

Dr. William T. Hold/The National Alliance Program in
RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

at Florida State University



February 2015

This newsletter provides a summary of the events occurring during the fall semester and highlights some of the accomplishments of our risk management and insurance students and alumni. The Dr. William T. Hold/The National Alliance Program in Risk Management and Insurance and the Iota Chapter of Gamma Iota Sigma appreciate all of the support we receive from alumni, industry professionals and organizations throughout the year.

Alumni Spotlight

Student Spotlight



Andrew Celestini



Lauren Evans

■ **Andrew Celestini** joined AmWins (formerly Gresham and Associates) after graduating in 2010 from Florida State with a double major in risk management/insurance (RMI) and marketing. He works as a property broker in Orlando, Fla., specializing in commercial property insurance for middle-market and transactional middle-market business. He currently is in the AmWINS University STEP Program, designed for employees who demonstrate high potential and who are interested in investing in their professional development.

As to why Celestini majored in RMI, he said, "I wanted to be a part of one of the most prestigious RMI programs in the country and one of the best programs at Florida State. Although I didn't fully realize the impact of my decision at the time, it turned out to be one of the best of my life. I was able to walk off the stage at graduation knowing I had a career waiting for me... a career, not just a job." Celestini's advice to current students is to get involved! "We live in a competitive world, so you always want to try to set yourself apart," he said. "This can be with Gamma Iota Sigma or as the risk manager for your fraternity or sorority. What you specifically do isn't as important as getting involved and staying involved."

Celestini is following his own advice.

Recently, along with several other alumni and staff, he helped establish the AmWINS Group, Inc. FSU Alumni Scholarship. The first scholarship was awarded in spring 2014. He said the group was motivated to take on this endeavor because: "All of us wanted a way to give back to the university that we felt gave us such a great opportunity to succeed. Our goal is to hire more Florida State students and keep giving back to the university as often as possible."

■ **Lauren Evans** entered the College of Business as a finance major, but discovered an interest in risk management and insurance while taking the introductory course. A senior, Evans has become involved in the department and taken advantage of a variety of opportunities. She is the president of Gamma Iota Sigma (GIS) Insurance Fraternity and a participant in the RMI Mentoring Program. She has received multiple scholarships from the RMI department, and recently was selected as one of a small number of students to receive the Griffith Insurance Education Foundation Scholarship. Evans is also a member of the Florida State team participating in the Spencer-RIMS Risk Management Challenge. If selected, the team will make a presentation at the RIMS Annual Conference in New Orleans in April.

During fall semester, Evans traveled to Philadelphia, Dallas and Anaheim, Calif., for the GIS Presidents Conference, GIS International Conference and the Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriters (CPCU) Society Annual Meeting. The events allowed her to expand her knowledge of insurance, meet other students with similar interests and network with insurance professionals.

Through her internship last summer at a large brokerage firm, Evans developed an interest in the property and casualty side of the business, particularly the excess and surplus lines industry "because of the unique problems presented" and it will allow her "to be creative" in meeting the needs of her future clients. Upon graduation, she will begin her career as a production associate for All Risks in New Orleans.

Students Learn About Insurance Careers at Kick-Off Event

Gamma Iota Sigma had a great turnout for its first event of the year held in September. A number of insurance professionals, including several managers and local agents, discussed insurance careers. The presentations began with each of the speakers talking about how they entered the insurance industry, their career paths and other career-related experiences. They also elaborated on development programs their companies offer recent graduates and opportunities within the industry overall. The retail agents discussed the challenging environment of insurance sales. Students learned a great deal, particularly during the Q&A portion. Speakers included **Bryan Van Vranken**, AVP/southeast regional manager, Safeco Insurance; **Bess Butler**, agency specialist, Safeco Insurance; and **James Dingle**, territory manager, Safeco Insurance. They were joined by a group of local agents including **Michael Himmel**, vice president, VanAllen Insurance Agency and **Patrick McKee**, agent with McKee Insurance Agency. In addition to the GIS meeting, the Safeco executives, along with **Jeff Grady**, president of the Florida Association of Insurance Agents (FAIA), spoke in two classes during the visit. GIS is thankful for the help of SafeCo and FAIA in organizing this event.

Risk Manager-in-Residence David Williams Visits FSU



David Williams of California Pizza Kitchen speaks to students.

Through the Risk Manager-in-Residence Program, sponsored by the Spencer Educational Foundation, **David Williams** visited the College of Business this past semester. He is the senior director of risk management at California Pizza Kitchen. Over the course of his two-day visit, he spoke to more than 700 students about career opportunities in

the risk management and insurance industry and his experiences dealing with a variety of losses at several large food-related companies. Also, GIS collected nearly 30 cans of food from students attending the final presentation. The food was for the Florida State Food Pantry, which provides bags of food to students in need.

Auto-Owners Continues its Support of the RMI Program

Several representatives from Auto-Owners Insurance, including Regional Vice President **Brenda Hennenfent**, Underwriting Manager **George Williams** and Claims Manager **Lisa Franson**, visited with the RMI faculty in October. During their visit, they presented a check to the department and discussed ways in which they can be more involved with the program. Over the years, they have hired a number of Florida State graduates and provided internships to RMI majors.



Lisa Franson, George Williams and Brenda Hennenfent of Auto-Owners Insurance present a check to RMI faculty members.

Educational Sessions Help Students Prepare for the Workforce

Each semester, the RMI program and GIS host events designed to help students learn about the insurance industry and gain information that will be useful as they begin their careers.

■ At the beginning of the fall semester, company representatives, including **Kelly Newton** from Bouchard Insurance and **Haley Linch** of Liberty Mutual, took part in the professional-development sessions. Bouchard Insurance covered personal branding, while Liberty Mutual discussed behavioral-based interviewing.

■ In November, **Sharon Gallagher** and **Austin George** from All Risks, visited the college to provide students with information about the excess and surplus lines industry. They discussed what it is like to work in this area of the industry and talked about employment opportunities.

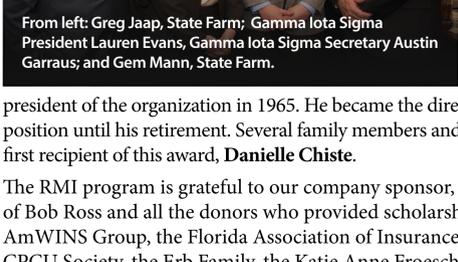
NAPSLO Representative Shares Opportunities with RMI Students

During a lunch presentation at the college, **Michelle Yuko** from AmWINS talked about the excess and surplus lines industry and a unique opportunity for students interested in this area of the industry to gain practical work experience through the National Association of Professional Surplus Lines Offices, Ltd. (NAPSLO) internship program. As part of the internship, students spend nine weeks with NAPSLO member firms learning all aspects of surplus lines insurance. One of last year's interns, **Britain Dooley**, said she was introduced to the essential work skills required to conduct business properly and effectively.

Banquet Brings Together Students, Faculty and Program Supporters



Danielle Chiste, recipient of a \$5,000 scholarship established in honor of Bob Ross, poses with members of Ross' family.



From left: Greg Jaap, State Farm; Gamma Iota Sigma President Lauren Evans, Gamma Iota Sigma Secretary Austin Garraus; and Gem Mann, State Farm.

The Gamma Iota Sigma fall banquet was held at Georgio's restaurant in Tallahassee in early December. Attendees included students, faculty and industry professionals (**Gem Mann** and **Greg Jaap**) who participated in our mentoring program. There also were three representatives (**Sharon Gallagher** and RMI alumni **Matt Fischer** and **Jordon Worlds**) from our company sponsor, All Risks.

During the banquet, more than \$16,000 in scholarships was awarded to undergraduate and graduate students. This included a recent \$5,000 scholarship established in honor of **Bob Ross**, who devoted a significant part of his life to mentoring and inspiring young agents and raising the professionalism of the industry. Ross worked as an agent and was an active member of the Florida Association of Insurance Agents, serving on many committees and as

president of the organization in 1965. He became the director of education in 1974 and held this position until his retirement. Several family members and friends of Ross attended and met the first recipient of this award, **Danielle Chiste**.

The RMI program is grateful to our company sponsor, All Risks, the family and friends of Bob Ross and all the donors who provided scholarships to students this past semester: AmWINS Group, the Florida Association of Insurance Agents, Elfreda L. Egger, the CPCU Society, the Erb Family, the Katie Anne Froeschle Foundation, Robert T. Powell and Windstorm Insurance Network, Inc.

Student News

■ **Two Students Attend the Acord Implementation Forum in Fort Lauderdale:** RMI students **Victor Tang** and **Tolulope Atanda** were selected to attend last semester's Acord Implementation Forum in Fort Lauderdale, where they networked with business professionals as well as other students and learned more about the insurance industry. Because of her success in the student networking challenge, Atanda has been invited back next year. She highly recommends the conference to other students. "I learned a lot and met professionals and other students who also are passionate about the insurance industry," she said.

■ Students Attend GIS

International Conference in Dallas:

Five Gamma Iota Sigma officers attended the 43rd Annual GIS International Conference in Dallas. The chapter won several awards, including the International Chapter Awards for Alumni Relations, Chapter Management, and Membership Development, as well as a special achievement award for all of its accomplishments. The students

networked with industry professionals, attended a career fair and met GIS members from other schools throughout the U.S. and Canada. **Cody Parsons** said he most enjoyed the interaction with so many important figures in the industry as well as the GIS students who are likely to be future business associates. In addition to Parsons, the other Florida State students attending the conference were **Danielle Chiste**, **Lauren Evans**, **Britain Dooley** and **Austin Garraus**.

■ Two Students Attend Excess and Surplus Lines Symposium at Troy University:

John Dutkowsky and **Nicholas Decrescenzo** attended the 19th Annual Collegiate Symposium for Excess and Surplus Lines, hosted by Troy University and held in October in Birmingham, Ala. The students attended educational sessions in which they learned about excess and surplus lines from industry professionals. They also participated in a career fair and learned about the National Association of Professional Surplus Lines Offices (NAPSLO) Internship Program.

■ GIS President Selected to Attend CPCU Annual Meeting:

This year's CPCU Society Annual Meeting was held in Anaheim, Calif., and **Lauren Evans**, a double major in RMI and Finance, was one of a small group of students selected to attend. The keynote speaker was **Ervin "Magic" Johnson**, who gave the audience insight of his trials and tribulations both in his basketball career as well as his entrepreneurial career. Evans said the meeting provided an invaluable opportunity to network with industry professionals and to grow professionally and personally through the CPCU Society Student Program.



From left: Gamma Iota Sigma officers Cody Parsons, Danielle Chiste, Lauren Evans, Britain Dooley and Austin Garraus.

Faculty News

RMI faculty among most prolific authors

A recent study by **Morris G. Danielson** and **Jean L. Heck**, both of Saint Joseph's University, identified the most prolific authors in the leading risk management journals from 1984-2013. The study shows that in the most recent 10 years, three of the top 10 faculty are Florida State faculty members. For the 10-year period of 2003-2013:

Dr. Kathleen McCullough: No. 1

Dr. Cassandra Cole: No. 2

Dr. Patricia Born: No. 7

Dr. Randy Dumm: No. 19

Dr. Pat Maroney: No. 37

Dr. Chuck Nyce: No. 102

■ **Dr. Patricia Born** (RMI) was selected by the American Risk and Insurance Association (ARIA) to serve as co-editor of *Risk Management and Insurance Review*. She also is the organization's new president.

■ **Dr. Cassandra Cole** (RMI) was selected as an associate editor for the *Journal of Financial Service Professionals*.

■ A paper co-authored by **Dr. Randy Dumm** (RMI) was one of two papers selected for the International Insurance Society's Shin Excellence in Research Award. He presented the paper at the organization's meeting in June in London, England.

■ **Dr. Kathleen McCullough** (RMI) was elected to the board of the American Risk and Insurance Association.

■ **Dr. Lori Medders** was named to the boards of directors for both the American Association of Water Distribution and Management and Sustainable Tallahassee.

■ **Dr. Charles Nyce** (RMI) was selected as the secretary/treasurer of Western Risk Management Insurance Association.

2014-15 GIS Officers and Faculty Advisor

President - **Lauren Evans**

Vice President - **Britain Dooley**

Treasurer - **Michael Zebracki**

Secretary - **Austin Garraus**

Director of Alumni Relations - **Danielle Chiste**

Events Coordinator - **Cody Parsons**

Director of Alumni Relations - **Joseph Starks**

Actuarial Liaisons - **David Kolar**, **Charley Yu**

Faculty Advisor - **Dr. Cassandra Cole**

About GIS

The purpose of the fraternity is to promote, encourage and sustain student interest in insurance, risk management, and actuarial science as professions; to encourage the high moral and scholastic attainments of its members; and to facilitate interaction of educational institutions and industry through networking and by fostering research activities, scholarship and improved public relations. If you would like to find out more about the organization, RMI news and future events, Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/FSURMI.

Want to Get Involved?

If you are interested in supporting the department or getting involved in future activities, please contact **Cassandra Cole** at ccole@business.fsu.edu or 644-9283.

Leave a Legacy for Future Generations

The College of Business celebrated the public phase of its \$112-million capital campaign in the fall. A third of that amount will go toward the college's new \$75-million building, Legacy Hall. The college will raise money for the building for the next two years and expects to break ground in the fall of 2016 and move into the building in fall 2018. If you would like to be part of the legacy by donating to the building fund or to learn more, please visit business.fsu.edu/legacyhall.



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