

# Inside THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS CLAYTON STATE UNIVERSITY

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NEWSLETTER  
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## Spring Speakers Series is Major Success

If numbers are any indication, the Clayton State University School of Business Speakers Series is a major success. Three hundred to four hundred students, faculty, staff, and members of the local community regularly attend lectures held at Spivey Hall and more than 100 squeeze into limited seating when the series is held in a classroom. For Dr. Michael Tidwell, Interim Director of Marketing and Brand Management for the School of Business, "the level of student and community interest speaks to the quality of our speakers and the relevancy of the topics they are addressing."

The School invites speakers who address pressing issues in today's business environment. The 2008 spring lineup is impressive, featuring Erzell Charles, VP of Instruction for Dale Carnegie, Inc.; Ed Baker, Publisher of the Atlanta Business Chronicle; Jim Messina, VP of Sales for Maritz Learning, a division of Maritz Inc.; and Michelle Bradley, Director of Sales and

Marketing for Marriott Atlanta.

In March, Erzell Charles presented *Personal Branding for Today's College Grads* and Ed Baker addressed *The Pulse of American Business*. According to Tidwell, "It was important for us to have Baker on campus because he's such an important mind in the Atlanta



Mr. Erzell Charles

business community." And while Baker's lecture touched on hot topics driving the Atlanta business scene, Charles' lecture focused on the individual student. He offered tips on how college graduates can brand themselves with their "value message" for the workplace. For Charles, "it's who knows you, not who you know or even what you know."

April features Jim Messina and Michelle Bradley. On April 3, Messina's topic will focus on *Understanding the Blue Ocean Strategy*, based on the theories of W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne's award winning book where one aims to create



Mr. Jim Messina

uncontested market space (i.e. a "blue ocean"), thereby making competition irrelevant. Messina finds the speakers series to be "great fun. If you enjoy business, this lecture is, I hope, an interesting forum to learn about successful enterprises and how they created new markets by tapping customers' desires to have more input into the relationships they have with companies.

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## Women in Leadership Programming Gaining Notoriety

Dr. Margaret Thompson, Assistant Professor of Management, teaches *Women in Leadership*. The course examines women in



Margaret Thompson, Ph.D.

leadership from a historical and strategic perspective, focusing on the identification of useful theories and appropriate strategies to promote the development of women. What started as a pilot class in fall of 2006 is now meeting a real need at the University. According to Thompson, enrollment of women at Clay-

ton State University is approaching 70%. This shift in demographics is developing an ever-increasing sense of responsibility towards women at the University. For Thompson, "We would be remiss in our mission if we say that we are student focused, but don't offer classes that meet the needs of our population. The Women in Leadership class, which is structured to appeal to both male and female students, meets these needs."

Thompson runs her course like a graduate seminar class. Students read academic articles about women in business, hold round table discussions, and write research proposals. Students also participate in Service

Learning Projects, such as designing and administering a member survey for a state-wide academic organization for women or developing a mentoring program for women in Clayton County.

There are no tests, which Thompson admits can be a "big draw." Instead, Thompson encourages students "to think about the word-on-the-street and question what they read about women in the workplace. A major highlight of the class is the emphasis on guest speakers. Thompson's class offers 10 speakers over a 16-week period. The women speakers represent a wide variety of career paths, ranging from

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## School of Business Selects First Executive In Residence

William F. Flynn begins this spring as the School of Business' first Executive in Residence. He is also stepping in as the new Chairman of the School's Advisory Board, replacing Dean Ernest "Bud" Miller, who retired last year.

The Executive in Residence Program invites senior-level executives to bring industry into the classroom, providing a bridge between theory and practice. The executives work with faculty to provide an enriching learning environment for Clayton State University's undergraduate and graduate students through guest lectures, team teaching, presentations, mentoring students and cultivating new internships and career placement opportunities.

Flynn has a M.B.A. from the University of Miami, served in the U.S. Marine Corps, is former President and CEO of Wilstemar, Inc., and is President and CEO of Marbil Properties. A long-time resident of Peachtree City, GA, he served as the Finance Manager for Harold Logsdon's campaign for Mayor of Peachtree City. Flynn is also actively involved in raising money for a military-dependent, children scholarship fund. This fund is currently providing college tuition assistance to 44 children who have lost a parent in the current war on terror.



Mr. William F. Flynn

According to Dr. Jacob Chacko, Dean and Professor of Marketing, Flynn "is a perfect fit" as our first Executive in Residence and Chair of our Advisory Board. "Flynn has military, corporate, leadership, and fundraising experience. He has a passion to get involved with education, and he's also passionate about first generation college students and supporting minorities. All these qualities can come together at Clayton State University."

The School's Advisory Board will be composed of 20 to 25 executive and community professionals whose primary roles will be as advisors to the business curriculum, marketing and fundraising. According to Chacko, "The role of the board will be to build a brand for the School of Business and help us market ourselves. This group maintains corporate contacts that will help open doors to talk about on-site programming, non-credit executive training, and fundraising." Flynn plans to "put together a group of people who are willing to work and be on committees to go about the School's business, as directed by Dr. Chacko. We need to be a

resource for the community in terms of a place to go for specific business solutions. Community service is extremely important."

Both roles as Executive in Residence and Chairman of the Advisory Board fulfill Flynn's goal to serve as a resource for his community: "When I retired from full-time work and business, I wanted to teach serious students who want to be practitioners. I owe my successes to mentors and leaders who took the time to explain points of leadership and management to me. These are the essential keys to business success. I want to be the person who can pass these ideas on. To help get someone from a middle management position to one of senior leadership or business ownership strengthens America's future."

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Beth Johnston, Senior Vice President of Human Resources for Delta to Bonnie Kallenberg, an entrepreneur for the last 25 years with her own line of furniture and clothing consignment shops. For Thompson, "not only do the speakers bring valuable life skills and knowledge to the classroom, but the process gives students some face time with successful women. Success is defined by these women in many different ways, which is an invaluable lesson for students. They realize that they may choose many different paths to success."

While the class continues to develop, it is a springboard to Thompson's next project. She is in the infant stages of developing an Institute for Advancing Women in the Workplace which will offer non-credit programs to women in the community. For now, however, she hopes students complete her course knowing "they can really do something with their lives that is successful and based on their skills, their values, and competencies. For the men in the class, I hope they recognize the need to maximize the talents and unique perspectives women bring to the workplace."

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Whether you're a future entrepreneur or hoping to bring new value to an existing company someday, I think the principles of *The Blue Ocean Strategy* can be useful and thought-provoking."

For Michelle Bradley, "it's all about a plan!" Speaking on *Starting at First Base: Developing a Career Game Plan*, Bradley wants to drive home the importance of networking and mentoring. "Pursuing want ads and cold calls doesn't cut it," says Bradley, "you've got to look for a mentor, you've got to volunteer, you've got to take internships where you're willing to be paid in knowledge and experience. Integrity

and work ethic will follow you. And you've got to have a plan for your future."

While the spring line up is exciting, Tidwell insists, "The program is still in developmental stages. We're working with faculty to create a culture in the school where it becomes ingrained in the students that the knowledge provided in these series is critical to their long term success. Textbooks and classes are wonderful, but we need supplemental information to bolster our education." But perhaps Ercell Charles said it best: "The way to predict our leaders is to create them, and leadership series like the School of Business Speakers Series does just that!"