

WOODBURY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Where Your Legacy Begins

Spring 2025 Newsletter



Honoring the 2025 Beta Gamma Sigma Inductees



On April 24th, we celebrated the 2025 inductees into Woodbury University's School of Business AACSB Honor Society, Beta Gamma Sigma. In this formal, yet joyful gathering, six exemplary students were honored for their impressive scholastic accomplishments. This year's inductees were: Ana Valencia (MOL), Ken Goldstein (Accounting), Luceen Bislamyian (Management-3+1), Nicolas Ruiz (Management), Colleen Barboza (Management), and Rozalia Hovhannisyan (MBA). The ceremony was led by Dr. Adam Wood, Advisor of the Woodbury Chapter.

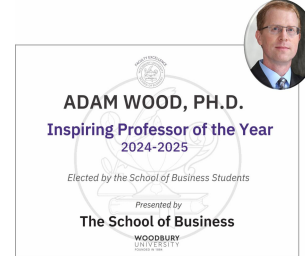


Dr. Wood was assisted by Dr. Joan Marques, Dr. Satinder Dhiman, and Dr. Paul Sabolic in explaining the principles of Beta Gamma Sigma, which are represented by three Greek words, the initials of which form the name of this Society.

Woodbury's School of Business '24-'25 Faculty Awards

The School of Business granted the 2024-2025 faculty awards in

four categories to members who made outstanding contributions in a variety of ways. Selecting the faculty members for the awards was a major challenge, since all members have performed excellently in scholarship, professional performance, service, and teaching.



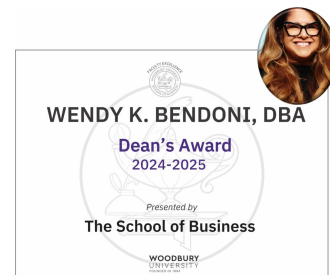
The Inspiring Professor of the Year Award was granted this year to two extraordinary professors upon a student survey: *Dr. Adam Wood* and *Dr. Paul Sabolic*, both of whom demonstrated that an interactive and creative approach in course facilitation is much appreciated amongst the students.

The Faculty Ambassador Award was granted this year to *Prof. Jack Condon*, who consistently brings in crowds of community college students to WUSB events, while he also maintains vivid relationships with several of our outstanding alumni. Prof. Condon's initiatives are well-appreciated by the School of Business.



The Faculty Making a Difference Award went to *Dr. Kevin Sanford*. Dr. Sanford's popularity has strongly increased over the past years, due to his clarity, accessible and reflective approach, his creative way of explaining complex problems, and his clear desire to assist students toward greater progress in life.

The Dean's Award was granted this year to *Dr. Wendy Bendoni*, who has been an enthusiastic advocate for continued innovation in the Marketing and Fashion Marketing departments, while she worked hard toward realizing her professional aspirations by earning her DBA from Grenoble Ecole de Management and contributing to a variety of scholarly projects with great success.



Business Roundtable Session: *Opportunities and Challenges in Today's Higher Education World*



On Friday, April 4th, the School of Business organized a roundtable session with colleagues from six local community colleges. This was the 9th annual meeting with colleagues from surrounding junior colleges.

The theme of this year was "*Opportunities and Challenges in Today's Higher Education World*", and representatives from Glendale Community College, Los Angeles Valley College, Pasadena City College, Los Angeles Mission College, Pierce College, and East Los Angeles College participated in a vivid dialogue that addressed the following areas:

- The reduced interest in obtaining a college degree
- The increasing call for online education
- The expanding use of AI in higher education deliverables

All participants expressed their appreciation for the roundtable structure and the entire team agreed to increase these gatherings to twice a year – in the spring and the fall semester - instead of just once.

The Baron Business Plan Competition Dinner: *An Annual CEO Highlight!*



On Saturday, April 26th, the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO) team celebrated the culmination of this year's Baron Business Plan competition with an elegant dinner party. CEO President Erandy Miranda Peregrino, and Vice President, Nick Ruiz, were the perfect hosts, and made sure all guests had a wonderful time.

The event was held in the Ahmanson Main Space with Tina Alleguez, entrepreneur and Managing Partner at Alleguez | Newman | Goodstein LLP, and Dr. Paul Sabolic, CEO Advisor and Management Professor, as speakers.



The winners of the 2025 Baron Business Plan competition are:

First place: *Cole Sparks* (Architecture) – winner of \$3,000

Second place: *Christopher Lee* (Architecture) – winner of \$1,200

Third place: *Hannah Waldron* (Interdisciplinary Studies) - winner of \$800

The annual Business Plan competition is sponsored by School of Business alumnus Mr. Tom Baron, who also sponsors the accompanying dinner event. Mr. Baron is a retired real estate entrepreneur, who has demonstrated an ongoing desire to pay it forward and give young people the opportunity to cultivate their entrepreneurial skills in a profitable, yet morally responsible way.

Student Spotlights



Jenna Peysakhovich: Accountant in the Making

Jenna started her journey at Woodbury University in Fall 2024. She is an accounting major, who chose Woodbury for the small class sizes and location. She particularly enjoys studying business because of the rich diversity in class topics and styles. She considers a blend of styles and content a great foundation for a well-rounded education.



Colleen Barboza: Performance with Purpose

Colleen Barboza is a Management student, who decided to further her education after a hiatus from a demanding professional path.

From 1998 through 2001 Colleen served in the US Air Force performing airplane handler duty and assisting in the safe and expeditious movement of about 9000 aircraft and 5500 elevator cycles during continuous combat

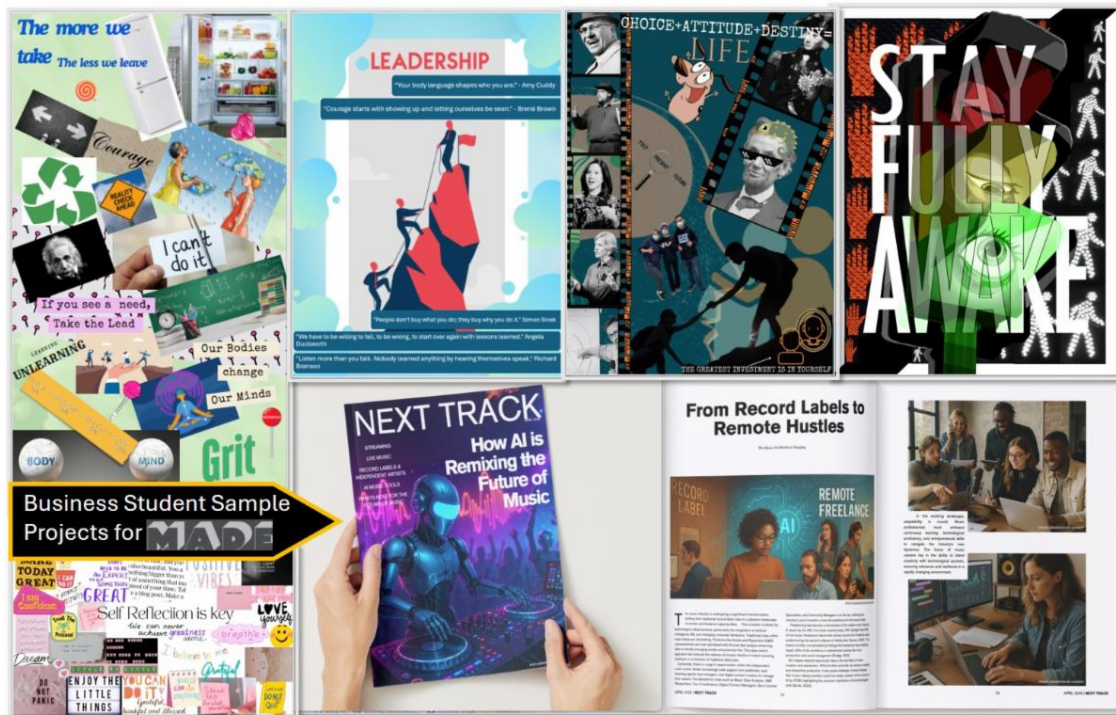
Jenna is passionate about financial literacy being taught within schools. "Being financially literate is an essential skill which many people do not have," she feels. This explains why she recently accepted a new role within the Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO) chapter of Woodbury, which is headquartered in the School of Business. As the new VP of Finance, Jenna looks forward to handling the finances of this organization and gaining experience in a leadership role.

Outside of Woodbury, she enjoys travelling, hiking, snow sports and developing my own recipes. Upon completing her Accounting degree, Jenna plans on pursuing her CPA licensure.

missions. After her military service, Colleen was employed at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory as a business administrator. During those years, she also earned a BA in Organizational Communication at Cal State LA.

In 2022, Colleen discovered Woodbury University and has since served as a role model to her fellow students, accomplishing some impressive feats. In classes Colleen has established a reputation of being a team player, a leader, a source of creative ideas, and a hard worker. In Spring 2025, Colleen and a small team of fellow students, took on the leadership task to serve at St. Philip the Apostle parish to volunteer as assistants in the need alleviation projects for Eaton Fire victims. Colleen has also made it a habit to serve the homeless during her weekends, along with her fellow parishioners.

WUSB Student Work at



"MADE at Woodbury" has flourished into a proud event for Woodbury students and faculty to display their work at the end of the academic year. This year, the School of Business presents its displays in the Malburg Atrium in the Business building, with work created by BCIS, Fashion Marketing, Management, Marketing, and MBA students. The works vary from posterized course take-away collages to impressions from courses in leadership, marketing, business ethics and

diversity. Of high appeal are the AI-produced magazines, prepared in the Co-Intelligence: AI Strategies for Business Innovation marketing class.

True to its reputation of massive societal impact, there is also an appealing display of WUSB faculty work, consisting of scholarly articles and books published in recent semesters.

The MADE event is a great way of demonstrating the creative spirit that lives among all Woodbury programs.

Alumni News



Nick Mitchell nominated for SVC Man of the Year

Nick Mitchell (BS, Management, 2009) and School of Business Advisory Board Member, was recently honored for his tireless work as Chair of the Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital Foundation.

To underscore his extraordinary efforts, he was nominated for Santa Clara Valley (SCV) Man of the Year. Since joining the Foundation Board in 2015, his steady leadership, legal expertise, and heartfelt commitment have made a lasting impact. His rich input comprised, among others, helping in rewriting bylaws, navigating fundraising regulations during COVID, and championing compassionate initiatives such as voice-recording teddy bears for palliative care families.

In his professional life, Nick Mitchell, who holds a juris doctorate, serves as Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer at Logix Federal Credit Union.



Jocelyn Ramirez joins panel at Los Angeles Times Festival of Books

Jocelyn Ramirez (MBA, Class of 2010) recently participated in an inspiring panel on the “De Los” stage at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books aka Bookchella. The other panelists were Karla Tatiana Vasquez, Alba M. Velasquez, and Wes Avila. “De Los” focuses on everything Latinidad in Los Angeles and across the country. Latinidad is a Spanish-language term that refers to the various attributes shared by Latin American people and their descendants without reducing those similarities to any single essential trait.

Jocelyn Ramirez is a chef, published cookbook author, New York times recipe contributor, entrepreneur and advocate for healthy food access in her community. She founded Todo Verde, one of LA’s acclaimed plant-forward Latinx food businesses, with a mission to create delicious and healthy plant-forward food inspired by her Latinx roots. her work has been featured in a multitude of outlets.

Joey Calderon Lectures on Entrepreneurship and Consumer Behavior

Joey Calderon (BBA, Fashion Marketing, 2017), recently conducted a well-received presentation in Dr. Bendoni’s

Consumer Behavior course. Joey is co-owner of NEO Pasadena, a fashion outlet in Old Town Pasadena offering locally curated LA brands to their vintage & street selects. Being the versatile entrepreneur that he is, Joey is also the resident DJ and marketing coordinator at "Arena K-town" Nightclub in Central Los Angeles.

During his Consumer Behavior class lecture, Joey gave students a real-world look into how retail is evolving in a digital-first landscape. He discussed the importance of brand storytelling, emotional connection, and social listening—particularly when engaging Gen Z and Millennial consumers. Joey's insights connected directly to course topics like consumer identity, motivation, and post-purchase behavior, making theory feel truly relevant.



Irma Pietojo joins BenQ

Irma Pietojo (MBA, Class of 2012) recently embarked upon a new career path by becoming the Product Manager at BenQ Corporation, a world-leading human technology and solutions provider driven by the corporate vision of "Bringing Enjoyment 'N' Quality to Life" to elevate and enrich the aspects of life that matter most to people today – lifestyle, business, healthcare and education.



Meshal Abahussain joins RAC

Meshal Abahussain (BBA, Accounting, Class of 2011, MBA, Class of 2016) started a new position as Financial Performance Senior Manager at Riyadh Airports Company (RAC). RAC was established in 2016 as part of the privatization program of the aviation sector in Saudi Arabia. RAC is now managing and operating King Khalid International Airport (KKIA) in the Saudi capital.

Faculty Highlights

Thought Leader Webinars

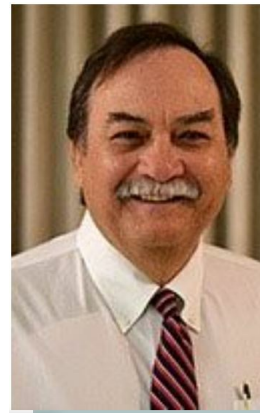
The School of Business continued its monthly thought leader webinar series with two additional



TAX UPDATES: What You Need to Know

In the March webinar, Jeff Neumeister, Managing Partner at Kelly+Partners Burbank, LLP, provided some valuable pieces of information, including:

- Avoiding audits:
 - o Don't over-rely on 1099's: if you don't have them, make sure you have some track record to report the income.
 - o Make sure your W2-information matches what you report.
 - o Affiliation to entities that are being audited.
- Avoiding underreporting practices that can be found out in other ways and places you on the radar (e.g.: crypto currency dealings).
- The various strategies used in screening tax filings that can lead to audits.
- Pending sunsets in provisions in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), which could impact taxpayers significantly.
Interested? View the entire presentation [here](#).



WHY Do You Want to Be an Entrepreneur: The Uncomfortable Truths

In the April webinar, Dr. Paul Sabolic, Associate Professor of Management and Marketing and serial entrepreneur, highlighted some important considerations for those who aspire the entrepreneurial path, including:

- The major responsibility of being your own boss.
- The many risks to consider and decide upon.
- Funding and customer issues.
- Intense work schedules and numerous roles within the job.
- The need for passion, commitment and self-confidence.
- Having access to mentors.
- Cultivating a creative mindset to pivot through volatile circumstances.
- Planning and ambition
Interested? View the entire presentation [here](#).

Publications and Presentations

Dr. Bendoni to present at La Londe '25

Dr. Wendy Bendoni, Chair of Marketing and Fashion Marketing, recently had a competitive paper accepted for presentation at the 2025 La Londe Conference Consumer Behavior and



Marketing Communications.

The conference will take place early June in France.



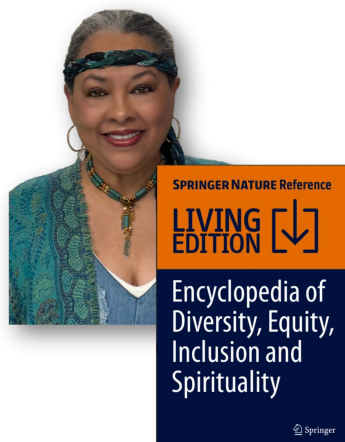
Dr. Bendoni's paper is titled, "*The Middle Managers of Influence: Critical Roles of Key Members in Social Media Influencer (SMI) Community Communication Dynamics.*" It entails an excerpt of her recently defended dissertation titled, "*Enhancing Influencer Marketing: Unveiling the Dynamics of Social Media Influencers' Communities*".

Dr. Joan Marques Publishes a Series of Articles

Dr. Joan Marques, Dean School of Business and Professor of Management, recently had a series of short scholarly articles accepted for publication upon a peer review process.

The following titles were included:

- *The Mindful Moral Compass as a Roadmap Toward Doing the Right Thing*
- *Artificial Intelligence and DEIS*
- *Moral Responsibility in Professional Performance*
- *On Mental Models and Spiritual Pathways*



The articles will appear in the Encyclopedia of DEIS, a major reference work (MRW) which is scheduled to be published by globally renowned publisher Springer near the end of this year.

Spring 2025 Faculty Colloquium

This semester, the School of Business organized two faculty colloquia, to which faculty members from all four Woodbury teaching units were invited.

"Peaches & Cream" Presented by Mr. Michael Dee.

On March 25th Michael Dee showed photos and videos from his Peaches & Cream Exhibit in the Nan Rae Gallery. The exhibit consisted of 16 new photos and 3 new sculptures utilizing the color peach fuzz and ran till March 28th.



"Co-Intelligence and the Future of Learning" Presented by Dr. Wendy Bendoni

Through her research within the digital culture space and Co-Intelligence: AI Strategies for Business Innovation course, Dr. Bendoni explored how AI enhances human creativity, accelerates



decision-making, and enables real-time adaptation in both business and education. This presentation was given on March 25th.

“From Play to Pedagogy: What Childhood Learning Teaches Us About Higher Education”

Presented by Dr. Eugene Allevato

This presentation, given on April 22nd, explored how a STEM experiment conducted in an underprivileged community in Brazil can inspire pedagogical strategies based on problem-posing. Dr. Allevato discussed ways to encourage higher education students to enhance their imagination and critical thinking through reflection and inquiry based approaches.

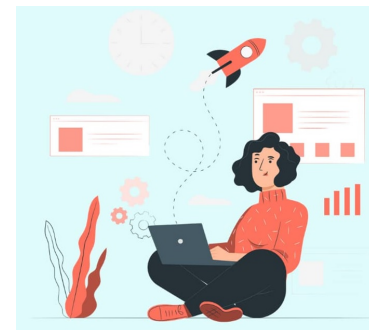


“Is it Him or Is it Hormones? The impact of menopause on relationships in the second half of life.” Presented by Dr. Joye Swan and Dr. Barbara Bowley

This presentation, also given on April 22nd, explored the multiple consequences of this mostly unreplicated research including the strong correlation between the decrease in HRT use and the sharp rise in divorce in people over 50 (termed gray divorce) in the two decades since.

SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY: THE STUDENT ENTREPRENEURS SUPPORT FUND

Please consider supporting our student entrepreneurs by donating to the [student entrepreneurs support fund!](#) This fund honors and encourages the efforts of budding entrepreneurs, who are students at Woodbury’s School of Business, or are members of one of the School of Business-headquartered professional student organizations.



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