

# WOODBURY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

*Where Your Legacy Begins*

Winter 2024 Newsletter



## **Woodbury University School of Business Successfully Reaffirmed AACSB Accreditation**

Following a peer review team visit in September 2023, Woodbury University School of Business recently received the great news of its reaffirmation of AACSB accreditation for the coming five years. The School of Business is proud of this accomplishment that was only achievable through a unified approach from its faculty and staff team, along with the enthusiastic support of its students, alumni, and advisory board. This reaffirmation of what is considered “the gold standard” of business schools and is only granted to about 5% of business schools worldwide, underscores once again the superb quality of education and thought leadership cultivated at our School of Business.



**Watch the clip above to see our School of Business year in review!**

# CONNECT & REFLECT Spring '24:

## A Business Happy Hour

On Thursday, January 25, a vibrant blend of Woodbury students and faculty, Community College and High School Seniors, and School of Business alumni gathered to network and engage in constructive conversations toward collective progress.

Several members of the Alumni Advisory Council shared their Woodbury experiences and how these bared fruit in their careers afterwards. It was particularly refreshing to hear Sofia Toro, the inaugural chair of the Alumni Advisory Council, share her desire to help as many youngsters as possible on their path toward higher education and a fulfilling career.



Alumna Mariya Palanjian, founder and CEO of Globafly, shared some of the lessons she learned along the way to starting and succeeding with her own business. Alumnus Charbel Ghaby spoke about his shift from entrepreneurship to becoming a successful financial advisor. Management professor and alumnus Jack Condon, who also serves as our liaison with several local community colleges, proudly shared his story, as did other alumni, faculty members and students.

Connect and Reflect is a recurring School of Business "Open House" initiative to familiarize potential students with the family atmosphere that makes Woodbury's School of Business so unique. We are proud of the turnout and the obvious enthusiasm all attendees displayed.

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## VITA '24 Now in Full Swing!

students, guided by Dr. Alice Shiotsugu, have resumed the **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance** program for 2024.

Every Saturday, till mid-April, our tax volunteers are supporting taxpayers with annual incomes of less than 73K. Upon making an appointment, taxpayers can place their documents in the secured VITA box at the university's security office.

As a seasoned former IRS executive, Dr. Alice Shiotsugu conducted a series of training sessions in the fall semester to optimize students' preparedness toward this important service.

## FREE TAX PREPARATION

**WHEN**  
Every Saturday  
Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> – Apr 13<sup>th</sup>  
9am – 5pm

**WHERE**  
Woodbury University  
7500 N Glenoaks Blvd, Burbank, CA 91504

IRS initiative to support free simple tax preparation for low-income residents

**BOOK YOUR VIRTUAL OR CONTACTLESS APPOINTMENT**  
(818) 394-3314 (Saturdays Only 9am – 4pm)  
Vita@woodbury.edu (anytime)

WOODBURY UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDED IN 1884

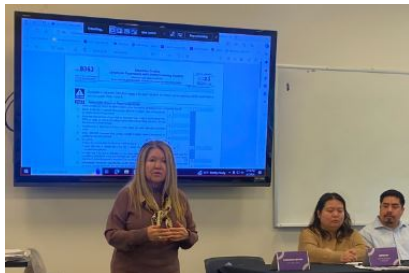


VITA  
VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

**ASSISTANTS**  
IRS Certified  
Accounting student  
volunteers, along with  
Certified Public  
Accountants

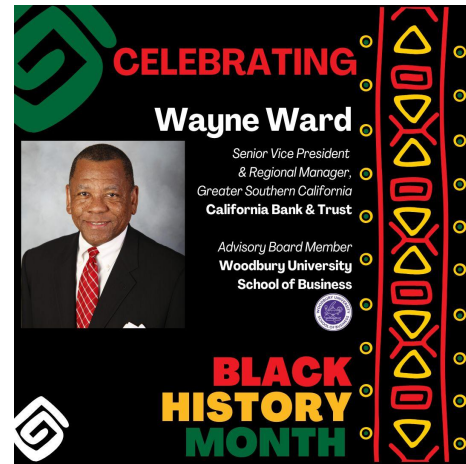
**PICK/DROP BOX**  
Place documentation  
with contact name and  
number in VITA box  
near security

**BENEFITING**  
Individuals making  
less than 73K a year



On February 7<sup>th</sup>, Accounting Department Co-Chair Dr. Alice Shiotsugu gave a presentation on proper tax filing to students, faculty, and staff. She also included information on tax credits. Dr. Shiotsugu wants to remind everyone to make sure to file their taxes on time. The deadline for timely filing is April 15th! VITA volunteers Jose Arevalo and Annie Ho were also on hand to share information about the VITA program.

## Celebrating Black History Month



In February 2024 we celebrated **Black History Month** by highlighting four of our respected stakeholders:

- Anasia Obioha, WUSB MBA alumna, who recently earned her doctorate in Organizational Leadership and accepted a position as a senior consultant at Kaiser Permanente.
- Wayne Ward, Sr. Vice President and Regional Manager at CB&T, who was named a 2023 Leader of Influence by the Los Angeles Business Journal, and who serves as a respected member of the WUSB Advisory Board.
- Roderick Harris-Wright, WUSB BBA-Management alumni, currently serving as a Strategy & Sales Operations Associate at Google.
- Susan Kivila, WUSB MBA alumna, who is completing her doctorate in IT and serves as the ITSD Business Manager at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

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**The School of Business has**



## a New Stock Ticker

Thanks to a team of generous donors, the School of Business now has a new stock ticker! Alumni and Advisory Board members joined forces and made it possible to purchase and install this

important moving report of the price of securities, updated continuously throughout the trading session by the various stock market exchanges. This stock ticker is intended to serve all student populations on campus, especially those with an interest in financial management.

Major sponsors to this project were School of Business alumni Emil Davtyan (founder/partner D.Law) and Jeff Neumeister (founder/partner Neumeister & Associates). Other important donors were Advisory Board members Nick Mitchell (Logix - also an alumnus), Mary Akpovi, Nick Hacopian (also an alumnus), Noam Lotan, and Jane Skeeter, as well as alumnus Ed Spiegel.

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## The Spring '24

## Rotating Executive in Residence Program

## School of Business Rotating Executive in Residence Team Spring 2024



2/8/24 (Thu: 10:00 am – 1:00 pm)	2/13/24 (Tue: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm)	2/21/24 (Wed: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm)	2/29/24 (Thu: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm)	3/5/24 (Tue: 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm)
<b>Nick Mitchell, JD</b> <i>Executive VP, Chief Legal Officer at Logix Federal Credit Union</i>	<b>Noam Lotan, MBA</b> <i>Investor and mentor to multiple tech companies</i>	<b>Mary Akpovi, MBA, PhD., CPA</b> <i>Founder &amp; CEO, Mary O. Akpovi, CPA, Inc.</i>	<b>Paul Herman</b> <i>President of The Herman Company (Real Estate)</i>	<b>Melissa Lintinger, MBA</b> <i>Senior VP of Production Finance, NBCUniversal's Television Studios</i>
3/20/24 (Wed: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm)	3/28/24 (Thu: 10:00 am – 1:00 pm)	4/2/24 (Tue: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm)	4/10/24 (Wed: 11:00 am – 2:00 pm)	4/17/24 (Wed: 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm)
<b>Wayne Ward</b> <i>Sr VP and Regional Manager, California Bank &amp; Trust</i>	<b>Jane Skeeter</b> <i>Founder and CEO (ret.) UltraGlas, Inc.</i>	<b>Nick Hacopian</b> <i>President at Glen West Management and Realty</i>	<b>Ahdee Abramson, MBA</b> <i>Entrepreneur   Investor   Teacher</i>	<b>Tracy Hernandez</b> <i>CEO, LA County Business Federation (BizFed)</i>

True to their dedicated approach, ten School of Business' Advisory Board members signed up for yet another dynamic cycle of the Rotating Executive in Residence Program. The executives will be donating three hours per week to meet with Woodbury students and assist them with career advice, resume reviews, mentorship, and any other professional development issues that might arise. Above are the executives for this semester. Students are invited to schedule appointments for one-on-one sessions with Joy Tabuchi at [Joy.Tabuchi@woodbury.edu](mailto:Joy.Tabuchi@woodbury.edu)

## STUDENT NEWS



Marketing student Alyana Castro recently received the *Marvin Selter Memorial Scholarship* at the Valley Industry & Commerce Association (VICA) Foundation’s 74th Annual Meeting. The event was organized by the VICA Foundation Board, who conducted the selection of the scholarship recipients and hosted a special luncheon for this celebration.

With this scholarship the City of LA, California Legislature, and County of Los Angeles expressed their recognition for Alyana’s academic achievements, passion projects, and engagement within the community. Elated about this honor, Alyana stated, *“Sharing my aspirations in creative marketing and entertainment as a Woodbury University School of Business student is a wonderful achievement I hold close to my heart”*.

Alyana has been a model student ever since the start of her educational journey at Woodbury. She plans to graduate in Spring 2024, and has already started giving back through assistance in student-centered initiatives and stellar academic performance.





## ALUMNI NEWS



### **Jocelyn Ramirez Wins Fancy Food Pitch Competition**

Jocelyn Ramirez, School of Business Alumna (MBA Class of 2010) recently became the pitch competition winner at the Specialty Food Association's "Fancy Food" Show in Las Vegas. She won the \$10K first prize based on her excellent 3-minute presentation of Todo Verde's *Tinga Seasoning*.

Jocelyn is the Chef/Founder of Todo Verde, a plant-forward Latinx-owned food business inspired by regional, true-to-culture flavors. The company helps home cooks create chef-curated meals using their non-GMO seasoning and offers recipes through its platforms and Jocelyn's best-selling published cookbook.



### **Sofia Toro Advises Upcoming Generations to Consider Woodbury University**

Sofia Toro, who serves as our School of Business' inaugural Alumni Advisory Council Chair, has taken it upon herself to volunteer as a student career consultant at the career fair of the middle school of her children.

As such, Ms. Toro advised hundreds of students on STEAM education and career pathways. Her findings? *"Sharing my path and alma maters not only inspires our youth but it makes them see themselves through my journey"*.

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## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



**Professor Wendy Bandoni**, Chair of Fashion Marketing, conducted a keynote speech at the *Journées du Marketing Horloger* 2023 event at the Musée International d'Horlogerie in La Chaux-de-Fonds, last winter.

The event was focused on "*New Business Models*" in the luxury world, and Professor Bandoni shared her research with brands such as Omega in breakout sessions. Her research, titled "*The Next Frontier of Luxury Watch Marketing: Multidisciplinary Perspective of Co-Creation Through Immersive Technology*," was selected for the JIMH journal. This research focuses on digital storytelling through immersive technology experiences, with a multidisciplinary approach that considers technology innovation, user experience (UX), and the evolution of digital cultures' attitudes, behaviors, and expectations. The research looks at digital disruption that has challenged marketers and management as new roles within the luxury business model continue to grow.

The Journées du Marketing Horloger event has an international audience and combines the academic and professional worlds around avant-garde themes. This unique event offers participants a 360° vision of current knowledge and trends in watch marketing that is lively, organic, and evolving.

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**Dr. Joan Marques**, Dean and Professor of Management, just had "*Führen mit Hertz*" published through Springer Gabler. This is the German translation of her original work, titled, "*Lead with Heart in Mind: Treading the Noble Eightfold Path for Mindful and Sustainable Practice.*"

This book explores leadership from a Buddhist psychological perspective and introduces the Buddhist construct of the Noble Eightfold Path to generate future-oriented leadership. Written in a conversational tone, this

book features practical examples, interactive questions, and chapter summaries to promote self-reflection as well as discussion. A wide array of examples and cases are also included, describing the behavioral patterns and accomplishments from leaders such as Elon Musk, Malala Yousafzai, Howard Schultz, Muhammad Yunus, and Millard Fuller.



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## **SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY: THE WOODBURY UNIVERSITY SOCIAL JUSTICE SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Woodbury University has launched a [Social Justice Scholarship Fund](#) that provides scholarships to undergraduate students from underrepresented groups. This scholarship, as well as the [School of Business' Dean's Fund](#) and the [Atlas Diversity and Inclusion Fund](#) financially assist students who are in need of support in obtaining their higher education with us. Your kind support is very much appreciated.



**Emphasis on High Quality and Readily Applicable Education**



**AACSB  
ACCREDITED**

Granted to Less Than 5% of  
Business Schools Globally



Rigor in Education and  
Continuous Improvement



**Cultivating Innovative Leaders for a Sustainable Society**



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