision of Dr. Elad Granot, Amy Dinsmore, Jennifer Falb, Aura Lopez, and Jeremy Zelwin represented Cleveland State University. The team's presentation was entitled, "The Strategy to Serve the Underserved". The marketing and sales plan created was focused, strategic, and centered around reaching out to the Underserved through a product they developed, the *KeyCash Plus Card*. This card is a prepaid debit card that would be available at local retailers and would meet the needs of the Underserved by providing direct deposit service, a small cash loan, a credit building, and a savings feature.

KeyBank and Fisher College of Business established the competition in 2005; it has grown to be one of the nation's most recognized minority MBA case competitions. The annual competition allows competing teams to hone their business acumen and team-building skills while learning from KeyBank executives. The competition involves 16 to 20 teams from leading institutions each year. To date, six competitions have been held, involving over 335 students. The Nance College of Business placed third in 2007, and fourth in 2008.

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## Nance Undergraduate Business Summer Book Scholarships

Are you a current undergraduate student of the Nance College of Business? Do you plan on registering for business related courses during Summer 2011? If you answered yes to both questions, you may be eligible to apply for an Undergraduate Business Summer Book Scholarship ranging between \$300-\$500. To qualify, a Nance student must take a CSU Business course during one or both summer sessions.

The Nance Business Summer Scholarship is available to current Nance Undergraduate students who meet the following requirements:

- Enroll in at least three credits of *Business* course work for the Summer 2011 semester from the areas of ACT, BLW, BUS, CIS, FIN, GAD, INB, IST, MKT, MLR, OSM. Online classes qualify for the scholarship.
- Have a current overall CSU GPA of 2.5 or higher
- Submit a completed [application form](#) to the Nance College of Business Academic Advising Office, BU 219

Scholarships support books only and will be awarded on rolling basis with merit being the primary consideration. The application deadline for the Summer One session or the entire summer is May 2, 2011. For the Summer Two session only, the deadline is June 24, 2011. All scholarship recipients will be notified by email at least one week prior to the summer session indicated on your application.

For more information, e-mail Anne Nelson at [a.e.nelson@csuohio.edu](mailto:a.e.nelson@csuohio.edu)

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## Featured Alumni: Alton Tinker, MBA '94

Alton Tinker is the Vice President–Community Development at KeyBank. Prior to his position at KeyBank, Mr. Tinker was a Senior Credit Analyst and Relationship Manager for Bank One (JP Morgan Chase) middle market lending group.

Tinker, like many of our alumni, chose Cleveland State because it offers the most value. It was close to home for him so the cost, convenience and excellent education made sense. He said, "professors took time to make sure you understood the information being taught." Mr. Tinker thinks students should take advantage of mentoring opportunities at CSU. His mentor helped guide him toward a job in the banking industry. He encourages students to not get wrapped up in the classroom; "Look at internships and work on networking. Build the network before you need it."



Alton Tinker, MBA '94

He also suggests that students really need to analyze what they like to do and look for a career in a similar field.

Mr. Tinker's civic involvement keeps him busy outside of work. He is the founder and co-host of Society of Urban Professionals, SOUP. Alton also serves on the board of trustees for Lutheran Housing Corporation. He is Past President of the Cleveland Chapter of the National Black MBA, and Past President of Esprit "The Ultimate" Ski & Sports Club, the largest African American ski club in Ohio. Tinker was elected as Councilman for Ward 3 in the City of Bedford Heights, Ohio in 2003. He was profiled in the September 2003 issue of *Inside Business* magazine as "The One to Watch." Alton was also listed in the 2004 inaugural issue of *Who's Who in Black Cleveland*. In 2009 he was selected by *Male PowerNetworker of the Year*, and was named the 2010 *MBA of the* by the National Black MBA Association.

Born in Jamaica, Tinker moved to the United States at the age of 12. He attended Cleveland Public School through the 9th grade. He graduated at the top of his class at Audubon Junior High School and subsequently received a high school scholarship through the "A Better Chance (ABC) Program" to attend high school in Appleton, Wisconsin. Prior to attending CSU Mr. Tinker spent time in the Air Force from 1984-1987. He also attended Southern Illinois University and graduated in 1987.

He now resides in Bedford Heights with his wife Lynnette, BBA '92, and their two children.

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## Featured Student: Cindy Jana Springer

This month's featured student is Cindy Jana Springer. Cindy is currently pursuing a Bachelors of Business Administration degree; double majoring in International Business and Marketing. She was born in the Czech Republic and moved to Canada where she completed one year of High School before going on to earn her associates degree. In the fall of 2009, Cindy moved to Cleveland to attend CSU. She hopes to graduate this fall and attend graduate school in spring 2012.



Cindy Jana Springer (back row, left) with the 37 Degree team.

As a student majoring in International Business, Cindy was required to complete a week-long business study tour in a foreign country. She chose to travel to Germany because of its geographic location in relation to her native home and she also wanted to enhance her German language skills.

Cindy decided to take the semester-long study abroad option which allowed to her to study in Germany for three months in the fall of 2010.

Cleveland State University has a 20-year long partnership with the university Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg located in Heidenheim Germany. Through this partnership, exchange students study business-related courses in English or German for a semester. In addition, students are offered an additional semester in Germany to complete an internship.

Cindy gained valuable experience during her study abroad. She was the first student from CSU to participate in a newly introduced faculty-lead program where groups of students use their innovation skills to launch a new product. She joined a team of seven other German students who were responsible for generating sponsorship for their new product, designing and creating the prototype, then marketing the product. The group came up with the idea to market a stylish, multi-functional, thermo-efficient ski jacket which uses the body's natural temperature, 37 degrees Celsius, and solar power to generate energy. The energy created can charge multiple electronic device, conserving electrical energy. The product was summed up as "37 Degree- Body Meets Technology" and was marketed at trade shows, in newspapers and on the radio in Germany.

How does this super technology work? Almost transparent solar cells tailored on the sleeves, together with an unnoticeable kinetic device placed on the inner jacket, act as energy accumulators. Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, and GPS units are among the devices that can be recharged by this jacket. For more detailed information on this innovation, please visit [www.37degree.de](http://www.37degree.de)

In addition to the academic portion of her study abroad journey, Cindy had a wide range of experiences during her three months in Germany. She took the time to compile these experiences into a journal, which she has shared with the CSU community at [http://www.csuohio.edu/offices/international/study\\_abroad/touringgermany.html](http://www.csuohio.edu/offices/international/study_abroad/touringgermany.html)

Students interested in the Study Abroad program can find more information at [http://www.csuohio.edu/offices/international/study\\_abroad/](http://www.csuohio.edu/offices/international/study_abroad/)

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## Nance Partners with Shaker LaunchHouse

The Nance College of Business will be supporting economic development and entrepreneurial efforts at the recently-opened Shaker LaunchHouse, located at 3558 Lee Road, near Chagrin Blvd in Shaker Heights. The center will aid early stage entrepreneurial efforts, LaunchHouse incubator companies and small businesses.

The agreement was adopted at a special meeting of the Shaker City Council on March 14 after recommendation by the Shaker Heights Economic Development Department.

Nance students and staff will work with the LaunchHouse, the City of Shaker Heights, and its Community Improvement Corporation to attract and assist companies and promote economic development in Shaker Heights and Northeast Ohio.

"This is a unique opportunity for both Northeast Ohio and for Nance," said dean Scherer. "Nance and the LaunchHouse team were already co-sponsoring a business plan competition, so this was a natural and welcome next step. We will also be joining the 2011 Innovation Fund application for Third Frontier funding. We look forward to a long-term relationship that will be very good for both parties—and for Northeast Ohio business generally."

Nance will locate an office for CSU staff and graduate assistants at LaunchHouse, and will fund a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) counselor to support incubator companies and traditional small businesses. Graduate students and the SBDC counselor will assist companies by providing market research, assisting with business plans, providing technical support and counseling, as well as referring

clients to a network of service providers.

"We look forward to taking this next exciting step in our relationship with CSU and the Nance College of Business," said Todd Goldstein, LaunchHouse. "The Nance business students are forward thinking, innovative, and a vital ingredient in the growing Cleveland startup community".

The college will also provide marketing support to promote seminars, workshops, and services in general as funds are available, and assist the City in identifying funding support for LaunchHouse and its program activities.

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