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Illinois Wesleyan University

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# Illinois Wesleyan Announces New School of Business and Economics

March 15, 2023

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Future business leaders will have the opportunity to study professional programs in a liberal arts setting under the auspices of the newly formed School of Business and Economics at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Several new programs, including professional sales, supply chain management, quantitative finance and financial planning will be housed under the school, joining existing majors such as accounting, business administration, economics, entrepreneurship, finance and marketing.

“The School of Business and Economics (SOBE) is building a platform for the specialized areas in business to work together

to create new options for our students,” said SOBE Interim Director John Camey. “This program prepares students to become strong ethical leaders and excel in a diverse, ever-changing world and business climate. Every IWU student is a Titan — the SOBE students are preparing to be business titans.”

Illinois Wesleyan has added six faculty members in the last two years to provide instruction in the new school. Bryan C. McCannon '98 has been selected to serve as the school director, beginning in July. McCannon studied economics and business

administration at Illinois Wesleyan and earned a Ph.D. in economics from Pennsylvania State University. He currently serves as an associate professor of economics at West Virginia University, where he also directs the Center for Free Enterprise. He previously served on the faculties of Saint Bonaventure University, Wake Forest University and Elmira College.

Illinois Wesleyan's School of Business and Economics is also home to the Greg Yess '82 Bloomberg Finance Lab, a professional resource that provides students access to state-of-the-art tools utilized by top financial institutions for investing, trading, risk management and research. [Students have the opportunity to enroll in a portfolio management course that actually invests part of the University Endowment](#), developing real-world knowledge of investing and trading, and the ability to complete Bloomberg Market Concepts certification.

A group of alumni with substantial experience in the field of business have been invited to serve on the School of Business and Economics advisory council. Members of the council provide perspective on market trends while identifying strategic opportunities for the University to prepare students on the path to become responsible and innovative business leaders.

Ed Rust — retired president, chairman of the board, and chief executive officer for State Farm Insurance — graduated from Illinois Wesleyan in 1972 with a degree in business administration. Rust serves as a member of the School of Business and Economics advisory council.

“I look forward to sharing the business perspectives and experiences gained over a 50-year career; helping to create a level of intellectual curiosity that energizes a rigor of lifelong learning for the next generation of leadership,” said Rust. “I often reflect on my time at Illinois Wesleyan and am a strong believer that a liberal [arts] education enhances one’s capacity to thoughtfully analyze and debate issues, reaching constructive responses.”

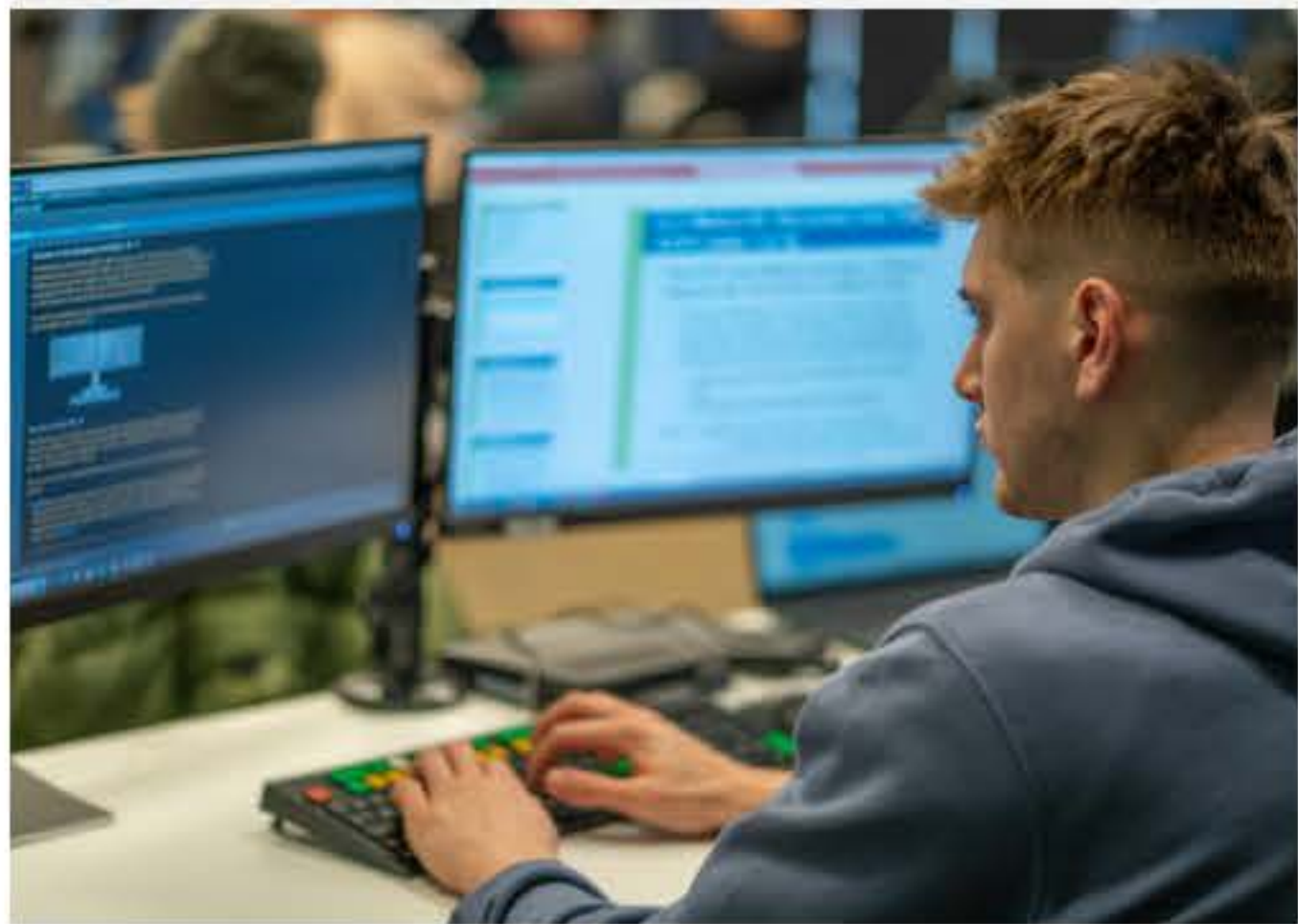
Another member of the School of Business and Economics advisory council is Julie Fritz, who graduated in 1984 from IWU with a degree in economics. As a treasury and corporate finance leader, Fritz has more than 30 years of experience at a leading automotive Fortune 500 company and her current role is senior business consultant for Fritz Ventures LLC.

Fritz said she still applies many of the lessons learned at Illinois Wesleyan in her career today, including the importance of connecting a big picture idea with the smaller details — a mindset she said was encouraged and exhibited through her professors.

“Illinois Wesleyan has always provided a robust business academic offering resulting in graduates who have had very successful business careers,” said Fritz. “Obtaining accreditation and expanding its offerings with an official School of Business and Economics will be a real competitive advantage for IWU.”

## Members of the School of Business and Economics Advisory Council include:

- **Carol Brandt '79** - Senior Vice President and Senior Consultant, Merrill Lynch Wealth Management
- **John Camey**, Interim Director, School of Business and Economics at Illinois Wesleyan University
- **Marcus Dunlop '08** - Partner, HG Vora Capital Management; and Board of Directors, The ODP Corporation
- **Julie Fritz '84** - Senior Business Consultant, Fritz Ventures LLC
- **John Horton '82** - Board of Directors and Investor, Pacific Consolidated Industries Inc.
- **Kara Lazarus '95** - Principal and Founder, Think Pink Idea Consulting
- **Mark McConaghy '63** - Retired Co-Founder, PriceWaterhouseCoopers Washington National Tax Office
- **Sean O'Neil '96** - Chief Financial Officer, University of Michigan Ross School of Business
- **Laura Orvidas '95** - Chief Executive Officer, onXmaps, Inc.
- **Sam Porritt '84** - Founder, Falling Forward Foundation
- **Mahesh Raju '01** - Interventional Cardiologist, Advocate Health Care
- **Ed Rust '72** - Retired President, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, State Farm Insurance
- **Matt Schuldt '99** - Partner, Adage Capital Management, LP
- **Mike Scudder '82** - President and Chief Executive Officer, First Midwest Bancorp, Inc; Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, First Midwest Bank
- **Tom Welge '92** - President and Chief Executive



A student accesses investing and trading knowledge at a Bloomberg terminal within the state-of-the-art Greg Yess '82 Bloomberg Finance Lab at Illinois Wesleyan University.