Dear UCR Business Alumni & Friends,

I invite you to join us for a very special homecoming: **Celebrating 40 years of Management Education at the University of California, Riverside.** As a business alumnus you have a lot to be proud of with your Alma Mater and I want to tell you all about it during our "Blues and Brews" Homecoming Celebration at Anderson Hall, 1-3 p.m. on Saturday, February 26 immediately following Roger Conway’s noontime presentation. In challenging economic times a vibrant alumni network is more important than ever, not only for alumni, but also for current students and faculty. With your business world experiences, you have much to offer the school in terms of sharing lessons learned. And we have much to share with you about the business school’s growth, new program offerings, world-renowned faculty, and many recent successes (such as being ranked a 2011 Princeton Review Best Business School).

So come and lift a glass and share good cheer. Inland Empire Brewing Company will be providing libations to accompany the day’s toasts and boasts. Please be my guest and come home to your UCR business Alma Mater. [RSVP here](#).

Sincerely,

David W. Stewart
Dean, School of Business Administration

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**SoBA ALUMNI EVENTS**

**Homecoming**
Saturday, Feb. 26
1 p.m.
UCR Campus

The 2011 Homecoming theme is "Blues & Brews." This is a free event for our alumni & friends. **U.S. News & World Report**-renowned Professor Roger Conway will give a presentation on how the financial crisis really is a leadership crisis.

Riverside’s own Inland Empire Brewing will be our beer provider. IEB has been brewing in Riverside since 2007.

**Alumni Reception**
Friday, Mar. 25
4:30-6:30 p.m.
Ana Mandara Restaurant ([anamandara.com](http://anamandara.com))
San Francisco

Join Dean Stewart for a Bay Area business alumni reception. Hosted by Chris Lam (BS ’91). Contact Brent Hunter for more information.

**Recruitment Events**

- **Sat., Mar. 26, 9-11 a.m.**
  KPMG, San Francisco
- **Sat., Apr. 2, 9-11 a.m.**
  Ernst & Young, Los Angeles
- **Sat., Apr. 16, 9-11 a.m.**
  Pfizer, La Jolla

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As a graduate of the UCR business school, you are automatically a part of the School of Business Administration Alumni Network. Get active in the network on LinkedIn and Facebook and connect with other alumni, network with potential employers/employees, and keep up to date on the latest SoBA news.

soba.ucr.edu
SoBA in the News

UCR Business School to Recruit Best and Brightest Students

The UCR School of Business Administration has always sought excellence, and it continues this tradition through outreach efforts to the best and brightest students. In events hosted by KPMG in San Francisco, Ernst & Young in Los Angeles, and Pfizer in La Jolla, SoBA will be reaching out to top tier students offered admission to UCR.

The first of these undergraduate recruiting events will be March 26, 9-11 a.m., in San Francisco, hosted by Jose Hernandez (BS ’10) of KPMG. The second event will be April 2, 9-11 a.m. in Los Angeles, hosted by David Gutierrez (BS ’04) of Ernst & Young. The last event will be April 16, 9-11 a.m. in La Jolla, hosted by Michelle Hannah (BS ’95) of Pfizer. In attendance at these events will be Dean David W. Stewart and undergraduate advisors.

If any UCR business school alumni are interested in joining us at any of these events to talk to prospective students, please contact Lisa Miller at lisa.miller@ucr.edu or (951) 827-4997.

Professor Erik Rolland Receives IBM Faculty Award for Patent Valuation Project

Professor of Information Systems Erik Rolland recently received an IBM Faculty Award to help support his project, “Patent Value and Renewal Decisions: The Role of Clusters and Portfolios.”

Read more...

Dean David Stewart Named to ARF NeuroStandards Evaluation Committee

From the Advertising Research Foundation. Dean David Stewart has been named a member of the ARF’s Evaluation Committee for its new NeuroStandards Collaboration, an unprecedented research project that will provide much-needed transparency about biometric and neurological research methods.

Read more...

Pre-Business Alumni Mentor Program

by Mike Jameson, B.S. ’96, MBA ‘00

Did you know SoBA has a program where experienced UCR business alumni advise incoming freshmen students?

Currently in its fourth year, the Pre-Business Alumni Mentor Program connects incoming students with alumni who can share wisdom, life experiences and business tips.

The program is a partnership between the UCR Alumni Association, the CHASS FIRST: First Year Experience, UCR Residence Life and the UCR Career Center. Alumni mentors usually have about five protégés and meet with them once per quarter for dinner on campus. Mentors must also be available to communicate with their protégés at least once between meetings by e-mail or phone.

Mentors share their experience as UCR students to help their student survive his or her first year in college and offer advice as business professionals to assist the student in setting and achieving his or her goals.

As a mentor, I find it’s a great way to help incoming students and give them encouragement, lessons and input that I wish I had in my first year of college, as well as insight about current business topics, the economy and career planning. If you feel you would have similar experiences to contribute, I suggest becoming a Mentor yourself.

For more information about becoming a mentor, please contact Kristin Seiler, Director of Student Relations at kristin.seiler@ucr.edu.
Alumni in the News

Peter Hughes (MBA 1976) Named 2010 Outstanding CPA

UCR business school alumnus Peter Hughes was recently honored by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants with an Outstanding CPA in Government Award for the year 2010.

Hughes is currently an internal audit director for Orange County, California. He also currently teaches as an adjunct accounting professor at California State University at Fullerton.

Hughes received his MBA from UCR in 1976 with an emphasis in operations research and a minor in organizational theory.

Susan Atherton (BS 1977) Receives American Red Cross Presidential Award

UCR business alumna Susan Atherton (BS 1977) recently received an American Red Cross Presidential Award for Excellence presented at a ceremony on Red Cross Square in Washington, D.C. The Presidential Award is a national award recognizing outstanding performance by a Red Cross employee or volunteer.

Atherton is currently the chair of the Board of Directors of the American Red Cross Bay Area. She has headed the board for the past two years.

UCR Business School Alumni Show Highlander Spirit is Alive in Bay Area

UCR business Alumni from the Bay Area met up for a reception preceding the UCR vs. Stanford men’s basketball game on December 12. The event, held at Scottys Seafood Bar & Grill in Palo Alto, featured updates from Chancellor Tim White and business school dean David W. Stewart.

ATTENTION: EMPLOYERS!

Tap into a talented pool of tomorrow’s business leaders by posting job/internship opportunities for UCR School of Business Administration students.

- Post opportunities for current undergraduate students by contacting the UCR Career Center
- Post opportunities for current MBA students by contacting MBA Career Services Director Monica Martin

JOIN US AT MBA NETWORKING EVENTS

Interested in networking with students eager to make inside business connections? The AGSM Student Association will be hosting MBA Networking Events monthly for current students to build industry ties with UCR business graduates. These events are designed to bring students and professional alumni together for advice, perspective, and reflection. Come join us at AGSM to lead a discussion and help provide opportunities for students to build relationships.

If you would like to link up with current students to share your experience and advice, or get more information, please contact AlumniAffairs@agsmsa.org.
Like most others, when Karen Wong interned for Southern California Edison (SCE) as a UCR business undergraduate, her understanding of what the company actually did was limited to just the fact that it provided electricity to customers. Now as a Financial/Business Analyst at SCE’s Information Technology Department, she’s immersed in the company’s doings, a far cry from her days as a wet-behind-the-ears intern.

In her current role, she oversees the company’s capital projects portfolio, including over 300 projects totaling millions of dollars. “For each project,” Wong said, “I work with project managers and clients in creating a five-year budget plan, tracking monthly project costs, and developing annual forecasts. In addition, a large component of my work is developing customized reports and presenting financial data in a summarized and meaningful way to senior management so that they can use the information for strategic decision-making.”

“I really enjoy working for SCE,” Wong said. “As a company in the energy and electric utilities industry, SCE is a really exciting place to be at as the firm is taking on new initiatives to be a leader in the renewable and ‘green’ energy era that is emerging.”

Wong also serves as a Section Director for the Future Business Leaders of America, the nation’s largest non-profit student business organization, currently 225,000-strong. “I was involved in the organization myself during high school, and am thrilled to return to volunteer with FBLA.” She oversees upwards of 2,000 Southern California high school students with aspirations to success in the business world. In addition, she serves on two local budget committees to help San Gabriel elementary schools in the wake of calls for budget cuts, by searching for alternative sources of funding for programs and teacher retention.

She attributes her current success to her education at SoBA. “Although my job duties are centered around finance,” she said, “having a strong foundation of the key business processes, goals, and trends in Information Technology has really helped me understand my role within the IT department, and how I can bring value and contribute to larger organizational goals. … Because my work largely consists of utilizing managerial and cost accounting systems, the concepts that I have learned from (Woody) Liao are extremely helpful.”

During her time at UCR, she served as a resident advisor and a Vice President of Scholarship for the Sigma Kappa Sorority. She was also part of the SoBA Undergraduate Student Ambassadors Program. “Being surrounded by other academically-driven and ambitious students in the Ambassadors Program was really uplifting,” she said. “The program also offered me a channel to meet and network with students, parents, and business professionals outside of UCR. The professional staff of the Ambassadors Program, Kazi Mamun and Lata Patel, were both extremely supportive of everyone in the program and created a really positive environment.”

Though she is grateful for her job security at SCE, Wong is cognizant of the troubles her fellow alumni might have in the current job market. “My advice to job seekers is to really spend some time working on honing their resume to suit the position that they are applying for. This includes highlighting specific skills, previous responsibilities, and accomplishments that are essential and valuable to the job that they are applying for. I also recommend following up with the company—for instance, by calling and asking to speak to the hiring manager about the status of their application or interview process.”

“I think it’s important to stay connected with your alma mater and to be aware and informed about the university’s recent events and accomplishments,” she said. “I have met other UCR graduates from work and the community, and the topic of conversation that always comes up is what UCR is doing these days and how it’s changed and continuing to grow. In addition, staying connected to UCR and the business school offers a great way to network with other successful professionals. There are tons of UCR alumni members from my graduating class of 2009 who are now working at Fortune 500 companies and changing the face of the business world.”

“You may contact Wong at karen_cay_wong@yahoo.com.”
Fresh out of graduate school, Omid Ghamami was in for quite a surprise when he was hired by Intel Corporation’s purchasing department in 1994. Though well-versed in business, the field of purchasing was a generally unmined area in business. But determined to learn independently as much as he could about the field, he shortly came to be regarded as an expert on negotiations and purchasing contract law at Intel, and now has numerous industry articles under his belt, most written for the Institute of Supply Management. He is also sharing the knowledge he has attained over the years through his recently published book, “Purchasing Advantage.”

“I came to realize from connections with purchasing professionals in many industries that this discipline is fraught with problems,” Ghamami said, “and that the root cause was that both academia and industry are treating purchasing for what it used to be—a function where clerics expedited orders—instead of what it is now—a strategic competitive advantage used to streamline orders and take cost out of the supply chain, for the benefit of the end customer. ...I called my business “Purchasing Advantage” because it encapsulated everything that I thought purchasing should be for companies that do it right: an advantage.”

Part of the reason for publishing the book was the necessity of a textbook he could use in courses he was teaching on cost modeling, contract law, and negotiations at Folsom Lake College. “Because there is a dearth of information anywhere on the concept of purchasing, and because I needed a really good text to teach the purchasing courses at Folsom Lake College, I decided to write my own book,” he said.

He is now an adjunct professor of business for the school, after realizing how much he enjoyed teaching. “The courses I teach include human resources, organizational behavior, public administration, and workforce skills. I also wrote a proposal to create a 16-unit purchasing certificate program for the college—the only one of its kind in California. This was approved and I have developed all the necessary coursework and materials. This program should kick off in Fall 2011 or Spring 2012, and there is a lot of buzz around it.”

Being in academia, he has an appreciation for the value of a quality graduate education, specifically that which he received at AGSM. “The students in graduate school were very ambitious, bright, and career-minded. The professors would treat you almost like peers,” he said. “Spending two years in time-consuming school projects with people who were so ambitious and bright is the ultimate personal development experience. I was also a graduate assistant, which aided me in developing my communication and leadership skills and helped me work my way through graduate school debt free. As the president of our graduating class, I was also offered unique opportunities, such as being on the selection and interview team for our new dean, as well as carrying our school flag and leading the procession at our class graduation. I didn’t realize it then, but those were the best two years of my life. The memories will last forever.”

In regards to advice he can impart to UCR business alumni facing the current tough job market, he said, “Attitude and confidence trump everything else. Learn it and exude it. A dying king’s last words to his son (the crown prince and heir to the crown) were ‘never to be afraid of anything.’ These powerful words have been my inspiration and motivation throughout the years.” He also suggests staying outside of your comfort zone when job hunting. “If you don’t do this, you just might turn around one day and find out that you have one year of experience twenty times instead of twenty years progressive experience. It is my experience that bad things happen when you stay in your comfort zone for prolonged periods;” he said. Finally, he said, “The number one key to sustained success in the workplace is the ability to influence. ...The people who make it to the corporate ladder and stay there are not the ones who know the most or even the ones who get the most done. They are the ones who have been able to recognize good ideas and are able to build coalitions behind them, driving results by influence instead of by authority.”

Overall, he is thankful to be an alumnus of the UCR business school. He said, “My MBA education has made a world of difference. There are so many diploma mill MBAs in the workforce, but my resume will always say that I got my degree from the University of California. Unlike material possessions, it’s something that nobody can ever take away from me.”

You may visit Ghamami’s business website at purchasingadvantage.com. You may also view a 10-minute excerpt of his guest speaker appearance in 2009 on “Good Work Now.”

We’d Love to Hear From You!

Is there something you’d like to share with your fellow alumni? Let us know for inclusion in our next newsletter!